

MODULE:	MEDIA & SOCIETY
CODE:	BAJH-3-1-09
Number of Credits:	4 semester credits / 6 quarter units
Stage:	Advanced Consolidation & Specialisation (III)
Theme:	History & Structure of the Media
Assessment Weighting:	Exam 60% Assignment 40%

INTRODUCTION

The media, its institutions and practices are the major source of information and culture in or about our society today. Students must be able to not only operate within but also to examine objectively at this immensely powerful institution.

SYLLABUS

Theories of the Media - Theories of Society

Elaboration of the important sociological theories from which media theory derives and draws intellectual strength.

Role of State Regulation of Media

Role of market regulation. The consumerisation and industrialisation of culture. The position of audiences, readers. as passive or active shapers of media messages.

The Public Sphere

Its efficacy in the era of transnational media conglomerates and the commodification of all information: the restricting of video information, entertainment to pay channels, the undermining of the ethic of public service.

The 'Professionalisation' of Media Practice

The tensions between journalists/broadcasters, audiences/readers and state, private and media institutions. How media workers attempt to insulate themselves from intrusion into their day-to-day working life. Evaluation of the concerns of journalists in relation to their social backgrounds.

The Media as Agents of Socialisation

Reinforcement or challenges to dominant definitions of reality. The role of free-speech and objectivity in media. How the dominant ideas impact on journalistic practice.

Self-regulation - How does the Media Report Itself?

Is there a role for state regulation of media content? How practice here fits in with

schools of thought examined earlier, how such regulation worked in the past. The experience of regulation through censorship and self-censorship.

Media Effects Research

The contentious area of media effects research. The role of television advertising in the socialisation of children into consumer culture and the creation of a 'childrens' market'. The role of editorial bias in affecting voting habits, opinions. An evaluation of recent research and analysis.

The Globalization of Media

Can Irish media survive?, should Irish media survive? What are the effects of media expansion and monopolisation in other parts of the world.

Media and Entertainment

The role of advertising driven media. The promotion of consumer culture and the alleged trivialisation of media culture.

MODULE: MODERN SOCIETY

Stage: Consolidation and Specialisation

Theme: Social and Political theory

Assessment weighting: Project: 40%; Exam 60%

INTRODUCTION

Changes in Ireland over recent decades are usually described as involving modernisation, but there has been very little discussion of what it means to be 'modern'. Alongside this there has been an increasing sense both of the global context within which we live, and of the great divergences across the globe, divergences which are often described as resulting from much of the globe's failure to achieve 'modernisation'. Critical reflection on these issues is vital for journalists and media professionals seeking to come to grips with the world we live in.

SYLLABUS

The emergence of centralised states

A look at how centralised states came into being and role of law, writing systems, money and military organisation in the process.

Market Society

This will focus on how a market society came into being and will look at the differences between the modern economy and markets in earlier societies. It will also explore some of the characteristic tensions and problems which emerge in market societies.

Empires, nation states and global power

From the beginning control of territory and global trading networks has been crucial to the emergence of modern power systems. This will examine the shifting balance of global hegemony from the period of the Genoese and Dutch sea-borne empires to the role of the United States in the contemporary world.

Knowledge and science

Modernity has transformed patterns of knowledge, and these have come to acquire a central role in the functioning of modern society. Within this new framework of knowledge, science has come to play a paramount role. This section will explore the character of modern science and its relation to modern society.

Religion and secularisation

The rise of modernity has seen a transformation of traditional religions and, arguably, a decline in the influence of religious world views. This has however been a highly contested development with religious fundamentalist currents acquiring considerable weight in parts of the world, in notably the Middle East and the United States.

Democracy and social conflict

Democracy didn't emerge automatically with modern society and to this day its role in much of the world is contested. The module will examine how democracy emerged and the challenges and obstacles which it still faces.

Modernity and cultural change

Modernity has involved huge transformations of culture. The module will examine some of these changes, in particular those associated with gender roles.

The uneven development of modernity

The evolution and spread of modern social forms has been highly uneven geographically. The module will examine some of the causes and consequences of this unevenness.

The future of modernity

There has been considerable debate in recent decades as to whether we still live in 'modern' times or whether we have entered a 'post-modern' era. This debate will be explored, so too, the question whether the conditions of modernity are sustainable over a more extended period