

MODULE:	MEDIA STUDIES
CODE:	BAJH-1-2-10
Number of Credits:	4 semester credits / 6 quarter units
Stage:	I
Theme	Media Theory
Assessment Weighting:	Exam (40%) Project (60%)

Overview and Aims

This module aims to enable the student to:

- Understand how media is studied and consumed in its various forms and products.
- Critique and evaluate media texts and movements in film.
- Develop media literacy skills in the genres of cinema, television drama and contemporary documentary.
- Assess how societies make sense of and interpret media products from the perspectives of ideology, content and form
- Practically apply these theoretical approaches to a range of media products.

On successful completion of this module, the student should be able to:

- Understand the key concepts and theories underpinning media studies.
- Analyse and critique media forms and media organisations.
- Display an understanding of the link between ideology and audiences.
- Understand and be conscious of the construction devices of both images and narrative and the conventions used.
- Apply the theoretical knowledge acquired to the production of media artefacts.

Module Content

Intro:

Media studies: How the term is used; overview of media institutions; structures that

shape media production and reception.

Reading Media Images:

Image and meaning; focus on semiotics - signs, symbols, signifiers and signified.

Film Noir:

Pre-history and origins; Artistic heritage; Expressionism; European influences; Form; Post-war Hollywood genres; 'Social-Consciousness' film; the 'new society' - post-war disenchantment; Content; Cold War 'angst' - urban paranoia - power and corruption.

Ideology; ideology in narrative; semiotics, narrative and textual analysis; genre study; generic conventions; gender representation; femme fatale; gender dynamics.

Contemporary Television Drama 1:

Reception theory and reader response criticism; reading the television text; the 'active' viewer and television effects; television and ideology of mass culture; depictions of the 'American city'; realism; institutional dysfunction. Political storytelling; political discourses; addressing 'elites'; popular culture and politics; TV fiction V's Washington reality; television and feminism; patriarchy in drama and reality.

Contemporary Television Drama 2:

Television as manipulation or fascination; consumption and pleasure; television between reality and fiction; the function of characters; the nuclear family and the crime family; intertextuality. Television genre conventions; Omniscient narration; Greek chorus; plot exposition; moral and thematic standpoints; seriality and narrative arcs; social issues, style and presentation;

Documentary 1:

The Documentary form: theory of, origins, authorship. 'The creative treatment of actuality'. British Documentary Film Movement; Romanticism. Cinema Verite; naturalism; representation; aesthetics, free cinema; direct cinema; notions of truth and reality; boundaries of reality and fiction.

Documentary 2:

Modern documentary - narrative shifts and directorial influences. Direct cinema: minorities, post-colonialism, representation of history. Questions of realism and reality. Objectivism V's. perspectivism; freedom of media; alternative voices; war andpropaganda; narration, invention and history; 'reality television'; 'docuganda' or mondofilms.

Minorities and the Media - Representations of the Other:

Examination of a core genre across a range of media.

Globalisation of the Media:

Origins of globalised media. Role of producers and consumers. Consequences of cultural imperialism and media ownership.

Radical / Reactionary / Resistance Media:

Origins and rise of media organisations outside the mainstream. Organisational structure, decision-making processes, agendas. History, motives, methods and success of these media types.

Reality Television:

Origins, definitions, understanding. Objectivity and reasons for success. Conflict between entertainment and privacy.

Public Service Broadcasting:

Origins, success, future, relevance in a globalised multi-media landscape. RTÉ, BBC and PBS.