

History of the News Media in America
Graduate Seminar
Course #16:194:663
Prof. David Greenberg
Fall 2005

Office: 4 Huntington St., Rm. 110	Office Hours: M 10-12 or by appointment
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Class Time: M 6.10 p.m. - 9.00 p.m.	Room: 303 SCILS Bldg.

Syllabus

Description. The course looks historically at the role that the news media have played in American politics and culture. Although the course proceeds chronologically, a series of different subjects within media history are explored, including politics, law, and technology. Underpinning the class is the assumption that the media have fundamentally shaped how Americans experienced their political and cultural life. As a graduate seminar, the course is somewhat historiographical in its intent. It aims to acquaint students with important books on a range of topics and help them situate those books in the contexts of their scholarly literatures.

Course Requirements.

- Regular attendance and active participation.
- Reading. The class reading comes to roughly one book (roughly 200 pages) a week.
- Short Paper. Due October 3. Based on the readings of the first weeks, you are to write a 4-to 5-page essay (maximum) making an argument about the relationship between journalism and history. You will be graded on the clarity and style of the writing, the originality and persuasiveness of the argument, and the use you make of the readings.
- Classroom Presentation. Each week one student will prepare a 15-minute presentation framing the readings.
- Term Paper. The research for this presentation should form the basis of a 12- page paper, due November 28. The paper should be in the form of a review-essay such as you might read in *The New York Review of Books*, *The New Republic* or an academic journal.

Reading List.

Books are on reserve in Alexander Library and at the Rutgers University Bookstore.

Selected articles (listed in weekly assignments below) are available online through the Rutgers University library website.

Leonard Levy, *Emergence of a Free Press*

Andie Tucher, *Froth & Scum: Truth, Beauty, Goodness, and the Ax Murder ...*

Thomas Leonard, *The Power of the Press: The Birth of American Political Reporting*

Douglas B. Craig, *Fireside Politics*

Robert Eisinger, *The Evolution of Presidential Polling*

Neal Gabler, *An Empire of Their Own*

Gerd Horten, *Radio Goes to War: The Cultural Politics of Propaganda During World War II*

Thomas Doherty, *Cold War, Cool Medium*
 Daniel C. Hallin, *The Uncensored War: The Media and Vietnam*
 John Maltese, *Spin Control*
 Cass Sunstein, *Republic.com*
 Herbert Gans, *Democracy and the News*

Weekly Assignments.

- Sept. 12 **Thinking About History**
 Robin Winks, ed. *The Historian as Detective* (selected chapters)
 David Lowenthal, *The Past Is a Foreign Country* pp. 196-238
 E.H. Carr, *What Is History?* pp. 3-35.
 Michael Schudson, Introduction to “The Problem of Journalism History”
 James Carey, “The Problem of Journalism History”
- Sept. 19 **Thinking About Media**
 Michael Schudson, *The Power of News* (selected chapters)
 James Carey, *Communication as Culture* (selected chapters)
 Daniel Boorstin, *The Image* (selected chapters)
 Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion* - Foreword, Chs. 1, 6, 16, 17, 21-24
 Christopher Lasch, “Journalism, Publicity & the Lost Art of Argument”
- Sept. 26 **The Press in Early America**
 Leonard Levy, *Emergence of a Free Press*
- Oct. 3 **Penny Press**
 Andie Tucher, *Froth & Scum: Truth, Beauty, Goodness, and the Ax Murder in America’s First Mass Medium*
 ***Short Papers Due**
- Oct. 10 **Reporting from the 19th to the 20th Century**
 Thomas Leonard, *The Power of the Press: The Birth of American Political Reporting*
- Oct. 17 **Radio**
 Douglas B. Craig, *Fireside Politics*
- Oct. 24 **Movies**
 Neal Gabler, *An Empire of Their Own*
- Oct. 31 **PR and Politics**
 Robert Eisinger, *The Evolution of Presidential Polling*
- Nov. 7 **World War II**
 Gerd Horten, *Radio Goes to War: The Cultural Politics of Propaganda During World War II*
- Nov. 14 **Television**
 Thomas Doherty, *Cold War, Cool Medium*
- Nov. 21 **Vietnam**
 Daniel C. Hallin, *The Uncensored War: The Media and Vietnam*
- Nov. 28 **Presidential Press Relations**
 John Maltese, *Spin Control*

***Term Papers Due**

- Dec. 5 **The Internet**
Cass Sunstein, *Republic.com*
- Dec. 12 **The View from Today**
Herbert Gans, *Democracy and the News*