Discovering Journalism: Traditional Tales to Tweets | JOUR 1003
Winter, 2019 | Thursdays, 8:35 a.m. - 11:25 a.m., Azrieli Theatre 102
School of Journalism and Communication
Carleton University

Instructor: Trish Audette-Longo, PhD

Course description

This course explores journalism's evolving role as creator of communities and guardian of democracy, including some of its greatest scoops and worst misdeeds. From ancient news-sharing instincts to 21st-century expression in blogs, tweets and investigative masterpieces, this course surveys the ethical, political and economic contexts of journalism.

Learning objectives

This course is intended to help you develop a critical understanding of Canada's journalism landscape, including its varying forms, contemporary practices, challenges and relevance to our everyday lives.

By the end of this course, you will be well versed in journalism's past and present, relevant Canadian policies, and how emerging technologies, platforms and funding models are changing the story. On this note, I hope you will leave this course ready to look to the future and assert your role as a citizen and audience member, or perhaps as a newsmaker, policymaker or journalist.

Course methods

This course is broken into three parts: form, practice and challenges. Each week, you will be invited to discover and engage with new ideas about where journalism is going, and with some of the best examples of journalism being produced today and in recent years in North America. You are also asked to stay on top of breaking news in order to remain engaged with how journalism works now.

My approach to teaching is participatory: this means I facilitate class discussion throughout my lectures, and wish to hear about your experiences with news media. Through discussion, we will build on shared knowledge to form new questions and find new answers.

Required texts

You are not required to purchase a text or course pack for this class. Rather, you will find the week's required readings – including video and audio material – available online and listed in the weekly schedule. If you have difficulty accessing a piece, try opening an "incognito" or "private" window, or a different browser altogether.

Criteria of Evaluation

News quizzes (best 8/10)	20%	Starting in class on Jan. 17.
News quiz questions (5):	10%	Due: Feb. 6, March 6, March 13, March 20 & March 27 at noon on cuLearn
News media journal & reflection	15%	Due Jan. 31 via cuLearn
Mid-term exam	20%	Feb. 14 in class
Final essay proposal	10%	Due March 14 on cuLearn
Final essay	20%	Due April 4 in class
Participation and attendance:	5%	

Penalties for late assignments

Missed news quizzes or news quiz questions cannot be made up later.

The mid-term exam will take place in class on Feb. 14 and cannot be made up later.

For the news media journal and reflection assignment, and for the essay proposal and essay, late submissions will automatically receive a deduction of a full letter grade. For example, if you were on target to receive an A-, you will instead receive a B-. **These assignments each have cut-off dates described below, after which they will not be accepted and you will receive a 0.**

Exemptions due to personal illness, family tragedy or other exceptional circumstances must be arranged ahead of time whenever possible, and be supported by documentation.

Assignments

Participation and attendance 5%

You are expected to attend all classes. **If personal reasons prevent you from attending a specific class, please let me know in advance via email.**

I will take attendance each class. Do arrive prepared to answer and ask questions about assigned readings and news of the day. **Bring a notebook and a pen or pencil to class:** you will be asked to hand-write your responses to the news quiz each week and, from time to time, to hand in written responses about readings or media we view together while in class.

An excellent final participation mark (for example, an A) will reflect your regular on-time attendance and ability to speak to class material, offer relevant additions and examples to class discussions, ask open-ended questions that engage your colleagues, and take an active role in facilitating in-class exercises.

A very good final participation mark (for example, a B) will reflect your regular on-time attendance, and ability to speak to class material and offer opinions or additions to class discussions. You may take a less active role in facilitating discussion, asking questions that build the conversation, or participating in in-class exercises.

A good-satisfactory final participation mark (for example, a C or D) will reflect your regular attendance in class, but a less active role in contributing to or facilitating discussion. You may ask fewer questions, offer reflections that are not related to the course or the questions at hand, or contribute little to in-class exercises.

A failing final participation mark will reflect your regular absence from class, especially if you have not written an email to let me know you will not be present.

News quizzes 20%

Starting in class on Jan. 17, you will be quizzed on the week's news. News quizzes will be based on news reported on the specific news sites or social media profiles you've been asked to monitor, as well as questions submitted by you and your classmates on cuLearn.

Your final grade on the news quizzes will be based on your top 8/10 scores. Your grade will reflect your ability to stay up-to-date on and synthesize the week's top stories.

Quizzes will take place at the start of class and be marked in class; if you miss a quiz you will not have an opportunity to make it up.

News quiz questions 10%

Throughout the semester, you will submit five (5) questions for the following day's news quiz. You may submit a question based on news sites or social media profiles that have been assigned to be monitored that week.

You will submit your question, the correct answer and the source material for your question (the title, author, date and correct link for the related story) via cuLearn **before noon** on the following days:

- ☐ Wednesday February 6
- ☐ Wednesday March 6
- ☐ Wednesday March 13
- ☐ Wednesday March 20
- ☐ Wednesday March 27

Your final grade on these quiz questions will reflect your ability to determine the most important news stories of the week, and to identify what makes them important now. In other words, your questions ought to zero in on a newsworthy detail everyone needs to know to understand a given story. A

question about a long-standing fact – for example, "Who is the prime minister of Canada?" – would not be acceptable.

If you miss handing in a quiz question you will not have an opportunity to make it up.

News media journal and critical reflection 15%
Due: Jan. 31

Download and fill out the **news media journal** (found on cuLearn). ***Over the course of <u>three (3) consecutive days</u>, you are asked to document your own news media consumption***. In addition to submitting your journal, you will write an accompanying reflection of 500-600 words.

Your reflection should be structured around one or two of the following sets of questions. If you wish to focus on another journalism issue or challenge, please <u>email me for written approval before Jan. 24</u>.

- Where do you get your news? Do you rely on sources like the CBC or *Vice*, for example? And what are your surprising blind spots?
- What stories or issues resonated with you most from what you read, watched or listened to, and what does this tell you about journalistic practice?
- How did you read, watch or listen to news? Were you following news from platforms like Instagram or Twitter? Do you follow the news on your phone, your computer or elsewhere? How do news media fit into your daily life?
- What do you observe as a key challenge for news media trying to reach audiences under 30 and what would you recommend news media producers do differently to reach broader audiences?

The objective of this exercise is to further analyze and critique your own engagement with news media. **A successful reflection paper** will include an introduction that outlines your main focus and argument. This is a short essay, to be printed in 12-point font, double-spaced. Conclusions you draw should be based on your own consumption, and you might consider introducing a question as to how further analysis could add to your argument. If you write about course or other reference materials, use an in-text citation style (APA, see https://library.carleton.ca/help/apa-citation-style) and include a separate page listing cited works when you hand in the assignment.

You will submit this assignment via cuLearn before class starts on Jan. 31.

Your grade will reflect the clarity with which you express your critical thinking about your news consumption.

Late penalty

Late submissions will automatically receive a deduction of a full letter grade. For example, if you were on target to receive an A-, you will instead receive a B-. **Media journals and reflections will no longer be accepted after Feb. 7.**

Mid-term 20%

We will have an in-class mid-term exam on Feb. 14. We will discuss details and undertake a review in class on Feb. 7.

If missed, this exam cannot be made up later.

Final essay & proposal 30%
Proposal deadline: March 14 (via cuLearn)
Essay deadline: April 4 (as a hard copy, in class)

You will write a final paper **(1,500 words)** that identifies and analyzes an issue or challenge in contemporary journalism.

You may choose to focus on:

- Further researching and elaborating on one of the challenges we have discussed in class;
- Presenting a new journalism tool or platform that disrupts or adds to ways in which people can access news;
- A person or organization whose work is exemplary of how journalism is changing.

Step One:

Before class on March 14, submit a one-page proposal for your final essay via cuLearn that identifies:

- **Your focus:** What question do you plan to answer? Why is it important to answer this question when studying journalism, particularly as a consumer of news?
- **How you will answer this question:** Provide examples of two (2) materials from the syllabus or class and two (2) materials you have found elsewhere that will support your research. Explain why each piece is useful for your final project. These are exemplary; it is expected you will draw upon and cite additional material for your final paper.

An excellent essay proposal will draw out an interesting or surprising question, making a clear and concise justification for why it needs to be investigated and researched further. It will show how you plan to research your essay and reflect a good eye for relevant sources.

Feedback: You will receive written feedback on your essay proposals via cuLearn. Additionally, class time will be set aside on March 21 and March 28 to workshop your final essay. If possible, do bring your laptop computer to these classes. You may be asked to conduct research, submit an outline of your plans, or otherwise engage with your final paper during these workshops. This is a great time, too, to ask me questions about your paper and approach.

Step Two:

In class on April 4, bring a hard copy of your final paper to class, including:

- **a title page** showing the title of your essay, your full name and student number, and the date;
- **an essay of 1,500 words, double-spaced, written in 12-point font**;
- **in-text citations** (see https://library.carleton.ca/help/apa-citation-style);
- **a separate list of cited works** (this list is not included in the 1,500-word word count);
- **and page numbers** in the lower right-hand corner of the page.

Your final essay should showcase the following elements:

- **Solid research**—*at minimum*, cite, refer to, and contextualize two (2) assigned course readings, and four (4) academic or non-academic materials that help you describe and analyze this phenomenon.
- **Attention to detail**—take care to contextualize the challenge, disruption, person or organization and explain clearly why they matter.
- **Style**—consider how your topic is best expressed.

The first objective of this assignment is to give you room to research a journalism question you find compelling, perhaps one that has been under-studied in the course. The opportunity to focus on a platform, a person or organization, or an idea demands detailed research; the second objective of this assignment is to sharpen your research and written communication skills.

Notes on grading: A rubric for the final essay will be discussed during class on March 7—this will be your opportunity to contribute thoughts on what you believe is most important for assessing this project. The rubric will be posted to cuLearn by March 8.

Feedback: If you wish to receive significant feedback for your final essay, please submit a hard copy of the grading rubric at the same time you submit your final paper.

Late penalty

Late submissions of the essay proposal or final essay will automatically receive a deduction of a full letter grade. For example, if you were on target to receive an A-, you will instead receive a B-.

Final essay proposals will no longer be accepted after March 28.

Final essays will no longer be accepted after April 11.

Course Schedule and Weekly Readings

There may be additions, including guest lectures, to the schedule.

Date	Description	Readings for this class	Guiding questions for class discussion
Jan. 10	**Introduction**		What is journalism? What are key words or ideas you associate with journalism or the "news"? Why does journalism matter?
Section 1: Forms			
Jan. 17	**Text** **In-class news quiz**	• **Read** Jimmy Breslin's (1963, republished 2013) article, "'It's an honor'": https://www.thedailybeast.com/its-an-honor • **Read** Sara Mojtehedzadeh's and Brendan Kennedy's (2017) feature "Undercover in Temp Nation" in *The Toronto Star*: http://projects.thestar.com/temp-employment-agencies/ • **Monitor** the "local news" section of the *Ottawa Citizen*'s website (https://ottawacitizen.com/category/news/local-news)	This week you are reading two exemplary feature stories, one written first in 1963 and the other in 2017. What are they about? How are they different? How are they structured? What, in your reading, are the reporters trying to do and what do they accomplish? What details stay with you? In monitoring the *Ottawa Citizen*'s website, take note of what makes a "daily" story salient. Who are the newspaper's imagined audiences?
Jan. 24	**Sound** **In-class news quiz**	• **Listen** to CBC's *The Current* Monday-Wednesday (8:30 a.m.-10 a.m.). If you're not able to tune in live, find it here: https://www.cbc.ca/listen/shows/the-current/episodes • **Listen** to *Serial*, Season 1, episode 1, "The Alibi": https://serialpodcast.org/season-one • **Listen** to the hourly news on CBC Radio One at 8 a.m., noon, and/or 6 p.m. Monday-Thursday morning. Many of the top stories will also appear here: https://www.cbc.ca/news	What is the relationship between the hourly newscasts you listened to this week on CBC and *The Current*? Debuting in 2014, *Serial* was a game changer for audio reporting and podcasts. How is it structured differently from the daily radio programs you've listened to this week? What strikes you about this storytelling style?

Date	Description	Readings for this class	Guiding questions for class discussion
Jan. 31	**Video** **In-class news quiz** **News media journal and critical reflection due before class on cuLearn**	• **Watch** the first 10 minutes of APTN's *National News* Monday-Wednesday. You'll find newscasts on APTN each night at 6 p.m. and 11 p.m., or here the following day: https://aptnnews.ca/newscasts/ • **Monitor** videos posted by CBC News on Instagram (@cbcnews), Monday-Wednesday. • **Watch** the first episode in the Vice series *She's Running* (2018), called "Not all female candidates are running because of Trump": https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLw613M86o5o6wuYQ938FwV6Hw9JPjlO3j • **Optional:** Listen to Peter Kafka interview Josh Tyrangiel about *Vice News Tonight* for the podcast *Recode Media* (2016). https://open.spotify.com/episode/1Ag2NqwuRgdApT37NGG56G	How are the news stories you watch structured differently across platforms? How are they narrated? Who is heard, and how do visuals match what people are saying?
Feb. 7	**Satire** **First news quiz question due on cuLearn Feb. 6** **In-class news quiz**	• **Watch** *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah* Monday-Wednesday. https://www.ctv.ca/The-Daily-Show-with-Trevor-Noah • **Watch** the first 10 minutes of *CTV National News* Monday-Wednesday. You'll find newscasts on CTV each night at 11 p.m., or here the following day: https://www.ctvnews.ca/ctv-national-news • **Listen** to *On the Media*'s (2016) live episode, "How the 'fake' news gets made": https://www.wnycstudios.org/story/how-fake-news-gets-made • **Check out** *The Beaverton* (https://www.thebeaverton.com/) and *Walking Eagle News* (https://walkingeaglenews.com/)	What journalism forms or conventions are put to work by these satirical sites and programs? How are the stories and programs organized? Listening to *On the Media*, what can satirical programs and texts contribute to the journalism landscape?

Date	Description	Readings for this class	Guiding questions for class discussion
Feb. 14	**MID-TERM EXAM**		
Feb. 21	**NO CLASS**	**Reading Week**	
		Section 2: Practices	
Feb. 28	**Is everyone a journalist now?** **In-class news quiz**	• **Read** Catherine Wallace's (2017) "Journalists are vanishing. Who will fill the void?" in *The Toronto Star*: https://www.thestar.com/news/atkinsonseries/newnewsroom/2017/journalists-are-vanishing-who-will-fill-the-void.html • **Read** David Uberti's (2016) "Philando Castile, Facebook Live, and a new chapter for citizen journalism" in *Columbia Journalism Review*: https://www.cjr.org/analysis/philando_castile_minnesota_facebook_live.php • **Monitor** J-Source's Twitter feed: https://twitter.com/jsource	What are some of the key issues Catherine Wallace highlights in her piece about contemporary Canadian journalism? Wallace asks, "can newsrooms and non-journalists collaborate in various ways to try to ensure we're paying attention to the key elements of civic society?" Read with our discussions to date and Uberti's piece, how would you answer this question?
March 7	**Reporting in conflict zones** **Second news quiz question due on cuLearn on March 6** **In-class news quiz** **In-class discussion of final essay.**	• **Watch** CBC's (2002) "A day in the life of an international reporter": https://www.cbc.ca/archives/entry/a-day-in-the-life-of-an-international-correspondent • **Read** Stephanie Nolen's (2018) "A farewell to Brazil, country of broken dreams" in *The Globe and Mail*: https://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/article-a-farewell-to-brazil-country-of-broken-dreams/ • **Monitor** stories from *Al Jazeera*'s English-language news landing page Monday-Wednesday: https://www.aljazeera.com/news/	**A note:** The CBC story you are watching this week is about foreign correspondents in conflict zones, and as such there are some disturbing elements. In the CBC report and Nolen's piece, take note of how journalists describe their roles. What challenges do they describe? How do they imagine their audiences at home? How do they talk about their sources, or the people they are covering? In terms of practice, what do they actually do to get their stories?

Date	Description	Readings for this class	Guiding questions for class discussion
March 14	**Journalism, spin and advocacy** **Third news quiz question due on cuLearn on March 13** **In-class news quiz** **Final essay proposal due before class via cuLearn**	• **Listen** to CBC's (2007) "The spin doctor is in": http://www.cbc.ca/player/play/2250483716 • **Read** Jason Schwartz's (2018) "The puzzle of Sarah Huckabee Sanders" in *Politico Magazine*: https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2018/04/27/sarah-huckabee-sanders-profile-feature-2018-218014 • **Monitor** CBC anchor Rosie Barton's Twitter feed: https://twitter.com/RosieBarton	In "The spin doctor is in," how is "spin" defined? What is the relationship between PR or communications professionals and journalists? What tensions are described? In your reading of Schwartz's profile of Sarah Huckabee Sanders, how does that tension in today's politics?

		Section 3: Challenges	
March 21	**Journalism in the age of "fake news"** **Fourth news quiz question due on cuLearn on March 20** **In-class news quiz** **Final essay workshop in class**	• **Read** the Public Policy Forum's (2017) *Shattered Mirror* report ("Introduction" only): https://shatteredmirror.ca/wpcontent/uploads/theShatteredMirror.pdf • **Read** Emma Gray's (2018) "How 'fake news' is deeply damaging in the Internet age" in *Teen Vogue*: https://www.teenvogue.com/story/how-fake-news-is-deeply-damaging-in-the-internet-age • **Read** Brett Popplewell's (2018) "Inside *The Toronto Star*'s bold new plan to save itself" in *The Walrus*: https://thewalrus.ca/inside-the-toronto-stars-bold-plan-to-save-itself/ • **Monitor** *Toronto Star* reporter Daniel Dale's Twitter feed: https://twitter.com/ddale8	Reading Gray's piece, what are some key attributes of "fake news"? Do you see signs of "fake news" in your social media feeds? In the context of Canadian journalism, how does the Public Policy Forum describe "fake news"? How does Popplewell describe reporter Daniel Dale's daily journalism practice? How can fact-checking change the story? How do you fact-check news?
March 28	**Paywalls and you**	• **Read** a selection from The American Press Institute's (2015) report, *How Millennials Get News:*	Reading this week's selections alongside previous course material, how would you describe the news

Date	Description	Readings for this class	Guiding questions for class discussion
	Fifth news quiz question due on cuLearn on March 27 **In-class news quiz** **Final essay workshop in class**	https://www.americanpressinstitute.org/publications/reports/survey-research/millennials-who-pays/ • **Read** Alexis C. Madrigal's (2017) "Prepare for the new paywall era," in *The Atlantic*: https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2017/11/the-big-unanswered-questions-about-paywalls/547091/ • **Monitor** *The Washington Post*'s Instagram feed (@washingtonpost) Monday-Wednesday. • **Optional:** Read the Pew Centre's (2018) "Where millennials end and post-millennials begin." http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/03/01/defining-generations-where-millennials-end-and-post-millennials-begin/	landscape in North America? What are the challenges, for news organizations, of funding news?
April 4	**Conclusion: Reflecting on Canada's news media landscape** **Final in-class news quiz** **Final essay due in class, as a hard copy**	• **Listen** to the last three (3) episodes of the CANADALAND podcast: http://www.canadalandshow.com/shows/canadaland/	