Module Descriptions

SOCL923 Critical Methods in Media and Cultural Studies

Module Convenor(s)

This course explores research practice in Media and Cultural Studies (MCS). Method in MCS is quite plural. It includes textual and discourse analysis, visual analysis, ethnography and participatory approaches, but with strong emphasis on engaging with issues of identity, differences, power and experience in the hyper-complex media and cultural environments we inhabit.

This course is designed to introduce students to contemporary methodological issues, key approaches, practical techniques, and exemplary cases relating to the study of media and culture. It uses recent examples of media and cultural research done here at Lancaster to give a taste of particular research methods and approaches, and encourage an exploration of their theoretical and practical implications and consequences. In conversation with invited guests, participants in the course will also discuss and critically evaluate different methodological approaches and learn how to draw on these approaches as a starting point for their own research. By the end of the course, students should have a strong understanding of key elements in planning and carrying out independent research projects.

Course Aims and Objectives

* 1. To explore the main methods used in media and cultural studies and how they relate to the key problems and approaches of that field.
* 2. In dialogue with media and cultural studies researchers, to show how issues of identity, power, value and experience can be researched.
* 3. Using visual, textual and observational materials, show how media and other cultural processes can be understood differently using different methodological approaches.

Key Readings

* Couldry, Nick. 2012. *Media, Society, World: Social Theory and Digital Media Practice*. Cambridge ; Malden, MA: Polity.
* Back, Les, and Nirmal Puwar. 2012. “A Manifesto for Live Methods: Provocations and Capacities.” *The Sociological Review* 60: 6–17. doi:10.1111/j.1467-954X.2012.02114.x.
* Rose, Gillian. 2011. *Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to Researching with Visual Materials*. Sage.
* Johnson, Richard, Deborah Chambers, Parvati Raghuram, and Estella Tincknell. 2004. *The Practice of Cultural Studies*. Sage.