

Fall 2013

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

Classes: T/Th 11: - 12:30, CMA 4.152
Instructor: Tracy Dahlby
Office: BMC 3.324
Telephone: 512-471-6272
Email: tracy.dahlby@austin.utexas.edu
Office Hours: T/Th 3:30-5, or by appointment

Teaching Assistant: Gabino Iglesias
Telephone: 787-503-6239
Email: gabinoiglesias@gmail.com

“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* 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 and understanding 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, or journalist-detectives, 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 news and non-news 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, their political, economic, cultural and psychological complexities, and develop deep context on issues affecting our communities and us.
- 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.

Prerequisites

Undergraduates: Admission to a journalism area of concentration.

Graduate students: Graduate standing.

Classes

The class meets for 80 minutes twice a week and employs a series of case studies that will 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 will start with “News of the Day” – an editorial discussion of what’s in the news and how it relates to our study. Your familiarity with the ebb and flow of current events will be an important factor in your grade for class participation. At the first class session we will discuss how “News” will work and how you will use it to monitor world events. You will be required to follow: **The New York Times, The Guardian (of the UK), Global Post, Al Jazeera English, the BBC World News, and Reuters.** You are welcome to monitor any additional news outlets you find useful and are encouraged to share them with the rest of us.

Following “News of the Day,” your instructor will lead seminar-style discussions of the ideas, issues and events under our journalistic microscope. (See the course schedule below.) You will be encouraged to volunteer your ideas and from time to time will also be called on to participate to ensure that everyone gets involved and we all benefit from hearing a full range of views.

Assignments & Grades

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

1. **Commentary and news analysis:** Designed to reflect your thinking on 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 the 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:** Such assignments may include submitting written notes of your reading and viewing for class as well as creating timelines to help keep track of developing news stories.
 3. **Leading class discussion:** Each student will be asked to help lead a class discussion based on our readings and related materials at least once during the course of the semester. Your efforts will be assessed as part of your grade for class participation.
 4. **Graduate students (and undergrads for extra credit):** One additional essay will be required of grad students. In consultation with the instructor, individuals will choose a book (or books) from the Suggested Reading list below or propose one of their own choosing 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 develop a long-form essay of 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 the instructor well in advance of the deadline.**

Assignment schedule

1. **Commentary and news analysis pieces:** You will write approximately six short essays (in addition to completing the course questionnaire), ranging in length from 300 to 700 “finished” words, which will be spaced at intervals of approximately 10 days or two weeks, depending on our progress in class discussion. (Assignments are kept relatively short to help us 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 be required to file an essay of 700 words at the time of their choosing up to a final deadline of Nov. 14 at 6 p.m. **Assignments filed after the final deadline will not be accepted.**
3. **Semester project:** Your rough draft is due on **Mon., Nov. 25, at 6 p.m.** The final version is due on **Mon., Dec. 9, at 12 noon.**

Grades

Timing: Deadlines are 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

Filing Your Work

All written communication between you and your editors (instructor and TA) will be electronic. For routine memos (messages), use standard email. Send story proposals and story files as email attachments in Word. **When filing an attachment always be sure to put the same slug on BOTH your email AND the attachment.**

Important: Work will NOT be accepted for deadline purposes without proper slugs (on both email and attached Word document) 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 commentaries/stories, it's "file." For project proposals, it's "prop." For all other messages, it's "memo." Add a space, then your last name, and then another space, and finally 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 filing a project proposal, the slug is:

prop smith project

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 proposals and story files to both of your editors – one copy to Gabino, one to Tracy. Memos can of course be sent to either Gabino or Tracy or both, depending on to whom you want to talk about what.

Important: Start all 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. Thus it's also a requirement of this course.

Editorial Consultations

You will meet with your instructor 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.

Tips for Success

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 or materials provided for you on our Blackboard site. **Please do all the reading assigned for class discussion so that we can make the best use of our time together.**

Taking notes: Producing good notes is second nature to the professional journalist; even in the presence of cameras or other recording devices you want your own record of comments and events to help you decide what *you* think about things and how they connect to *other things* you know. Accordingly, 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) please take notes. This is important both in the course and for your development as a critical thinker. To talk or write authoritatively about a subject you need to not only read, view and listen but 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. And taking good notes is the best way yet discovered to ensure you have something of lasting value to show for your encounters with the world of sources and ideas.

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

Required Texts

Orientalism, by Edward W. Said

Occidentalism: The West in the Eyes of its Enemies, by Ian Buruma and Avishai Margalit

The Race Beat: The Press, the Civil Rights Struggle, and the Awakening of a Nation, by Gene Roberts and Hank Klibanoff

Suggested Reading

Internet & Social Media Impact

Googled: The End of the World as We Know It by Ken Auletta

The Shallows: What the Internet Is Doing to Our Brains by Nicholas Carr

The Information Diet: A Case for Conscious Consumption by Clay A. Johnson

Who Owns the Future? Jaron Lanier

You Are Not a Gadget: A Manifesto by Jaron Lanier

iDisorder: Understanding Our Obsession with Technology and Overcoming Its Hold on Us by Larry Rosen with Nancy A. Cheever and L. Mark Carrier

The New Digital Age: Reshaping the Future of People, Nations and Business by Eric Schmidt and Jared Cohen

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Infotopia: How Many Minds Produce Knowledge by Cass R. Sunstein

Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other by Sherry Turkle

Media Epistemology

True Enough: Learning to Live in a Post-Fact Society by Farhad Manjoo

The Chomsky Reader edited by James Peck

Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business by Neil Postman

Building a Bridge to the 18th Century: How the Past Can Improve the Future by Neil Postman

The End of Education: Redefining the Value of School by Neil Postman

Media Organization

Crowdsourcing: Why the Power of the Crowd is Driving the Future of Business by Jeff Howe

Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organizing Without Organizations by Clay Shirky

Cognitive Surplus: Creativity and Generosity in a Connected Age by Clay Shirky

The Wisdom of Crowds by James Surowiecki

Journalism and Journalism History

From Milton to McLuhan: The Ideas Behind American Journalism by J. Herbert Altschull

The Powers That Be by David Halberstam

The Death and Life of American Journalism: The Media Revolution That Will Begin the World Again by Robert W. McChesney and John Nichols

The Elements of Journalism: What Newspeople Should Know and the Public Should Expect by Bill Kovach & Tom Rosenstiel

Understanding the Muslim Sphere

Islam: A Short History by Karen Armstrong

Terror and Liberalism by Paul Berman

On Saudi Arabia: Its People, Past, Religions, Fault Lines – and Future by Karen Elliott House

What Went Wrong?: Western Impact and Middle Eastern Response by Bernard Lewis

Islam and Democracy: Fear of the Modern World by Fatima Mernissi

Covering the Muslim World: How the Media and the Experts Determine How We See the Rest of the World by Edward Said

Rock the Casbah: Rage and Rebellion Across the Islamic World by Robin Wright

Covering Race and Ethnicity

Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism by Benedict Anderson

The Children by David Halberstam

Harvest of Empire: A History of Latinos in America by Juan Gonzalez

News for All the People: The Epic Story of Race and the American Media by Juan Gonzalez and Joseph Torres

Missing Pages: Black Journalists of Modern America by Wallace Terry

Eyes on the Prize by Juan Williams

Thinking, Critical Thinking & Historical Analysis:

China: The Balance Sheet: What the World Needs to Know About the Emerging Superpower by C. Fred Bergsten, et al

Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies by Jared Diamond

Historians' Fallacies: Toward a Logic of Historical Thought by David Hackett Fischer

The End of History and the Last Man by Francis Fukuyama

Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking by Malcolm Gladwell

How Doctors Think by Jerome Groupman, MD

Arguing for Our Lives: A User's Guide to Constructive Dialog by Robert Jensen

The 5 Elements of Effective Thinking by Edward B. Burger and Michael Starbird

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.

Professional courtesy: Attention is the key to good intellectual work. To help us maintain our focus, sharp and clear, use of electronic devices (cell phones, tablets, e-readers or laptops) is not permitted during class unless required for in-class assignments as specifically approved by the instructor.

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 OK provided they don't prove a distraction.

Our Roadmap

The following class schedule is intended to provide a reliable roadmap of the territory to be covered. At the same time, a map is a map, and we will speed up or slow down or change our direction depending on the "reality on the ground" – to wit, our progress as a class in mastering the requisite materials and techniques.

COURSE INTRODUCTION: INTERPRETING THE WORLD

Aug. 29 **Basic Questions: Untangling the Mystery of Things**

What will this course cover? How will it be structured and how will it work? We will also approach some basic questions: How do we know what we know about the world based on what we consume in the media? How does that picture jibe with or differ from what is really going on? How do we prepare ourselves to work effectively in the world?

View

in class: YouTube: “So You Want to be a Journalist”
 “Journalism Grads: 30 Things You Should Do This
 Summer
 NYT: “On Your Own Content Farm”

Sept. 3 **Defining the Problem: Crisis in the News or Opportunity?**

What is the impact of the digital revolution on traditional news media? Is it more than just a “business model” problem? Is the revolution getting us closer to or taking us farther away from an accurate view of our world?

View

in class: YouTube: “Social Media Revolution 2013”

Read: David Carr: “Journalism, Even When It’s Tilted”
 Kovach and Rosenstiel: *The Elements of Journalism*,
 Introduction and chapters 1 & 2.

5 **Spy vs. Spy: Edward Snowden and the Summer of Surveillance**

No sooner had the Obama administration publicly chastised the People’s Republic of China for widespread hacking of U.S. websites, putting military and industrial secrets at risk, than along came Edward Snowden. The former cyber-intelligence contractor announced through journalists Glenn Greenwald and Laura Poitras that he was blowing the whistle on America’s secret data-collection programs. Let’s investigate the still-thickening plot to determine the extent to which the media has told us what we need to know about how government intelligence programs affect our lives, for good or ill.

View

in class: Meet the Press: David Gregory vs. Glenn Greenwald

View: Guardian: Interview with Edward Snowden

Read: Politico: Snowden Timeline
Peter Maas: “How Laura Poitras Helped Snowden Spill His Secrets”
James Bamford: “They Know Much More Than You Think”

10 Snowden: Whistleblower or Traitor?

View: NewsHour: “Were Snowden’s Actions Justified?”

Read: David Carr: “War on Leaks is Pitting Journalist v. Journalist”

Discuss: **Students to bring in articles offering contrasting POVs**

12 The Type “R” (for Reporter) Personality: The Mystery of Who We Are and What We Want

News has value for us both as an extrinsic and intrinsic phenomenon: We look at what’s going on in our world and it changes us. It’s among the most human of pursuits because it’s not only manufactured by systems – it’s also made by people. That not only conditions the message but can also provide clues to your career. So let’s look briefly at what sets apart the journalism practitioner from other intellectual adventurers. What does it mean to be a “critical thinker turned loose in the world”?

View in class: PowerPoint: “The Animating Spirit of Journalism”

Read: Tracy Dahlby: Regarding Katherine Graham in “Firemen, Florists and Free Speech”

17 Gateways to Perception: How Do We Know What We Know?

Being a decidedly human occupation, journalism is prone to err. By identifying why and how we make mistakes, we can try to make fewer of them. The quality of our observations as journalists depends on at least four basic elements: the degree of attention (awareness) we bring to bear on an issue; the neurobiology that sets the limits of our cognition; the effort (work ethic) we put into our reporting; and the means by which we

do our learning (epistemology) and reach our conclusions. First, let's consider some studies dealing with the limits of cognition.

Listen: Ira Flatow: "The Myth of Multitasking"

Read: Tom Standage: "Social Networking in the 1600s"
New York Times op-ed: "Your Brain Lies to You"
Alex Stone: "The Science of Illusion"
James Gorman: "Scientists Trace Memories of Things That Never Happened"

19 **Gateways to Perception: Deeper Ways We Can Get It Wrong**

The digital revolution has churned up at least two epistemological issues that positively or negatively affect our capacities to process information effectively and to derive meaning from information. Let's consider what Nicholas Carr and Michiko Kakutani have to say on the subject.

Read: Nicholas Carr: "Is Google Making Us Stupid?"
Michiko Kakutani: "Text Without Context"

Optional (and for those who read Carr and Kakutani in my spring class):

Chronicle of Higher Education: "The Invisible Gorilla" and two short follow-ups

24 **Fingers Pointing at the Moon: The Epistemology of the News**

To what extent do the means by which we access the news alter its meaning and message? What role have the media played historically in our understanding of the world? Let's discuss "template" and "framework."

Read: Neil Postman: *Amusing Ourselves to Death*
Introduction
Ch. 1: "The Medium is the Metaphor"
Ch. 2: "Media As Epistemology"

26 **An Enduring Mystery: The Secret Journalists Keep from Themselves**

How have the news media traditionally coped with reality? How have they thought of themselves, philosophically? Based on whose ideas and values?

Does journalism have a true “operating philosophy”? If so, what values does it promote? To what extent are such values relevant in today’s digital age? How do you develop your gestalt as a reporter?

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”

**View
in class:** PowerPoint: “The Reporter’s Paradigm”

Oct. 1 Thinking Critically About the Reporter’s “Critical” Stance: Tailoring a Framework for Observation

Given the understandable confusion in the news media today, what is the proper stance for a professional journalist to assume? What is critical thinking and why is it instrumental in the reporter’s approach? How is it possible to gain a deeper understanding of places, people and events without being brainwashed, hornswoggled or otherwise “groomed.” Let’s revisit the concepts of “template” and “framework.”

**View
in class:** Sherlock Holmes: “Inductive and Deductive Reasoning”

Read: Robert Jensen: *Arguing for Our Lives*, chapters 2-6.

EXAMINING THE MEDIA MACHINE: WHO OR WHAT ESTABLISHES THE NEWS NARRATIVE IN THE POLITICAL ECONOMY?

3 The Chomsky Template: All the News Unfit to Print?

We all place “templates” or patterns of thought over reality to make sense of it. Here’s a famous one: Noam Chomsky and Edward Hermann’s Propaganda Model. According to the authors, who or what sets the news agenda? What role do politics, economics and culture play? To what extent do media organizations overlay events and issues with a media “filter” or template? To what extent do templates aid, alter or distort our views of the world?

View: Chomsky et al: “The Myth of the Liberal Media”

Read: *Manufacturing Consent*

Introduction
Preface
Ch.1: “A Propaganda Model”

8 The News Agenda: A Collision of Interested Parties

As the nuclear physicists say, if there is matter, there must be anti-matter; and so it follows that if there is Chomsky, there must be anti-Chomsky...

View: Chomsky v. Buckley, v. Bennett

Read: *The Anti-Chomsky Reader*
Introduction
Ch.3: “Chomsky and the Media: A Kept Press and a Manipulated People”

10 Parsing the Propaganda Model in Time of War: Pros and Cons

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 when it comes to a nation’s decision to invest “blood and treasure” in human conflict? Where do new media fit into the equation?

View: Bill Moyers: “Buying the War” (2007)

Read: *Manufacturing Consent*: Ch. 7: “Conclusions”

15 INTERLUDE: The Fog of War: Critical Thinking – and Critical Errors

Big historical events, like the Arab Spring and the Iraq War, are hard to interpret while they’re still unfolding. Let’s look at the Vietnam War from a longer distance and see what “lessons” it offers. Secretary of Defense under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, Robert McNamara is regarded as having been one of the war’s key architects. How can a gift for thinking critically lead us into big mistakes in thinking? To what extent do McNamara’s self-professed lessons have relevance to big events we witness in our world today?

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

Read: Richard Gee: “Missing the Real Story in Iraq”

INTO THE FIELD: SORTING OUT THE “ARAB SPRING”

17-22 An Explosion in Egypt: The Unwinding of the Arab Spring?

Having looked at the difficulties of examining events still in the making, let’s look at the current situation in Egypt. What happened to the Arab Spring? Having deposed president Hosni Mubarak in 2011 wasn’t Egypt supposedly charting a course for a better, freer future? What happened? Why, in recent months, have things suddenly come apart? Let’s analyze the situation and, in analyzing, decide on the extent to which the American media have done their jobs in providing context for events.

Read: Blackboard postings

24 CNN v. Al Jazeera: Seeing the Region Through Split Frames

The emergence of an Arab-oriented news network in the mid-1990s raised concerns in the West about the birth of a channel for anti-American propaganda in the heart of the Middle East. To what extent were such fears justified? To what extent does Al Jazeera’s coverage of discreet news events in the Middle East differ from U.S.-oriented media coverage? Which side gets closer to the truth? How do we place in context the recent advent of Al Jazeera America?

View: Jehane Noujiam: “Control Room” (2004)

Read: Blackboard postings

ZEROING IN ON KEY TEMPLATES: RELIGION, RACE AND CULTURAL MISUNDERSTANDING IN THE POLITICAL ECONOMY

29 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 12 years since 9/11 – what role did events play in establishing perceptions? How are attitudes played out in everyday life in America? What lies beneath such attitudes and outlook?

View: PBS Frontline: “The Man Behind the Mosque”

View in class: Preview of “On Orientalism” featuring Edward Said

Read: Blackboard package: “How stubborn our images?”

Orientalism

Preface & Introduction

Part 1: I- “Knowing the Oriental”

II- “Imaginative Geography and its Representations: Orientalizing the Oriental”

III- “Projects”

IV- “Crisis”

31 **Orientalism: Examining the Cultural Lens**

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

Read: *Orientalism*

Part 3: I- “Latent and Manifest Orientalism”

II- “Style, Expertise, Vision: Orientalism’s Worldliness”

III- “Modern Anglo-French Orientalism in Fullest Flower”

IV- “The Latest Phase”

“Afterword I and II”

Optional: Clifford Geertz: “Which Way to Mecca,” Parts 1 & 2

Nov. 5 **Occidentalism: Turning the Telescope Around**

What are the historical origins of the Muslim sphere’s view of the West? To what extent do they influence the media narrative in Muslim majority countries today?

Read: *Occidentalism* (entire book)

7 **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: Robin Wright: “Don’t Fear All Islamists, Fear Salafis”
Bernard Lewis: “The Question of Orientalism”
Edward Said: “Orientalism: An Exchange”

12 The Mystery of Money, Mississippi: What Brought America to a Crossroads on Race?

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 the mainstream media? Public perceptions?

View: Alex Gibney and Tracy Dahlby: “The Rage Within” from “The Fifties” (1997)

Read: *The Race Beat:*
Ch. 1: “An American Dilemma: ‘An Astonishing Ignorance...’”
Ch.2: “A Fighting Press”
Ch.3: “Southern Editors in a Time of Ferment”

14 Examining the Till Template

What are the journalist’s obligations to history? How does looking at “old news” contribute to reporting fresh events?

Read: *The Race Beat:*
Ch.4: “Ashmore Views the South”
Ch.5: “The Brown Decisions Harden the South”
Ch.6: “Into Mississippi”
Ch.7: “The Till Trial”

Blackboard postings

19 Examining the Till Template II

To what extent is America a different society today than in the 1950s? To what extent do racial and ethnic stereotypes condition our view of what is and isn’t important in the domestic and global spheres? How good a job does the U.S. media do in presenting a realistic picture of the role and meaning of race and ethnicity in America?

View
in class: Little Rock segment from “The Fifties”

Read: *The Race Beat*:
Ch.8: “Where Massive and Passive Resistance Meet”
Ch.9: “Alabama”

Blackboard postings

21 INTERLUDE: Big Trouble in Far Borneo in a Time of No Template

How did racial and ethnic stereotypes help create the news template governing the conflict between Dayak and Madurese communities in Kalimantan? What happens when the news media don’t cover the news?

Read: New York Times: “Migrants Flee as Death Toll Rises”
BBC News: “Borneo’s head-hunters”
Granta: Richard Lloyd Parry: “What Young Men Do”
CJR: “From SOS to SMS: Mobile Journalism Service Aims to Protect Indonesian Forests, Connect Villages”

Optional: Human Rights Watch: “Summary & Recommendations: Communal Violence in West Kalimantan”

26 Parachuting in: A Workshop on Covering China

Suppose: An editor from a prominent American news outlet asks you to “parachute” into China to cover the story of public reaction to American criticism of the PRC’s alleged cyber-hacking of U.S. interests. How would you prepare yourself to tackle the assignment? What would you need to know? How would you establish your framework for thinking and reporting?

View: YouTube: “United States Owes China”

Read: Blackboard postings

THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

Dec. 3

Course Wrap-up I: Engaging the Internal Template

To what extent is the journalist's storytelling craft directed by patterns deeply embedded in our culture? How do such patterns influence the ways in which we inform the public? To what extent are old patterns at war with new means of communication?

Read: Blackboard postings

5

Course Wrap-up II: 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 pull into focus 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 to read and discuss your peers' work. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from your written work.

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://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>

Plagiarism and the Consequences of Plagiarizing

<http://www.lib.utexas.edu/services/instruction/faculty/plagiarism/preventing.html>
<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: <http://www.utexas.edu/student/utlc/>

Undergraduate Writing Center: <http://uwc.utexas.edu/>

Counseling & Mental Health Center: <http://cmhc.utexas.edu/>

Career Exploration Center: <http://www.utexas.edu/student/careercenter/>

Student Emergency Services: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/>

Use of Blackboard in Class

This course will use Blackboard—a Web-based course management system with password-protected access at <http://courses.utexas.edu>—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 Blackboard at the ITS Help Desk at 475-9400, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., so plan accordingly.

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 <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php>.

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.”