

PBPL 44/FS 46:
U.S. Broadcast/Electronic Journalism and Public Policy
Fall, 2007
3A, Carson 60

Mark Williams
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Office Hours: Thursday 1:00-3:00
Wilson 317 x63836

Required Reading:

American Television News, Steve Barkin
The Interplay of Influence, Kathleen Hall Jamieson, Karlyn Kohrs Campbell
Television and the Public Sphere, Peter Dahlgren
Library Digital Reserve Readings (listed on syllabus)

Overview:

This course will survey the history of broadcast and electronic journalism in the United States, with a special attention to the development of and the changes to its fundamental relation to the public sphere. Especially as regards the contemporary era, we will focus on practices and issues of media policy and agenda-setting within changing media ecologies. This entails a historicized, contextualized understanding of the formats, aesthetics, economics, and industrial organization of these media, as well as a concentration on specific debates, events, and individuals that condition the impact of the media on active, critical citizens. We will invite speakers who have worked in these media industries or on these histories. Students will be expected to contribute to collaborative projects and will be required to write analytical papers, including a research paper.

Every week, we will pursue the survey history of broadcast and electronic journalism in the United States, but also work to understand the most significant issues in the contemporary reporting of news.

Assignments:

Attendance is mandatory, and participation in class discussions is essential to the success of this course. Reading assignments indicated on the course calendar should be completed before the assigned class session. Readings and screenings outside of class may be announced in class.

Class participation. Worth 10% of your grade.

One short paper (5-7 pages) due October 15, worth 15% of your final grade.

One video project (5-7 minutes) due November 30, worth 15% of your final grade.
[Individual or paired team.]

A 15-20 page research paper is due November 29. The topic of this paper should be of your own design, but must be cleared with me. Worth 40% of your final grade.

Take-home final exam. Worth 20% of your final grade.

Course Calendar:

Week 1

[9/26 Presidential Candidates Debate, Dartmouth College]

9/27 Course Introduction

Read: Barkin, chpt. 1

Screen: *Frontline: News War - What's Happening to the News?* (PBS, 2006) 90 m.

Week 2

10/ 1 19th Century Technology and Newsgathering; Early Cinema and Inter-Medial News

Read: Jamieson and Campbell, chpt 1; Carey on telegraphy;

Postman on entertaining ourselves to death;

Castonguay on The Spanish-American War (<http://chnm.gmu.edu/aq/war/>)

Screen: *Before the Nickelodeon* (Musser, 1982) – clips; other early cinema

10/ 4 Radio Debates: Public Relations; Advertising and the (Gendered) Public Sphere

Read: Jamieson and Campbell, chpts 2 and 6

Ewen on public relations; Lears on advertising; Starr on early radio

Online Lab: early radio clips [listen to these before class]

Week 3

10/ 8 Modernity and the Public Sphere; Local vs. Network: Constructing the National “Live”

Read: Dahlgren, chpt 1; Danna on radio news; Vianello on liveness

Recommended: Horwitz on Congressional regulation

Online Lab: crash of the Hindenberg; radio news 1939; WWII and Murrow radio reports
[listen to these before class]

**Assignment: Pitch your video project

10/11 Television News Begins; The Murrow Legacy

Read: Barkin, chpt. 2; Edwards on Murrow; Cogley on clearance at CBS

Screen: *Edward R. Murrow: This Reporter* (2005) 113 m.

rec: *Good Night and Good Luck* (Clooney, 2005) 93 m.

Week 4

10/15 Paper #1 due

Post-War Television and Journalism: Remote Events, National Events

Read: Slotten on nationwide TV; Williams on liveness; Schudson on tele-mythology

10/18 Network TV News Emerges: White Papers, Civil Rights, and Sponsor Scandals

Read: Dahlgren, chpt 2; Curtin on TV news; Torres on Civil Rights TV

Screen: *Harvest of Shame* (CBS Reports, 1960)

**Assignment: Consult video guidelines; continue pre-production

Week 5

10/22 60s Television News and Catastrophe/Revolt: Assassinations and Vietnam
Read: Barkin chpt 3; Simon on JFK assassination ; Gitlin on 60s and TV
Guest Lecture: Bob Hager, NBC News, "War Stories"
**Assignment: Commence shooting video project

10/25 60s/70s Television News: Watergate and 60 Minutes
Read: Barkin, chpt 4; Jamieson and Campbell, chpts 3 & 7;
Stahl on early 70s news; Schudson on Watergate

Week 6

10/29 Network News as Budget Item: The Rise of Info-Tainment
Read: Barkin, chpts 5-7; Dahlgren, chpt 3; Frank on network news

11/ 1 Market-Driven Journalism
Read: Jamieson and Campbell, chpts 4, 5 & 8; McManus on logic of commercial news;
Anderson on news as good business
Guest Lecture: Denise Anthony, Dept. of Sociology, "Media, Markets, and Democracy"

Week 7

11/ 5 Changing Technologies: New Formats and Options via Satellite
Read: Jamieson and Campbell, chpt 9; Barkin, chpt 8; McNair on PR;
Shaiko on interest groups
Guest Lecture: Ron Shaiko, Rockefeller Center, "Influencing the News"

11/ 8 From Analog to Digital: Changing Media Topographies, New Aesthetics/Audiences
Read: Dahlgren, chpt 4; Caldwell on Televisuality; Katz and Dayan on media events;
Shohat, Engelhart on Gulf War coverage
**Assignment: Screen assembled rough-cut of video project

Week 8

11/12 Splintered Audiences and Global Practices
Read: Dahlgren chpt 5; Volkmer on global public sphere;
Costanza-Chock on globalized media policy; Gandy on audience segmentation
Guest Lecture: Reese Schonfeld, '53, "Establishing CNN"
**Assignment: Commence re-shoots and tightening of video project

11/15 9/11 and Contemporary Crisis/Catastrophe Coverage
Read: Carey on journalism after 9/11; Barkin, chpts. 10-11; Fenton on spin
Screen: *Rich Media, Poor Democracy* (Media Education Foundation, 2003) 30 m.
Outfoxed (Greenwald, 2004) 75 m.

Week 9

11/19 On-Line Journalism: New Networks and Inter-Medial Address
Read: Barkin, chpt. 12; Jamieson and Campbell, chpt 11; Mindich on eclipse of the local;

Chakravarthy on Online tech; Kline on blogs; Hallahan on online communication
Recommended: Gurak on weblog scholarship

11/22 Thanksgiving holiday

Week 10

11/26 Rethinking Politics and the Media

Read: Dahlgren, chpts 6-7; Jamieson and Campbell, chpts 10 & 12;

Lloyd on realistic radicals; Rheingold on always-on panopticon

Screen: *Frontline – News War: Secrets, Sources & Spin* (PBS, 2006)

11/29 Research Paper Due

Catch-Up and Spill-Over

11/30 (Friday) Video project due before 5pm

Week 11

12/3 Screen final cuts of video projects

Distribute Take-Home Final Exam