Fall 2017

J342G/J395 41: Reporting the World: A Critical Examination of the U.S. News Media

Classes:	T/Th 12:30-2, CMA 4.152
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"We don't see things as they are, we see them as we are."—Anais Nin

"Every big thing is a secret, even when you know it, because you can never know all of it."—Madame Laoutaro, a character in "The Rebel Angels," a novel by Robertson Davies

Objectives

This course offers a dynamic way of looking at, thinking about, and reporting events and ideas, both abroad and at home. It will help you establish a framework for analyzing the factors that shape our lives in a global society. Our guiding considerations: How does the news coverage we consume shape our views and influence our reporting? To what extent do such views or "templates" jibe with or differ from what really occurs? As journalist-observers, how do we develop tools for obtaining a clearer picture of what lies at the heart of important events and trends?

In answering such questions, we will focus on how to:

- Think critically about what purpose the news media serve – and how we can use various forms of media to see the world more clearly.
- Determine the extent to which the news media succeed or fail in conveying the reality of events on the ground and why.
- Drill down to fundamental layers of understanding about events (and their political, economic, cultural and psychological complexities), and develop deep context on issues affecting our interests and those of others.
- Develop and hone our research, reporting and writing techniques.
- Distinguish the Do's and Don'ts of professional journalism, and consider the ethical compass points of fairness, accuracy and truth-seeking as they relate to explaining the world around us.

Classes

The class meets for 75 minutes twice a week and employs a series of case studies and exercises to teach you to think critically about how the news is "made" and factors that have contributed to the shaping of American journalism; the degree to which ideologies, ownership and political power clarify or obscure journalism's task of going after the illuminating or significant story and getting it right; the journalist's obligations to history, objectivity and fairness; the means by which to establish a productive stance in regard to conflicting value systems; and the demands posed by technological, political and social change in a globalizing world. In short, we will discuss and practice techniques for becoming better reporters, writers and thinkers.

Each class starts with "News of the Day"—a discussion of what's in the news and how it relates to our study. Familiarity with the ebb and flow of current events will be a significant factor in your grade for class participation. We'll discuss how "News" will work and how we'll use it to keep our fingers on the pulse of what's happening in the world. You're required to subscribe to a digital copy of The New York Times (See "Course Materials" below), and will keep up with it throughout the semester. While the Times will help anchor News of the Day, you'll also be asked to compare and contrast coverage with other online news sites—for example, other leading newspapers (e.g., The Guardian, The Wall Street Journal or The Washington Post), other leading news websites (e.g., Al Jazeera English, BBC World News, NPR, VICE News and BuzzFeed) and at least one mainstay wire service (e.g., The Associated Press or Reuters).

Following News of the Day, Tracy will lead seminar-style discussions of the ideas, issues and events under our journalistic microscope. (See "Course Schedule" below.) Your instructors will encourage you to volunteer your ideas and will also call on you to ensure that everyone gets involved and we all benefit from hearing a full range of views.

Course Materials

Required Texts
Thomas E. Patterson: "Informing the News: The Need for Journalism"
Edward W. Said: "Orientalism"
Ian Buruma and Avishai Margalit: "Occidentalism: The West in the Eyes of Its Enemies"
Evan Osnos: "Age of Ambition: Chasing Fortune, Truth and Faith in the New China"

Required Online Subscription
The New York Times is one of the world's most influential newspapers and will serve as a common reference point for News of the Day. You can get the digital edition at a reduced educational rate by visiting www.nytimes.com. (Also, sign up with an email address ending in .edu and you can get a free digital access to The Washington Post.)

Required equipment: Use of personal digital devices, including laptops and smart phones, is not permitted in this class (see "Attendance & Rules of the Road" below). Please use an old-fashioned notebook and a pen to take notes; keep reading and

discussion notes you take outside of class in your notebook or print them out before class starts. Notes on digital devices will be off limits during class.

Assignments & Grades

There are four main assignment types (five for grad students):

1. **Commentary and news analysis:** Designed to reflect your thinking about issues covered in class, regular written assignments will develop your ability to process information and opinion (from assigned reading, other media, and class discussion) and make meaning out of it for a general audience. Completing assigned reading and reporting on your own initiative will be critical to demonstrating your grasp of the issues in written form. Range: 300 to 700 words.
2. **Reporting exercises/quizzes:** These may include reflection papers on your mastery of course materials, timelines to keep track of developing news stories, or quizzes on course materials or news events.
3. **Leading class discussion:** Each student will, in turn, help lead at least one class discussion based on our readings and related materials.
4. **Graduate students:** In consultation with Tracy, individuals will choose a book (or books) about which to write an analysis of 700 words. **Please do not pick a book you have already read or written about.**
5. **Semester project (grads and undergrads):** You will choose a topic of your liking that deals with issues or events covered in class and write an essay—1,000 "finished" words for undergraduates and 1,200 "finished" words for graduate students, or the multimedia equivalent. **Students wanting to do a multimedia project should discuss plans with Tracy well in advance of the deadline.**

Assignment schedule

1. **Commentary and news analysis pieces:** You will write approximately six short essays, ranging in length from 300 to 700 "finished" words. Spaced at intervals of approximately 10 days to two weeks (depending on our progress as a class), these assignments will test your grasp of course materials and discussion. The goal: To hone our ability to say meaningful things on questions of importance inside a tight word budget. (Thus the emphasis on "finished" pieces.)
2. **Book analysis:** Grad students will file an essay of 700 words at the time of their choosing up to a final deadline of **Friday, Nov. 10 at 6 p.m. Assignments filed after the final deadline will not be accepted.**
3. **Semester project:** Your project draft is due on **Monday, Nov. 20, at 6 p.m.** The final version is due on **Mon., Dec. 11, at 12 noon.**

Key points for success:

1. **Meet your deadlines.**
2. **Always be prepared for News of the Day.**
3. **Prepare well for your turn to lead class discussion.**
4. **Do your homework and participate in class discussion.**

Deadlines: They're sacrosanct in journalism. Meet them and qualify your assignments for full credit; miss them and your highest potential grade will drop sharply—one grade level each at 30 minutes, 12 hours, 24 hours late, and so on. You may always file your assignments *before* deadline to the applause of your grateful editors.

Assessment: Writing assignments will be graded on the skill with which you use language, organization and solidly reported content to illustrate and satisfy your topic – and the degree to which you improve your skills over the course of the semester. **See Appendix I below for a detailed assessment grid for commentaries and analyses.**

The Matrix: Final course grades will be calculated on the plus/minus grading system for both undergraduate and graduate students. They will be tallied according to the following percentage guidelines:

- Commentary, analysis and reporting exercises 50
- Semester project 15
- Class participation and in-class exercises 35

Class participation: Each class period will carry specific weight in your grade for class participation. "News of the Day" counts for 10 percent of your overall participation grade, your turn as class discussion leader counts for 5 percent, and your participation in discussion counts for 20 percent. (There are 28 class days in our semester—many but not all sessions will feature class discussion. As a rule of thumb, therefore, it may be helpful to think of each discussion period counting for roughly 1 percent of your overall grade.)

Grading Scale

A = 94 to 100 points
A- 90 to 93
B+ 87 to 89
B = 84 to 86
B- 80 to 83
C+ 77 to 79
C = 74 to 76
C- 70 to 73
D+ 67 to 69
D = 64 to 66
D- 60 to 63

Filing Your Work

Key points:

1. **Post your work to Canvas; email a backup copy to your instructors.**
2. **Label BOTH your email and your Word document with the proper slug.**
3. **Place a working headline on ALL your assignments.**

We submit assignments in two ways—first, by posting a Word document to a discussion thread on Canvas and, second, because of the importance of making deadlines in this class, by emailing a backup copy of your assignment to your editors, Tracy and Cate. Sending the backup copy ensures your work is received even if technical glitches prevent your post from showing up on Canvas on time.

When sending routine memos (messages) to your instructors use standard email. Email assignments (files) as attachments in Word. **When filing an attachment always be sure to put the same slug on BOTH your email AND the attachment.**

Important: Work won't be accepted for deadline purposes without proper slugs or a working headline (see below). Please don't expect your editors to remind you about slugs and headlines. That is your responsibility.

Here's how to create a proper slug:

Start by using the correct tag for the item you're sending: For our written assignments, it's "file"; for all other messages, it's "memo." Next, add a space after the tag and insert your last name. Add another space and enter the assignment number (or for memos only, a brief topic identifier). If your last name is Smith, for example, and you're filing your first assignment, the slug reads:

file smith assign1

If you're sending a routine memo, it reads:

memo smith missed deadline

For the class questionnaire, the slug is:

file smith questionnaire

Please send all assignment files to both of your editors—one copy to Tracy, one to Cate. Memos can of course be sent to either Cate or Tracy or both, depending on to whom you want to talk about what.

Important: Start <u>all</u> written assignments with a working headline. Putting a headline or title on your work helps focus both writer and reader, and is therefore a good habit to acquire. It's also a requirement of this course and your grade will be reduced for failing to include a title.

Editorial Consultations

You will meet with Tracy at least once during the semester to discuss individual progress, reporting methods, research ideas and career goals. You are also encouraged to make use of office hours to discuss any of the foregoing.

Attendance & Rules of the Road

Being there: Showing up when you need to be there is a first requirement of the reporter's craft. Come to class on time. Do your own work. **If you can't be on time, tell Tracy why – in advance. ("In advance" means at least an hour before class time and preferably the day before.)**

Unexcused absences: If you accumulate three unexcused absences you should consider dropping the course. (Please don't interpret this to mean you have three "free passes"—you don't. Each class period carries specific weight in your grade for class participation.) Being five minutes late equals half an absence, 15 minutes late is a full one. Leaving class early will be treated the same way.

Unexcused absences can be converted to excused absences when you present acceptable documentation – e.g., a note from a healthcare provider.

Digital absences: Use a phone, laptop or tablet to text, email or browse the internet and you will be marked absent. Running personal digital errands on class time renders us mentally absent and isn't fair to others.

Attention is the key to good intellectual work. To help us maintain our focus, sharp and clear, use of electronic devices of any kind isn't permitted unless required for in-class assignments as specifically approved by the instructor. **Long story short: If you require personal digital connectivity during class time, this is not the class for you.**

Likewise, please don't consume food in class. Beverages are okay provided they don't prove a distraction.

See Tracy if you wish to request an exemption from the digital devices policy based on documented special needs or you are experiencing an emergency.

Tips for Success

Executive summary:

1. **Study all course materials and be prepared to discuss them in class.**
2. **Take notes to help you "frontload" facts and ideas for discussion.**
3. **In discussing, clearly reference sources and ideas—i.e., who said what. (This is where you say: "In the article from Foreign Affairs magazine, Mary Smithers, an expert on the Chinese economy, argues …" and then give the author's main points of argument. After (but only after) you've established what the author argues, it's time to say what you think, agree or disagree.)**
4. **Honor the learning space.**

Reading: Reading, both panoramic and sharply focused, is essential to your success and growth as a journalist. Formal reading assignments come from two main sources –

required texts and materials provided for you on Canvas. **Please do all the reading assigned for class discussion so we can make the best use of our time together.**

Taking Notes: Producing a good set of notes is one of the professional journalist's great assets. Even in a world of digital recorders you'll want your own separate, written record of events to help you decide what *you* think about things and how they connect to *other things* you know. So, each time you encounter a source, whether human or media (e.g., a city official, an expert on climate change, or a book, an article or a video) take notes. This is important in your development as a critical thinker. To talk or write authoritatively about a subject you need not only to read, view and listen but also to master the relevant materials, which means retaining key ideas and supporting detail. Don't leave your data in the Cloud; making information your own requires that you work it as a baker kneads bread or a potter molds clay. Taking good notes is the best way to ensure you emerge from your encounters with sources and ideas with something of lasting value and utility.

Activating Your Knowledge: In order to talk intelligently about the issues of the day, and to get the most out of our course materials, we want to command the materials and the ideas contained in them. To that end: 1) Always take reading or viewing notes; 2) Take them in a diary or a notebook or print them out before class; 3) Make sure the notes contain the author's name and the title of the work from which you're quoting; 4) Make sure your notes track the development of the argument as well contain key phrases the author uses to support the argument; 5) When citing a work in class discussion, state the author's name, the title of the work, and explain the author's POV with quotes or concrete examples; 6) Keep your notes in a running intellectual diary—you'll be surprised how much more you take away from the class; 7) In class discussion, once you've established what the author says you can then critique the argument and say what you think and feel about it; 8) Skipping these steps leads to wasted time—you won't retain much. Follow them and you'll be surprised how well you know your subject!

Honor the Learning Space: One of the purposes of universities since they were established in medieval times is to create a quiet space for scholars and students to absorb ideas and reflect on their learning. In "Why Teach: In Defense of a Real Education," educator Mark Edmundson writes: "To live well, we must sometimes stop and think and then try to remake the work in progress that we currently are. There's no better place for that than a college classroom where, together, we can slow it down and live deliberately." Sure, straight-up skills classes are vital and in them we often need to be wired in, as students are in other classes I teach. In this class, though, we're learning a different skill: how to think deeply and develop the context required to really understand what's going on in the world. To do that, we need a space in which to focus and think—an oasis, if you will. In that spirit, our classroom is off limits to personal digital connectivity.

Office hours: Take advantage of them – to discuss the class, your progress, ideas, career plans, or your professional interests. You are always welcome.

COURSE SCHEDULE

This schedule is subject to change: Journalism can be fluid as quicksilver and fickle as the weather, so we need to stay flexible. We'll update topics and assignments as needed and announce them in class as we go. The only materials NOT on Canvas will be assignments from your required textbooks and your independent reading of the news. **Ultimately, it's up to you to monitor Canvas for the full range of assigned materials for any given session, including late-breaking items.**

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

Aug. 31 **Making Sense in a Time of "FAKE NEWS"**

Some basic questions: What is the key to successfully observing the world? How do we cut through today's blizzard of information to get to the bottom of things? How do we know what we know about the world based on what we consume in the media? How does that picture clarify or distort what's really going on?

Reading Course syllabus

In class Kristen Hare: "Local Edition: What Skills Do Journalists Need? ..." (Poynter)
Brian McFadden: "Own Your Own Content Farm" (New York Times)

Sept. 5 **Our Journey Begins: Who Are We and What Do We Want?**

News has value for us both as an extrinsic and intrinsic phenomenon: We see what's going on in our world and, in trying to understand events, we are changed. Thus, gathering the news is a very human pursuit because it's not only manufactured by systems, but people create it and are influenced by it, too. What sets journalists apart from other intellectual adventurers? What does it mean to be a "critical thinker turned loose in the world"?

In class PowerPoint: "The Animating Spirit of Journalism"
E.F. Schumacher: "A Guide for the Perplexed" (book excerpt)

Listen Center for News Excellence and Engagement: "Traveling to the Heart of a Story"

Read Tracy Dahlby: "Living (Semi-) Dangerously in Indonesia" from "Into the Field: A Foreign Correspondent's Notebook" (book excerpt)

7 **Getting Oriented: A Sense of Where You Are**

GPS can locate us in the world but does it really tell us where we are? Today we'll start "News of the Day" to get a handle on what's going on in the world. To what extent do the news media adequately "map" or ignore important stories?

In class Alissa Miller: "How the News Distorts Our Worldview" (TED talk)

Read Anjan Sundaram: "We're Missing the Story: The Media's Retreat from Foreign Reporting" (NYT)
David Brooks: "The Real Africa" and "Stairway to Wisdom" (NYT)
Tracy Dahlby: "Parachuting In: Tips for the Long-distance Reporter" (book excerpt)

12-14 **Staging a Big Story: To What Extent Has the News Media Helped or Hurt Our Understanding of 'Russia-gate'?**

If, how or to what extent did Donald Trump's campaign collaborate with Vladimir Putin's Russia to tip the 2016 presidential election? The question has roiled the U.S. news media for months. Is the story the new "Watergate," as some media pundits claim? Or is it "fake news" abetting a "witch hunt," as the White House had insisted? Is the press on the trail of a vital story or prolonging a sensational one? Let's apply "news-thinking" techniques to sort the issues and provide a basis for good news reporting.

In class PowerPoint: "An Introduction to the Pyramid of Knowing"

Read Study Memo: "Staging a Big Story: Triangulating Russia-gate"

SECTION 2: SOME LIMITATIONS ON PERCEPTION AND OBSERVATION

19 **Locating Our Blind Spots: Factors That Ensorcell and Bamboozle**

To be good reporters we first have to be aware of how much we don't know or, to say another way, *how much we are capable of knowing.* Let's consider factors that can cloud our powers of cognition— socioeconomic status, tricks stored in the wetware of our brains, and the impact of technology on thought and reflection.

View Daniel Simons: "The Invisible Gorilla" (YouTube)

Read Michael Inzlicht and Sukhvinder Obhi: "Powerful and Cold-Hearted" (NYT)
Sam Wang and Sandra Aamodt: "Your Brain Lies to You" (NYT)
James Gorman: "Scientists Trace Memories of Things That Never Happened" (NYT)
Henry Farrell: "Most of What You Think You Know About Human Reason Is Wrong…" (Washington Post)
David Brooks: "Building Attention Span" (NYT)

21 Case Study: The U.S. Media's Iraq War 'Blind Spot'

For journalists it's an eternal question: Did information exist that would have allowed the news media to do a better job of informing the American people about the stages of U.S. involvement in Iraq and the Middle East before events took them by surprise? To what extent did press coverage of the run-up to the Iraq war set the stage for future misperceptions? Get the basics from the timeline below and then analyze the Moyers documentary. Ask yourself about the extent to which misunderstanding led to the eventual rise of ISIS.

View Video timeline: "The Rise of Isis, Explained in 6 Minutes" (Vox)

Bill Moyers: "Buying the War" (PBS)

SECTION 3: HOW DOES THE MEDIA MACHINE ESTABLISH THE NEWS NARRATIVE?

26 Knowledge-based Journalism I: A Case for "The Corruption of Information"

Critics have called it the "hamster wheel." Others call it the "news cycle." Whichever, the daily round of today's media operations and the journalists they employ has changed dramatically in a short period of time. How has the impact of technology on the newsroom and the scramble for news sources led to calls to revamp the news business? As reporters, how can we immunize ourselves against "hamsterization"?

In class Shorenstein Center: "Journalist's Resource"

Read "Informing the News," p. 3-59

28 **Knowledge-based Journalism I, Continued**

Read Erik Wemple: "Dear Mainstream Media: Why So Liberal?" (WP)
Thomas Frank: The Media's War on Trump Is Destined to Fail. Why Can't It See That? (Guardian)
On the Media: "Walking Back the Backfire Effect"

Oct. 3 **Knowledge-based Journalism II: Defining the "Knowledge Deficit"**

To what extent has the lack of "slow-speed" context-building and a rush to journalistic judgment eroded the news media's efficacy in a time of digital revolution? Let's now take up the question of coping with the new intellectual demands of a craft with an anti-intellectual past.

Read "Informing the News," p. 60-106
Danny Funt: "What Does It Mean for a Journalist Today to Be a Serious Reader?" (CJR)

5 **Knowledge-based Journalism III: Patterson vs. Chomsky**

What is the nature of the relationship between news and power? Between news and democracy? To what extent are major U.S. media influenced by "special interests"? To what extent are news consumers manipulated by the news media? Let's contrast Thomas Patterson's argument with Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman's "Propaganda Model."

In class Chomsky vs. Buckley (YouTube)

Read "Informing the News," p. 107-143
"Manufacturing Consent": Preface and Ch.1: "A Propaganda Model"

View Open Culture: "The 5 Filters of the Mass Media Machine"
Chomsky vs. Andrew Mar: "The Big Idea: Interview with Noam Chomsky on Propaganda" (BBC)
Thomas Patterson: "Media Problems and the Public Interest" (Shorenstein Center)

SECTION 4: STEPPINGSTONES TO 'KNOWLEDGE-BASED' PRACTICE

10 **The Fog of War: Critical Thinking—and Critical Errors**
Big historical events like the Iraq War and the Syrian conflict are hard to interpret while they're still unfolding. Let's look through a longer lens, at

the Vietnam War, to see what "lessons" it offers. Secretary of Defense under presidents Kennedy and Johnson, Robert McNamara is regarded as one of the war's chief architects. Can a gift for thinking critically lead us into critical mistakes? To what extent do McNamara's self-professed lessons have relevance to witnessing big events in our world today?

View Errol Morris: "The Fog of War: Eleven Lessons from the Life of Robert S. McNamara" (2003)

Read David Hackett Fischer: "Historians' Fallacies" (book excerpt)
Nick Grothaus: "Eleven Lessons From the Life of Robert S. McNamara" (Hand of Reason)

12-17 Going Deep: Thinking About Your Professional Philosophy

How well have journalists traditionally coped with reality? How have they thought of themselves, philosophically? Is it time to change the paradigm? To what extent are "old-time" values relevant in today's digital age? How do you develop your gestalt as a reporter?

In class PowerPoint: "The Reporter's Paradigm"

Read "From Milton to McLuhan"
Introduction: "Journalism as Fire and Light"
Ch. 1: "To Keep 'Us Always Alive with Excitement'"
Ch. 2: "Ideology and the Missing Theory of News"
Ch. 3: "Philosophy and Some Fundamental Questions"

SECTION 5: ZEROING IN ON KEY TEMPLATES—DEALING WITH RELIGION, RACE AND CULTURAL MISUNDERSTANDING

19 Through a Glass Darkly: America's View of the Muslim World

Framing the issue: What do Americans know about the Islamic sphere and how have the media helped them know it? It's now been 16 years since 9/11—what role did events play in establishing public perceptions? How are attitudes played out in everyday life in America? What lies beneath such attitudes and outlooks?

View PBS Frontline: "The Man Behind the Mosque"

Read Robin Wright: "The Orlando Shootings and Muslim Americans" (New Yorker)

24 **Orientalism: Examining the Cultural Lens**

What are the historical origins of the West's view of Islam? To what extent do old images condition today's news coverage?

In class Video: "Edward Said on Orientalism"

View Open Culture: "Animated introduction to "Orientalism"

Read "Orientalism": Preface & Introduction
Part 1: I- "Knowing the Oriental"
II- "Imaginative Geography…"
III- "Projects"
IV- "Crisis"

26 **Orientalism, Continued**

Read "Orientalism"
Part 3: I- "Latent and Manifest Orientalism"
II- "Style, Expertise, Vision…"
III- "Modern Anglo-French Orientalism…"
IV- "The Latest Phase"
"Afterword I and II"

31 **Occidentalism: Turning the Telescope Around**

What are the historical origins of political Islam's view of the West? To what extent do such ideas influence the media narrative in Muslim majority countries today? To what extent do they share a viewpoint with other traditional critics and opponents of the West?

Read "Occidentalism" (entire book)

Nov. 2 **Summing Up: A New Basis for Understanding?**

To what extent does U.S. news coverage reflect a comprehensive view of the Muslim world? By what means can we broaden our perspectives as reporters? How do we establish balance in a time of warring ideas? How important is "fairness" and how do you define it?

Read: Gary Kamiya: "How Edward Said Took Intellectuals for a Ride" (Salon.com)
Bernard Lewis: "The Question of Orientalism" (New York Review of Books)
Edward Said: "Orientalism: An Exchange" (NYRB)

7 **The Pivotal Case of Emmett Till: When Race and Ethnicity Are Fundamental to the Story**

In the summer of 1955, the murder of a 14-year-old Chicago boy in Money, Mississippi, changed the way the mainstream news media reported matters of race in America. To what extent did the national media "discover" the civil rights story in the American South during the 1950s? What role did the African American press play? How did reporting of the Emmett Till trial influence public perceptions about the struggle for civil rights? To what extent do racial and ethnic stereotypes condition news coverage today?

Read "The Race Beat," Ch. 1: "An American Dilemma: 'An Astonishing Ignorance…'" and Chapter 7: "The Till Trial" (book excerpts)

View Alex Gibney and Tracy Dahlby: "The Rage Within" from the documentary series "The Fifties" (History Channel)

9 **Emmett Till's Legacy: How Relevant Is History to Covering the News?**

An epidemic of police shootings, shootings of police and other violent episodes are a tragic staple of news coverage and American life today. To what extent has society's thinking evolved on issues race, ethnicity and gender since the days of Emmett Till? To what extent can learning how to use history to shift our perspectives help improve journalism in our times?

Read Karen Attiah: "How the Western Media Would Cover Baltimore If It Happened Elsewhere" (Washington Post)
Michael Eric Dyson: "Racial Violence on the Screen" (NYT)

Listen "Ta-Nehisi Coates in Conversation with David Remnick" (New Yorker)
Bill Chappell: "'You Don't Really Know Us,' Chicago Kids Tell News Media" (NPR)

Suggested Smithsonian: Joseph Mosnier oral history interview of Simeon Booker and Moses James Newson

14 **Looking at the Larger Frame: Social Division as a Driver of the Global Story**

Social divides based on race, ethnicity and income disparities continue to fuel stories in the U.S. and the world at large. To what extent does the

news media probe the genesis of such problems? Can we establish more useful perspectives by examining larger frames of history and public perception? What is the journalist's obligation to do so? **Let's absorb the diverse range of ideas expressed in the assigned materials, connect the topical dots, and see where our thinking takes us.**

Read Carol Graham: "The Unhappiness of the U.S. Working Class" and "The Geography of Desperation in America (Foreign Affairs)
Paul F. Campos: "White Privilege Is Alive and Well" (NYT)
Andrew J. Bacevich: "Trump Is Not the Problem" (Nation)
Wolfgang Fendler and Homi Kharas: "A Golden Age for Business? Every Second Five People Are Entering the Global Middle Class" (Brookings)
Kai-fu Lee: "The Real Threat of Artificial Intelligence"

16 A Conversation with R.B. Brenner About the Impact of Advanced Technology on Reporting the World

Read William Oremus: "What Is Virtual Reality Good For?" (Slate)

Listen Robert Siegel interview: "At Sundance, 'Project Syria' Puts Viewers in the Center of Conflict" (NPR)

21 Parsing China on the Rise: Peril or Promise?

Just suppose: An editor from a prominent American news outlet asks you to "parachute" into China to cover a major story. Because of China's importance in the world, the stakes are high, for the story and your career. How do you prepare yourself to tackle the assignment? What do you need to know? How do you establish your framework for reporting?

In class YouTube: "United States Owes China"
Jim Edwards: "Alibaba Founder Jack Ma Has a Brutal Theory of How America Went Wrong…" (Business Insider)
C. Fred Bergsten, etal: "China: The Balance Sheet" (book excerpt)

Read "Age of Ambition," p. 3-33
Murong Xuecun: "A Land China Loves and Hates" (NYT)

THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

28 **Shadows of History: 'See the Future in the Mirror of the Past'**

Read "Age of Ambition," p. 34-59
Elizabeth Economy: "History with Chinese Characteristics" (FA)
Ian Buruma: "Are China and the United States Headed for War?" (New Yorker)

30 **Never the Twain? The Clash Over Fundamental Values**

In class News clips of Tiananmen Square

Read "Age of Ambition," p. 60-95
Perry Link: "The Passion of Liu Xiao Bo" (NYRB)_
Roderick MacFarquhar: "China's Astounding Religious Revival" (NYRB)
Perry Link: "He Exposed Corrupt China Before He Left" (NYRB)

Dec. 5-7 **Course Wrap-up: Developing Your Own Gestalt as a Reporter**

What are the key ideas we've considered in this course? To what extent has your framework for looking at and understanding the world changed? Let's talk about our personal philosophies of journalism.

APPENDIX I

Assessment Grid for Commentaries & Analysis

In evaluating your written work for this course, the instructor will use the following framework:

1. The work shows an effective, well-focused presentation of topic.

0 1 2 3 4

2. The ideas represented in the work are well argued throughout and the work is persuasive of its point of view.

0 1 2 3 4

3. The work demonstrates effective research and/or reporting, and is supported by appropriate sources.

0 1 2 3 4

4. The writing is straightforward, lucid and logical.

0 1 2 3 4

5. Grammar, spelling and punctuation are correct.

0 1 2 3 4

6. The work properly attributes sources.

0 1 2 3 4

7. The work demonstrates critical thinking about issues relevant to a full treatment of the topic at hand.

0 1 2 3 4

APPENDIX II

Undergraduate Course Flags for Reporting the World

Writing

This course carries the Writing Flag. Writing Flag courses are designed to give students experience with writing in an academic discipline. In this class, you can expect to write regularly during the semester, complete substantial writing projects, and receive feedback from your instructor to help you improve your writing. You will also have the opportunity to revise one or more assignments, and you may be asked to read and discuss your peers' work. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from your written work. Writing Flag classes meet the Core Communications objectives of Critical Thinking, Communication, Teamwork, and Personal Responsibility, established by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Independent Inquiry

This course carries the Independent Inquiry flag. Independent Inquiry courses are designed to engage you in the process of inquiry over the course of a semester, providing you with the opportunity for independent investigation of a question, problem, or project related to your major. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from the independent investigation and presentation of your own work.

Global Cultures

This course carries the Global Cultures flag. Global Cultures courses are designed to increase your familiarity with cultural groups outside the United States. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments covering the practices, beliefs, and histories of at least one non-U.S. cultural group, past or present.

APPENDIX III

Required University Notices and Policies

University of Texas Honor Code

The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

Documented Disability Statement

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259 (voice) or 232-2937 (video phone),

http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/

Plagiarism and the Consequences of Plagiarizing
http://www.lib.utexas.edu/services/instruction/learningmodules/plagiarism/

Resources for Learning & Life at UT Austin

The University of Texas has numerous resources for students to provide assistance and support for your learning.
The UT Learning Center: https://ugs.utexas.edu/slc
Undergraduate Writing Center: http://uwc.utexas.edu/
Counseling & Mental Health Center: http://cmhc.utexas.edu/
Career Exploration Center: https://moody.utexas.edu/career-services/students/career-exploration-programs
Student Emergency Services: http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/

Moody College Writing Support Program

The Moody College Writing Support Program, located in BMC 3.322, offers one-on-one assistance without charge to undergraduates seeking to improve their professional writing in all fields of communication. We have student specialists in Journalism, RTF, CSD, CMS, Communication & Leadership and PR & Advertising. In addition, we offer workshops to strengthen core writing skills in each field and to inspire students to strive for excellence. Students may guarantee their time by booking half-hour appointments on our website for assistance during all stages of the writing process. Writing coaches also will take drop-ins if they are not working with appointments.

Use of Canvas in Class

This course will use Canvas—a Web-based course management system with password-protected access to distribute course materials, to communicate and collaborate online, to post grades, to submit assignments, and to give you online quizzes and surveys. You can find support in using Canvas at http://canvas.utexas.edu or by contacting the ITS Help Desk at 475-9400, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Use of E-Mail for Official Correspondence to Students

Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, you are responsible for reading your email for university and course-related information and announcements. You are responsible to keep the university informed about changes to your e-mail address. You should check your e-mail regularly and frequently to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time-critical. You can find UT Austin's policies and instructions for updating your e-mail address at https://security.utexas.edu/policies/aup

Religious Holy Days

By UT Austin policy, you must notify the instructor of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy

day, the instructor will give you an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)

If you are worried about someone who is acting differently, you may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone your concerns about another individual's behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal.

Emergency Evacuation Policy

Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform me in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow my instructions or those of class instructors.

Do not re-enter a building unless you're given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office

Q drop Policy

The State of Texas has enacted a law that limits the number of course drops for academic reasons to six (6). As stated in Senate Bill 1231:

"Beginning with the fall 2007 academic term, an institution of higher education may not permit an undergraduate student a total of more than six dropped courses, including any course a transfer student has dropped at another institution of higher education, unless the student shows good cause for dropping more than that number."