SOCL923 Critical Methods in Media and Cultural Studies, 2015

# Essay question

Due: **Monday Week 2, Summer term, 27** **April 2015, 5pm.**

Nick Couldry wrote in 2000: 'cultural studies is an expanding space for sustained, rigorous and self-reflexive  empirical research into the massive, power-laden complexity of contemporary culture'  (Couldry, 2000, 1).  Critically analyse what this claim means for media and cultural studies research in 2014/2015. Drawing on the various interpretative, textual, visual, observational and participatory methods discussed in the course,  describe some of the ways  your group research project could address the challenges of empirically researching contemporary culture today. You will need to spend some time in your essay describing what your research was about, but this description should mainly serve to highlight your analysis of the challenges of contemporary research.

Nick Couldry defines media cultures in this way: 'I use the term “media culture” .. to refer to collections of sense-making practices whose main resources of meaning are media. The only criterion for identifying a media culture is that its members are likely to recognize its distinctiveness, its way of “hanging together”. When I say “sense-making”, I do not mean that media cultures are exclusively or primarily ways of making sense *of media*. I mean instead that they are ways of making sense *of the world* that work primarily *through*, or in reliance on, media' (Couldry 2012, 159–160). Critically analyse what this claim means for media and cultural studies research today. Describe how  your group research project addressed the challenges of empirically researching contemporary media culture. You will need to spend some time in your essay describing what your research was about, but this description should mainly support your reflections on the challenges of researching media cultures.

Couldry, Nick. 2012. *Media, Society, World: Social Theory and Digital Media Practice*. Cambridge ; Malden, MA: Polity.