THESIS HANDBOOK

MASTERS PROGRAM IN MEDIA STUDIES
THE NEW SCHOOL

Prepared by Shannon Mattern
Created Fall 2004
Revised April 15, 2008

MEDIA STUDIES M.A. THESIS

This handbook is designed to clarify the process of planning and producing a Thesis. It describes many of the administrative issues involved in undertaking a thesis and is designed to enable you to concentrate on the most important part of the process: thinking about and producing your thesis. Should you have further questions, please don't hesitate to contact the Thesis Coordinator, Director of Graduate Studies, any Principal Faculty member, the Graduate Advising Coordinator, or the Department Chairperson.

THESIS OPTION

To complete the work toward a Master of Arts degree, you must choose to undertake either the *Thesis Track* or the *Non-thesis Track*. The Thesis Track requires the completion of 39 credits (36 for students who matriculated before Fall 2008), and the submission of an approved thesis, which *often adds* ***as much as a year*** *to a student's program of study*. Details about the Non-thesis track can be found in the Student Guidebook. Approximately ten percent of the students in our program choose the Thesis Option. Students who do not choose a Thesis Option often use Independent Study or Independent Production courses to create significant portfolio pieces.

The Thesis Option represents a synthesis of your accumulated knowledge and competencies, and provides an opportunity to extend, gather, and display the ideas and skills learned through the program of study. There are a number of reasons to choose the Thesis Option. It is useful as an exercise in applying lessons, techniques, and skills learned in coursework. There is satisfaction in exploring a field or sub-field of Media Studies and knowing it well. Writing a thesis can function as an act of fulfillment, a tying up of loose ends, and can bring a sense of closure to the M.A. experience. It can also serve as a foundation for further creative work or a source for articles to be submitted to journals for publication, as a demonstration of seriousness to Ph.D. programs, or as an example of professional production work.

PREREQUISITES

You are eligible to submit a Thesis Proposal during the semester in which you are completing your 27th credit, and you must have completed all required courses before enrolling in Thesis Tutorial. Throughout your coursework, you should keep in mind interesting topics, useful theoretical approaches, and helpful faculty members from previous courses. Indeed, your coursework should be an opportunity to explore possibilities and to use assignments to evaluate the suitability of issues, subjects, and practices for a thesis. Examples of previous students' projects are available in the Department's thesis library, and thesis guidelines and advising documents are available in the Media Matrix on MyNewSchool.

TYPES OF THESES

Ours is a program that prioritizes the integration of theory and practice, and we acknowledge scholarship in a variety of formats; we recognize that a well conceived and conducted study need not be presented in a traditional written format, although it can be. Theses can take the form of an **extended paper** (typically between 50 and 70 pages in length), **a film, video, audio, or digital media production, or a hybrid project** that combines several media formats or modes of communication. Your choice of format depends on the media studies problem or question you want to solve, the audience you intend to reach, and the kind of work you want to and are prepared to undertake. Your Primary Thesis Advisor is responsible for determining that you have met the appropriate standards and acquired the necessary skills (e.g., that you

have taken the appropriate production or methodology classes) to undertake your proposed project. A Second Reviewer – chosen by you and your advisor – will confirm that judgment.

Regardless of its format, a thesis involves **systematic inquiry into some media studies-related phenomenon, problem, or question**. The thesis represents more than the accumulation of facts, footage, or references. Instead, it demands the identification or development of suitable methods for conducting research, the analysis or interpretation of ideas, the solution of some articulated problem, or the systematic search for meaning in the chosen area of study. Even creative or production theses are expected to build and sustain a coherent and creative engagement with a given set of conceptual, aesthetic, technical, or theoretical problems germane to our field.

You must identify **what methods are best suited to your topic and intended audience**. Would your research be best presented in a traditional written thesis, on a website, in a radio or video documentary, or in an installation? The process may entail the collection and analysis of original empirical data using appropriate scholarly methods, and/or the investigation of already published sources, and/or the interpretation of given materials, texts, objects, or ideas. It may also involve the extension of research, analysis, writing, or production initiated in courses or through interaction with Media Studies faculty. You will be expected to *explain* your chosen methods – both in the proposal and in the **support paper** that accompanies all non-written theses (described below, under "The Final Submission").

The topic chosen should be **suited to the length and scope of a Master's thesis**. While the Master's thesis, unlike the doctoral dissertation, does not have to create new knowledge or break new ground, it does display your ability to go beyond the mere collection of information into synthesis, analysis, judgment, and interpretation. Moreover, it should demonstrate your familiarity with a substantial body of thought or critical literature and your competence in the application of some recognizable form of inquiry. It should, in sum, demonstrate your "mastery" of some self-chosen topic of study and/or mode of production.

In defining your topic, it is probably not a good idea to start with "The History of Media and Ideas," as this is better suited to a multi-volume (multi-lifetime!) work. Nor is a simple content analysis of a single website appropriate. Better is a topic that combines the theoretical scope of the former with the specificity of the latter. For example, a manageable thesis might involve a feminist reading of a film, or an explication and interrogation of the prevailing ideology suggested by a particular cable network, or a study of the political economy of independent label music distribution. The task is to find a **topic both particular enough to offer focus yet general enough to be accessible and thought-provoking to others** whose concerns lie beyond the particular material.

The topics should also be **realistic, given the resources, both scholarly and technical**, available to Media Studies students. As you refine a suitable topic for exploration or engagement, you should also carefully assess the following: How long will the proposed research and production activities take? Are all the materials I need accessible to graduate students locally? Does the proposed use of resources (library or production equipment, etc.) correspond to their foreseeable availability? However novel, creative, or original the ideas being described, you must work within the constraints of the Media Studies M.A. Program.

FORMING THE THESIS COMMITTEE

The first step in the thesis committee process is the selection of a Primary Thesis Advisor. Early in the semester in which you are completing your 27th credit, or not earlier – and before the semester in which you plan to enroll in Thesis Tutorial and officially begin to work on the thesis – you should select a Primary Thesis Advisor. That selection must be made from *among the Media Studies Principal Faculty* and preferably should be a faculty member with whom you have worked. Meet with her or him early in the semester to discuss the possibility of working together and to consider areas of interest or possible topics.

Once you have secured your Primary Advisor, you must register, *no later than the eighth week of the semester*, for **one credit of Thesis Proposal Supervision** with your advisor; the Graduate Advising Coordinator will assist you with registration upon your provision of documentation of your advisor's agreement to serve in that capacity. You and your advisor should then work together to identify a Second Reviewer, who may be selected from among the Principal or adjunct faculty – or, if appropriate, from outside the Program. In addition, you are strongly advised to ensure that at least one member of your Thesis Committee has some expertise in the methodology or production skill you plan to employ in the thesis. The Primary Thesis Advisor and Second Reviewer will together constitute the "Thesis Committee."

Both members of this committee will work with you through the proposal writing and review and thesis writing/production and review stages of the thesis. The degree and regularity of involvement of your Second Reviewer, however, is to be determined on a case-by-case basis. In some instances, the Second Reviewer may be willing to make him or herself available throughout the proposal and thesis writing and production processes. In other cases, the Second Reviewer may wish to be called in only at the end of both processes, for the proposal and completed thesis reviews; in these cases, the thesis proposal and thesis itself will not go to the second reviewer for *formal* review until it has been fully approved and "signed off" by the Primary Thesis Advisor. Early in the proposal writing stage, you and your Primary Advisor should establish with your Second Reviewer what your working relationship will be throughout the thesis process. *You are strongly encouraged to* ***schedule in-person meetings*** *(or, if a member of the committee is working remotely, conference calls) during both the proposal writing and thesis approval processes*; either advisor may call for such a meeting, in which case it is the student's responsibility to accommodate that request and schedule the meeting.

THE THESIS PROPOSAL

The Thesis Proposal is a planning document produced by the student, in consultation with the student's Primary Thesis Advisor. It is your responsibility to meet regularly with your Primary Thesis Advisor, to schedule a proposal review meeting and to meet calendar deadlines for formal submission of the approved thesis proposal (see section below).

It is crucial that your proposal successfully demonstrates your preparedness and competence to undertake the work described. Aim for clarity and brevity, and follow the formatting and style conventions of one of the standard style guides, such as APA or MLA. Although the content of the proposal will depend on the type of project you are proposing, all proposals should include the following elements. Limit your proposal to between ten and fifteen pages. Shorter proposals are acceptable if complete.

- **Signature Page** (see Appendix A)
  - Signed by the student, Primary Thesis Advisor, and Second Reviewer
    Please do not expect the Department to collect signatures on your behalf. Off-site students, or students working with off-campus advisors, should make special arrangements to obtain the requisite signatures via email and/or fax. Please budget sufficient time to collect signatures by whatever means necessary (e.g., you might ask your advisors to email or fax to you a note of approval, which you then affix to your proposal), and submit all requisite signatures with your approved proposal before the deadline.
- **Abstract.** A brief (100 words or fewer) descriptive statement. What is the project? What do you propose to do? What is the thesis statement, argument, question, or central idea of the project?
- **Proposal and Rationale**
  - Description. (1-2 pages) Provide a more extended description of the project.
  - Rationale. (2-4 pages) What is the purpose of the project? What is the conceptual framework informing your questions? What theoretical perspectives or assumptions do you draw from? What is your project's relevance to the fields of media studies and media practices? What is its contribution to the field? What can we learn from your work?
  - Methodology. (3-4 pages) If you propose to conduct research for your thesis, what research methods will you use, and how are they congruent with your conceptual framework? Describe the general kinds of information to be used, the sources from which the data will be collected, your sampling rationale, and your methods for collecting that data. Address any limitations of the research methods or any challenges you expect to encounter. If you will be using surveys, questionnaires, or interviews, briefly list some sample questions; or if you will be using participant observation or field research, describe your observational procedures. If applicable, explain how you will analyze your data.
  - Relevant experience and expertise. (1 page) What is your relevant experience and expertise? What experiences, course work, and areas of study have prepared you for this work? How will the thesis be a culmination of your educational experience?
- **Research/Production Plan** (2-3 pages)
  - List the necessary steps toward project completion, in the form of a proposed work schedule. Please note that most faculty are not available over winter or summer breaks for advising.
  - Provide an annotated table of contents or outline including proposed length of chapters; or, for a production, offer detailed descriptions of proposed scenes, interviews, characters, etc.
  - Discuss any contingencies within or among the steps, e.g. interviewees who may not agree to be interviewed, rights holders who may not grant you permission to reproduce their footage or music or to access their property, choices that will be informed by the results of earlier steps.

- Address resource issues such as budgets, access to locations or facilities, travel to archives, etc.
- **For production theses: Be sure to consult with the managers of the appropriate production facilities to ensure that equipment is available for you when you need it. You may need to plan your production schedule around equipment availability.

- **Bibliography/Mediagraphy** (1 page) Provide a list of relevant published literature and other media materials. (1 page)

Copies of the final proposal will be kept on file with the Thesis Coordinator during the entire period that you are preparing and producing the thesis. All Principal Faculty members will have access to the files.

<u>The Proposal Review Meeting and Approval of the Proposal</u>

During the semester before you plan to enroll in Thesis Tutorial, the Primary Thesis Advisor will indicate when he or she deems your proposal ready for review by the Second Reviewer. You may formally submit your proposal to the Second Reviewer any time during the semester, but well before the eighth week. This ensures there will be sufficient time for

1) the Second Reviewer to review the proposal;
2) for you, your Primary Thesis Advisor and Second Reviewer to schedule a proposal review meeting;
3) for you to complete any necessary revisions;
4) and for your Primary Thesis Advisor to approve the revised proposal.

Completion of each of these steps entitles you to enroll in Thesis Tutorial during the registration period in the 10th week of the semester.

You and your advisor may work through this process at your own pace, but be mindful of the Week 10 final deadline. The following timeline presents the *latest possible dates* by which the various stages of the thesis proposal review process should take place. This timetable ensures that each successive step will be completed by the deadline for proposal approval.

Weeks 1-6:
The student establishes his or her committee, drafts a proposal, and meets regularly with the Primary Advisor to revise the proposal.

Week 7 (or earlier):
The Primary Advisor instructs the student to submit the thesis proposal to the Second Reviewer, who examines it.

Week 8 (or earlier):
The student, Primary Thesis Advisor, and Second Reviewer schedule a **Thesis Proposal Review Meeting**. During that meeting, the Second Reviewer provides feedback and all present establish a plan for revision.

Week 9 (or earlier):
The student makes the requested revisions, and the Primary Advisor approves the complete, fully revised proposal.

Week 10 (or earlier):

The student submits **one hard and one electronic copy** of the complete, fully revised thesis proposal, along with all requisite signatures (include a scanned signature page with your electronic submission), to the Thesis Coordinator, and the student registers for Thesis Tutorial for the following semester.

In short, you must submit the approved proposal to the Thesis Coordinator by the tenth week of the semester, at the very latest. With this in mind, you should plan *backward* to ensure that you begin the process early enough to allow sufficient time for writing, the review meeting, and multiple rounds of revision.

You must have a completed and approved Thesis Proposal in order to register for Thesis Tutorial for the following term.

*Note: If you submit your proposal in the spring and plan to take Tutorial in the fall, but intend to begin your production work in the summer, you must register for one credit of Maintaining Status to ensure that you'll have access to equipment in the summer.

THESIS TUTORIAL AND SUPERVISION

Committing to a thesis also means committing to participation in an intellectual community. That community is fostered through Thesis Tutorial, a one-credit course that is required of all thesis students (online-only thesis students are advised to take one credit of Thesis Supervision with their Thesis Advisor in lieu of Thesis Tutorial.). It is recommended that students take it in the first semester after approval of their proposal. This is a workshop-type class in which students will conduct research, produce first drafts, do their shooting, etc., while giving progress reports and receiving feedback. Tutorial is graded Pass or Unsatisfactory by the Tutorial instructor in consultation as appropriate with the student's thesis advisor.

Students should register for one credit of Thesis Supervision in each semester *subsequent* to Thesis Tutorial when they are working with their thesis advisor on an approved thesis. It is likely that you will have to register for at least one semester (but *no more than two*) of Thesis Supervision, as it is extremely rare that a student completes his or her thesis in Thesis Tutorial. Students will pay the University fee for Thesis Supervision for each semester that they require to finish the project.

While you are enrolled in Supervision, you should continue to meet regularly with your Primary Thesis Advisor. You must be proactive in maintaining contact with both advisors; they cannot be expected to ask you for periodic progress reports. *You are strongly encouraged to* ***schedule at least one in-person meeting*** *(or, if a member of the committee is working remotely, conference calls) to discuss how the thesis is evolving and, near the end of the process, to discuss and approve final revisions*. Either advisor may call for such a meeting, in which case it is the student's responsibility to accommodate that request and schedule the meeting.

Students must maintain good progress on the thesis each semester. Their progress will be reflected through a grade of P, passing, in Thesis Supervision. Students who receive a grade of U, unsatisfactory, may not continue on their current project. Normally in such cases students should switch to the Non-thesis Option and complete the remaining requirements for their MA degree. Under special circumstances,

with the support of a faculty advisor, students may appeal this rule and may be allowed to continue in the thesis track.

THE RESEARCH, WRITING, AND PRODUCTION PROCESSES

Research is an ongoing process both personal to you and peculiar to the given topic. The Department's methodology courses allow you to explore research resources, techniques and methods that may be useful as you complete your thesis; you advised to choose methods courses that will help to advance your thesis work. What follows are four general pieces of advice on conducting research for a thesis.

1) **Keep a research or production journal**. This is a private space for making entries that contemplate the project, reflect on readings, record novel ideas and insights, work out inchoate thoughts, and plan the various stages of the writing or production process. The journal can be a place for you to incorporate formal notes, planning tasks, research findings, draft outlines, memos or messages to and from an advisor – anything that allows you to formulate ideas. Re-reading the journal periodically helps you to keep the thesis work in context and to maintain a grasp of the overall analysis.

2) **Keep the research component manageable**. Even once a focused topic is decided upon, you face the possible pitfall of feeling the need to read exhaustively, to study and integrate all related materials. Research is a means to the end of writing or producing. After conducting substantial research, you can generally begin to write even if additional research is required. You can always incorporate other leads and resources in later drafts.

3) **Use proper formatting from the very first draft**. You and your advisor can determine the appropriate degree of formality for drafts you submit for review. Regardless, it is a good idea to begin inserting **properly formatted citations** and **formatting pages** appropriately with the very first draft so that you can avoid having to return to these tasks at the very end. All theses should conform to certain conventions of physical production and abide by the specifications of one of these style manuals: American Psychological Association (APA), Modern Language Association (MLA), or Kate Turabian's University of Chicago Manual (Turabian/Chicago). In extraordinary circumstances, another style manual may be used; the reasons for such use should be included in the proposal. All of these books provide authority in the matters of format, page layout, citation, note taking, and bibliography. Whichever manual is adopted, consistency of use is the greatest priority.

4) **Keep writing or moving forward through production planning**. You should avoid rewriting the same outline or chapter, or re-shooting the same scene. Perfectionism can paralyze your ability to think, write, and produce creatively. Working initially to give the whole project shape allows you to incorporate changes, respond to criticism and advice from the advisor and fellow students, and maintain an orderly flow of ideas. The hardest phase of the thesis process is setting forth the argument logically and coherently.

5) **Set reasonable expectations**. The thesis is a long research paper or sizable production project. You should not begin the project planning to produce your magnum opus; save that for *after* you have the MA in hand.

THE FINAL SUBMISSION

The Department maintains an in-house thesis library for those thesis components that must remain in their native format – but as of Spring 2008, we ask that all thesis components be **submitted digitally, on disc,** so that they can be stored on the University's servers and eventually made available in an online thesis archive.

Written Components

The text for a written thesis or project thesis support paper contains the following:

1. title page (as per example in Appendix B)
2. optional: copyright page
3. single-spaced abstract of roughly 100 words
4. optional: dedication or acknowledgements page, single-spaced
5. table of contents, with page numbers
6. if appropriate: table of illustrations, tables, or figures, with page numbers
7. text, with headings for chapters, sub-sections, or other divisions
8. appendices or production materials or attachments, as appropriate
9. bibliography

The **Project Support Paper** is the written component of a production thesis and should be **15 to 30 pages long.** It is not a production diary, but rather a short, scholarly paper in which you outline what your thesis project accomplishes and what it may have failed to accomplish; reevaluate your project's design and conceptualization and how they informed the production; and reflect on the production format(s) and style(s) used in your work and the effectiveness of your production in dealing with the theoretical and aesthetic issues you laid out in your proposal.

It is here, in this written support paper, that you have an opportunity to address the conceptual and theoretical issues that you may not have been able to take up in the production. You may want to include an appendix that discusses the technical aspects of the production, including the production tools you used and any technical problems you faced in completing the project.

We are no longer collecting hard copies of the written thesis components. All written components – whether the traditional written thesis or the support paper for a project thesis – must be submitted **on disc as a pdf containing a scanned, signed title page**. All documents should be collapsed into a single pdf file. The **title page with original signatures should also be submitted in hard copy.**

Media Components

All project theses may be submitted in physically archiveable formats – DV tape, DVD, CD, audiotape, etc. – but should also be submitted in a format that allows for online archiving and web accessibility. These formats are described below. Productions are also expected to abide by certain conventions governing their respective technical formats; these, too, are described below.

Video: Video project theses must demonstrate competent professional protocols in terms of production value. They must be properly exposed, shot, and edited in a manner that is technically clean and with levels at a proper technical state. Any subversion

of professional protocol must be performed with reason and control over the medium; that is, if you defy professional standards in the production for a specific purpose, you must clearly and fully justify that purpose. Finished video theses should be deposited to the University on DVD, in Quicktime.

Audio: Audio project theses must demonstrate competent professional protocols in terms of production value. They must be properly recorded, arranged, mixed, and edited in a manner that is technically clean and with levels at a proper technical state. Any subversion of professional protocol must be performed with reason and control over the medium; that is, if you defy professional standards in the production for a specific purpose, you must clearly and fully justify that purpose. Finished audio theses should be submitted on CD in Stereo AIFF files at 44.1 KhZ, 16 bit.

Multimedia: Please consult with your advisor regarding the technical conventions applicable to your project. If applicable, submit your project on DVD in Flash.

Film: Film project theses must demonstrate competent professional protocols in terms of production value. They must be properly exposed, composed, shot, and edited in a manner that is technically clean. Any subversion of professional protocol must be performed with reason and control over the medium; that is, if you defy professional standards in the production for a specific purpose, you must clearly and fully justify that purpose. Finished film theses should be deposited to the University on DVD, in Flash Video at full screen.

Whichever the format, you should **credit all sources used** – if not in the production, then in the written report. Also, if you plan to broadcast, publish, or submit to festivals, distribute, or exhibit your work publicly or for commercial purposes, you must obtain all **use copyrights and clearances** for any music, talent, picture, and all over intellectual and artistic properties that are featured or used as part of the thesis project.

In short, your thesis submission should contain the following:

1. hard copy of the signed title page
2. a disc containing a pdf of all textual components of the thesis, including a scanned, signed title page
3. if applicable, productions in their native, physically archiveable formats
4. a disc containing the production in appropriate digital format to allow for web archiving and accessibility

THESIS APPROVAL

When your Primary Thesis Advisor deems your thesis ready for formal review by your Second Reviewer, you will provide copies of the complete draft or project to both members of your committee. The Second Reviewer will need at least three weeks to consider the work. In addition, as stated above, either committee member may call for a thesis review/approval meeting; it is the student's responsibility to accommodate that request and schedule the meeting.

Either of your committee members may ask you to revise and resubmit portions of the thesis, and all revisions must be completed by the thesis submission deadline. You must therefore plan not only to give your Second Reviewer time to review your thesis, but also to schedule a time for the entire committee to meet to discuss final revisions, and to give yourself sufficient time to make the necessary revisions before the submission deadline. Final approval of any revisions at this stage is the responsibility of your Primary Advisor. After you receive her/his final approval, you must produce complete, copyedited, archive-quality copies of all thesis materials (see below). At this point – and not before – your Primary Thesis Advisor and Second Reviewer will sign your thesis title page.

As was the case in the thesis proposal review process, you and your advisors can work through this thesis approval process at your own pace, but be mindful of the fact that all completed theses are due to the Thesis Coordinator by the 13th week of the semester. The following timeline presents the *latest possible dates* by which the various stages of the thesis approval process should take place. Again, with the Week 13 deadline in mind, you should plan *backward* to ensure that you begin the process early enough to allow sufficient time for multiple rounds of revision, copyediting, printing, and signature collection.

Weeks 6-8:	The Second Reviewer examines the student's work and recommends revisions. The student schedules a committee meeting to discuss these necessary revisions.
Week 9:	The student incorporates the Reviewer's recommended revisions, and submits a final draft of the thesis to the Primary Thesis Advisor.
Weeks 10-11:	The student's Primary Thesis Advisor reviews the student's final round of revisions and indicates his or her approval or asks for further revision until final approval is given.
Week 12:	The student produces final, archive-quality copies of all thesis texts and production materials.
Weeks 12-13:	The student collects signatures from both the Primary Thesis Advisor and Second Reviewer and submits all requisite materials to the Thesis Coordinator.

Specific submission deadlines will be announced each semester.

Both committee members' signatures must appear on the cover page for the thesis to be considered complete. ***The Department cannot collect signatures on your behalf.*** Off-site students and students working with off-campus advisors should make special arrangements to obtain the requisite signatures via email and/or fax. Please ask advisors to submit this documentation to *you* – not to the Department; you must then include the documentation with your complete proposal.

In order for your submission to be considered complete, you must submit (1) two hard copies of all thesis text (including, for project theses, the support paper); (2) one digital copy of all thesis text on CD or DVD; and (3) all media materials.

THESIS PRESENTATION

You are welcome to present your thesis to faculty, classmates, family, and friends during the final weeks of each semester. This presentation is not meant as a formal defense of the thesis, which will have already been officially approved; it is, rather, a ceremonial and celebratory meeting at which you summarize and discuss the main points of your project, review its preparation, and announce any future plans you may have for the work. Consult with your committee members and other desired attendees to identify potential dates and times, and work with the assistants in the Department office to determine room availability. If you like, you may publicize the event, perhaps with flyers posted in the Department, or with a department-wide email distributed through the Media Matrix.

Appendix A

THESIS PROPOSAL SIGNATURE PAGE

"Title"

Your Name
Your Student ID#

Your Email
Your Address
Your Phone Number

Your Signature & Date
Primary Thesis Advisor's Signature & Date
Name of Primary Thesis Advisor
Second Reviewer's Signature & Date
Name of Second Reviewer
Thesis Coordinator' Signature & Date
Name of Thesis Coordinator

Appendix B
COMPLETED THESIS TITLE PAGE

TITLE
Subtitle (if applicable)

Your Full Name

Thesis for the
Master of Arts in Media Studies
The New School
Year

Primary Thesis Advisor:
Advisor's Name _____

Second Reviewer:
*Reviewer's Name*_____

Thesis Coordinator:
*Coordinator's Name*_____

Appendix C
SAMPLE THESIS TOPICS

Each of the following topics was successfully developed as a Media Studies M.A. Thesis. Bound copies of the final versions are available for review upon request at the main desk of the Fogelman Library, 65 Fifth Avenue.

"A Study of the Impact of the Telephone on Human Sexuality" (Man-Kong Lum, 1983)

"Personal Portable Stereos: The Cultural Phenomenon of Tuning Out the World" (Kim Conley, 1987)

"Media Ethics in a Post Modern World: What Can 'Pee-Wee's Playhouse' Teach Us?" (Jeannie Toley, 1988)

"Which Way to Mecca, Jack? Ethnicity and the *New Yorker* Cartoon, 1925-1990" (Christian Clark, 1990)

"Irony as Style in Post-modern Popular Music" (Clas Wilhelm von Sydow, 1990)

"Starry Solitudes: An Examination of Children's Literature as a Vehicle in the Search for Meaning" (Roberta Panjwani, 1993)

"The Impact of Electronic Media on Periodical Publishing: Reconfiguring Literacy in the Visual Marketplace" (Margaret Furlong, 1994)

"Privatizing the American Public" (Ann Butler, 1994)

"The Terrorist's Media: A Strategy in Cultural and Political Resistance" (Akram Zaatari, 1994)

"Participatory Development and Empowerment: A Communication Approach for Hygiene Education in Rural Viet Nam" (Viviane Dewachter, 1996)

"The Body is Back: Communication in Cyberspace" (Samantha Longoni, 1997)

"Time, Technology and Media" (Brian Kase, 1998)

"Sound, Music and Moving Image: Hitchcock's Creative Manipulations" (Juwan Park, 1999)

"Media and Metaphor in Nietzsche and McLuhan" (Howard Meister, 2001)

"Resistance in Sci-Fi: Building Community Through Social Commentary in Science Fiction" (Mari Barias, 2002)

"You Have To Look For It: Teen Rebellion Through Counterculture Punk" (Lorelei Narvaja, 2003)

"Dyke TV: A Study in Lesbian Media Activism" (Anezka Sebek, 2004)

Appendix D
RECOMMENDED READING

On General Writing Style

Graves, Robert and Alan Hodge. *The Reader Over Your Shoulder: A Handbook for Writers of English Prose*, 2nd ed., rev. and abridged (New York: Vintage, 1979).

Strunk, Jr., William and E.B. White. *The Elements of Style*, 4th ed. (New York: Longman, 2000).

Williams, Joseph. *Style: Toward Clarity and Grace*, reprint ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

Willis, Meredith Sue. *Deep Revision: A Guide for Teachers, Students, and Writers*. (New York: New York Teachers and Writers Collaborative, 1993).

On Documentation and Composition Style

American Psychological Association. *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 5th ed. (Washington, D.C.: APA, 2001).

Gibaldi, Joseph and Walter S. Achtert. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 6th ed. (New York: Modern Language Association, 2003).

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 6th ed., rev. and expanded by Bonnie Bortwhistle Hongsblum (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

On Research Paper Writing

Becker, Howard. *Writing for Social Scientists: How to Start and Finish Your Thesis, Book, or Article* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986).

Corrigan, Timothy. *A Short Guide to Writing about Film*, 5th ed. (New York: Longman, 2003).

Lester, James D. *Writing Research Papers: A Complete Guide*, 10th ed. (New York: Longman, 2001).

Miller, Joan I. and Bruce J. Taylor. *The Thesis Writer''Handbook: A Complete One-Source Guide for Writers of Research Papers* (West Linn, OR: Alcove Publishing, 1987).

On Research Methods

Berger, Arthur Asa. *Media Research Techniques*, 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1998).

Jensen, Klaus Bruhn and Nicholas Jankowski. *A Handbook of Qualitative Methodologies for Mass Communication Research* (New York: Routledge, 1991).

Priest, Susannah Hornig. *Doing Media Research: An Introduction* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1996).

Rubin, Rebecca B., Alan M. Rubin, and Linda J. Piele. *Communication Research: Strategy and Sources*, 5th ed. (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1999).

Stempel, III, Guido H. and Bruce Westley, eds. *Research Methods in Mass Communication*, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1989).

Wimmer, Roger D. and Joseph R. Dominick. *Mass Media Research: An Introduction*, 7th ed. (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2002).