History of the News

History 201W: The Craft of History: The History of News: Fall 2011

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Weekly outline

The History of News

August 29 - September 4

Week 1—Introduction

Mon—Introduction to the Course
Wed—What Is News?
Fri—The Power of Language

George Orwell, "Politics and the English Language" (1946)

Neil Postman, Amusing Ourselves to Death (in comic form)

September 5 - September 11

Week 2—News and Democracy

Mon—News and Democracy Today, or Why Do Americans Mistrust the Media?
IN CLASS: Writing examples. Handout: “Keys to Good Writing”

Tue—Assignment Due & Evening Film

OTP #2 DUE BY 10 AM (via email). News Coverage of CNN News, Fox News, New York Post, or the New York
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| September 12 - September 18 | **Week 3—The Concept of the Public Sphere (9/12)** | Mon—Habermas on the Public Sphere  
Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Bourgeois Public Sphere* (1962, selections)  
***Wed—The Public Sphere in Practice***  
Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (1846, selections)  
Muhammad as-Saffar, *Disorienting Encounters* (1835, selections)  
***Fri—Ideals and Realities***  
Michael Schudson, “Was there Ever a Public Sphere?”, in *Habermas and the Public Sphere*  
OTP #3 DUE by midnight Fri night/Sat morn posted to Woodle. What is the Public Sphere? (1-3 pp.) |
Stuart Hall, et al, *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State, and Law and Order* (selections)  
***Fri—Gossip News: Social Control or Moral Exercise?***  
Read gossip news. Bring in 4 to 6 news reports. Prepare your own analysis along the lines of Jack Katz. How would you answer the question: what makes gossip “news”?  
PAPER #1 DUE by midnight, via email. “The Promise of News” |
| September 26 - October 2 | **Week 5—A Broad View on the Evolution of News: American News (9/26)** | Mon—Objectivity and the Democratization of the News  
Michael Schudson, *Discovering the News: A Social History of the American Newspaper*, intro and ch. 1  
***Wed—Objectivity and Sensationalism***  
Schudson, *Discovering the New*, ch. 2 and 3  
***Fri—Nineteenth-Century News***  
Samples of Nineteenth-Century News Styles  
OTP #4 DUE IN CLASS. News Styles in the Nineteenth-Century Press. Write a short piece—on any topic you like from today’s news—but write in the style of one of the samples of 19th c. news I’ve shared. Upload your exercise to Woodle (follow link below) and bring hard copy to class. |

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Course: History of the News FA11  
https://woodle-1112.wooster.edu/course/view.php?id=742
### Week 6—A Broad View on the Evolution of News: From the Print Revolution to the Mass Newspaper (10/3)

**Mon—The Print Revolution and the Early History of Journalism**


For this reading - and for the other readings this week - I recommend that you print out the readings, but will not require it, so long as you come to class with a strong set of reading notes. NB: you'll need one or the other!

**Wed—Nineteenth and Twentieth-Century Trajectories**


**Fri—A Broad View Back and Forward**

Starr, *Creation*, ch. 13, "Coda: The Advent of the Media"

- Starr, *Creation*, ch. 1
- Starr, *Creation*, ch. 2
- Smith, *The Newspaper*, ch. 6
- Starr, *Creation*, ch. 12

### October 10 - October 16

### Week 7—News in Eighteenth-Century France (10/10)

**Mon—A News Society**


**Wed—Public Opinion and the Word on the Street**

Arlette Farge, *Subversive Words* (selections)

**Fri—Revolutionary News & Peer Review**

Optional: Antoine de Baecque, in Daniel Roche and Robert Darnton, *Revolution in Print*

Bring two copies of your paper draft to class on Friday for peer review by the class.

**PAPER #2 DUE** by midnight on Saturday (Sunday morning), posted to Woodle. "Theories of News"

- Darnton, *Early Information Society*
- Farge, *Subversive Words*
- De Baecque, *Revolutionary Pamphlets*
- Student Papers - Some Strong Examples
- Paper #2 - Upload Here

### October 17 - October 23

### Week 8—Jack the Ripper and the Press (10/19)

**Mon—No Class—Fall Break**

**Wed—The Whitechapel Murders**

L. Perry Curtis, Jr., *Jack the Ripper and the London Press* (selections)

**Fri—And Their Coverage**

Curtis, *Jack the Ripper and the London Press* (selections)

Selections from the *Pall Mall Gazette*

- Curtis, *Jack the Ripper*, Intro
- Curtis, *Jack the Ripper*, ch. 3
- W.T. Stead, *The Maiden Tribute* (from *Pall Mall Gazette*)

### October 24 - October 30

### Week 9—Critical Views in the American Press (10/24)

**Mon—Southern Horrors**

Ida B. Wells, *Southern Horrors: Lynch Law in All Its Phases* (selections)

**Wed—Muckraking**


**Fri—Peer Review Session**

Strunk and White (selections)

Rampolla (selections)

**OTP #5—PAPER #3 OUTLINE per assignment, due in class and uploaded to Woodle. Reading the News**
Week 10—Sensationalism and Yellow Journalism (10/31)

Mon—Sensationalism in France, c. 1900
Selections from the illustrated Petit Journal
Marcel Proust, "The Abominable Act of Reading the Newspaper" (1906)
Halloween!

Wed—Yellow Journalism in America—The Wooster/Scovel Connection

Fri—Yellow Journalists at Work
Selections from the New York World and the New York Journal
PAPER #3 DUE by midnight, via email. Reading the News

Week 11—World War 1: News and Propaganda (11/7)

Mon—War Enthusiasm & the Press 1
Jean-Jacques Becker, The Great War and the French People (selections)

Wed—War Enthusiasm & the Press 2
Thomas Verhey, The Spirit of 1914 (selections)

Fri—Press Accounts of the War, Real and Imaginary
OTP #6 DUE in class.

Week 12—Adventures in Broadcast History (11/14)

Mon—Radio News, True and False
Edward Bliss, Jr., Now the News: The Story of Broadcast Journalism (selections)
Listen to radio clips on Woodle

Wed—From Quiz Show to the Evening News
Bliss, Now the News: The Story of Broadcast Journalism (selections)
View television clips on Woodle

Fri—the Dangers and Delights of Broadcast News
Neil Postman, Amusing Ourselves to Death (selections)
OTP #7 DUE in class.

Week 13—Writing Workshop (11/21)

Mon—Writing Workshop
Bring Outline, Introduction, and Notes for final papers
OTP #7 DUE in class. Outline, Rough Introduction, Notes

Wed—No Class—Thanksgiving
Fri—No Class—Thanksgiving

Week 14—Critical Perspectives on the News Today (11/28)

Mon—The End of the Newspaper?
Wed—New Forms of News—the End of Mass Culture?
Neil Henry, American Carnival: Journalism Under Siege in an Age of New Media (selections)

Fri —Who Do We Trust?
OTP #8 DUE in class.

December 5 - December 11
Week 15—Presentations (12/5)
Mon—Presentations
Wed—Presentations
Fri—Presentations

December 12 - December 18
Exam Week
Final Paper Due. Friday, December 14, at 9:00am