MDIA5009

Philosophies of Journalism

Term Two // 2021

School of the Arts and Media // UNSW Arts, Design & Architecture

Course Overview

Staff Contact Details

Convenors

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School Contact Information

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The School of the Arts and Media would like to Respectfully Acknowledge the Traditional Custodians, the Bedegal (Kensington campus), Gadigal (City and Art & Design Campuses) and the Ngunnawal people (Australian Defence Force Academy in Canberra) of the lands where each campus of UNSW is located.

Course Details

Credit Points 6

Summary of the Course

Media disruption does more than just alter practices and business models. In many cases, it mounts a philosophical challenge to long-standing ideas about the role of journalism in liberal democracies and developing nations. In this course you will engage with critical and theoretical perspectives on news media practices old and new, including 4th Estate vs 5th Estate, Citizen Journalism, Fake News, Big Data, Development Journalism, hyper-localism, and Community-Engaged Research. You will also gain an understanding of Field and Gatekeeper Theory, the political economy of news in the Second Media Age, and debates around journalism professionalism, social distribution and the ethics of algorithms, AI and the robotic reporter.

Course Learning Outcomes

1. Apply concepts and theories of journalism to critically analyse news practices and texts in the context of the Digital Revolution.
2. Understand and contextualise the history and philosophies of journalistic practices and their impact on society
3. Craft a clear, critical and persuasive argument which addresses the histories and philosophies of Journalism.

Teaching Strategies

Interactive, participatory and reflective teaching approaches will be prioritized along with conceptual frameworks and applied methods. These teaching strategies encourage students to immerse themselves in the history and philosophies of journalism in order to promote reflection and the application of this material in both future academic and industry pursuits.

Assessment

Assessment Tasks

Assessment task	Weight	Due Date	Student Learning Outcomes Assessed
Discussion Leadership	30%	18/06/2021 11:00 PM	2, 3
Critical Essay	50%	02/08/2021 11:59 PM	1, 2, 3
Portfolio	20%	23/07/2021 11:59 AM	1, 2, 3

Assessment Details

Assessment 1: Discussion Leadership

Start date: 07/06/2021 09:00 AM

Length: 1200 words

Details:

Discussion leadership (individually marked) approx. 15 minutes during a specific class on a particular topic, as arranged with tutor. Feedback will be given via LMS.

Additional details:

Assignment 1 worth 30% of the marks in this course encourages students to investigate the connection between the philosophical thinking and the discipline of journalism. In Week 1 students will nominate their chosen philosopher from a list provided by their lecturer, then undertake research into the resonances between that philosopher's work and aspects of journalism theory and practice. The short essay will be accompanied by a ten-minute in-class presentation in PowerPoint that summaries the argument of the essay. Correct academic referencing is required using Harvard in-text citations, including page numbers for all quotes and a separate reference list of books you have actually used in your research. Best presentations will be presented in class.

Submission notes: Short Essay plus Power Point presentation

Turnitin setting: This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

Assessment 2: Critical Essay

Start date: 05/07/2021 09:00 AM

Details:

(research component) approx. 2000 words. Feedback given via LMS

Additional details:

Choose one of the emerging forms of journalism listed on the course Moodle page and write an essay on the history of that genre, its philosophy and methods, its affordances for journalists and audiences, and the ethical challenges faced by journalists working in that genre.

Submission notes: Full Harvard in-text referencing with a separate reference list

Turnitin setting: This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

Assessment 3: Portfolio

Start date: 08/06/2021 09:00 AM

Details:

submissions (selected pre-class and in-class submissions) approx. 1500 words. This is the last assessment for this course. Feedback given via LMS.

Additional details:

Students will be marked on the quality and volume of their contributions to the class discussion forum and in class participation exercises. Submission will consist of the individual student's forum contributions collated into a single WORD DOC.

Submission notes: Forum contributions

Turnitin setting: This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

Attendance Requirements

Students are strongly encouraged to attend all classes and review lecture recordings.

Course Schedule

View class timetable

Timetable

Date	Type	Content
Week 1: 31 May - 4 June	Lecture	**Philosophers and Journalists** At first glance, these two different disciplines appear to have little in common. But journalists and philosophers share a passion for describing and understanding what our world is, and what it could and should be. This week's lecture explores the history of journalism, stretching back to the Greek and Roman empires, and its philosophical underpinnings and asks why some scholars believe we need a philosophy--or philosophies--of journalism.
	Reading	Mitchell Stephens, *A History of News: from the drum to the satellite* Martin Conboy*, Journalism: A critical history* John C Merrill, *Legacy of Wisdom: Great thingers and Journalism.* Carlin Romano, "We need 'Philosophy of Journalism'" *The Chronicle of Higher Education.* Jean K. Chalaby, *The Invention of Journalism*
	Tutorial	**IN CLASS DISCUSSION:** What lessons does history teach us when it comes to understanding journalism today? **ACTIVITY (ASSIGNMENT ONE PREP):** Working with one partner student, access the list of philosophers in the Moodle Week 1 folder. Pick two philosophers and search online for information about their ideas. Can you identify aspects of their work that have direct or indirect relevance to journalism theory and practice?

Week 2: 7 June - 11 June	Lecture	**Theories of Journalism** Journalism is a global phenomenon, but the practice of journalism is profoundly different in different parts of the world. This diversity of approaches has spawned multiple different theories regarding its purposes and methods. From authoritarian to libertarian models, and from social responsibity theory to the concept of a global public sphere, and Bourdieu's Field Theory.
	Tutorial	**IN CLASS DISCUSSION:** Where you live in the world makes a big difference to how you see the world, and for media, it's no different. What journalism is on one country, it is most definitely not in another country. What is journalism like where you live? How different or similar does it seem when compared with the journalism practiced in other placed you have been? **ACTIVITY (HYPOTHETICAL/FOUR MEMBER GROUP EXERCISE):** You are hired to devise a strategy to promote global journalism in your country. Prepare an action plan for your client.
	Reading	Siebert, Peterson and Schramm, *Four Theories of the Press* Rodney Benson, 'News Media as a "Journalistic Field": What Bourdieu adds to New Institutionalism, and vice versa' David M. Ryfe, *Journalism and the Public* Flew, Iosidis and Steemers, *Global Media and National Policies: The Return of the State.* de Beer, and Merrill, *Global Journalism: Topical Issues and Media Systems* Raymond Williams, *Britain in the Sixties: Communications* Mark Deuze, *Media Work* Brian McNair, 'Journalism and Democracy' in *The*

		Handbook of Journalism Studies
		David Berry, *Journalism, Ethics and Society*
		Michael Schudson, *Discovering the News*
Week 3: 15 June - 18 June	Lecture	**Truth, Gatekeepers and the Fourth Estate** By the mid-20th century, the dominant model for journalism in the West was the Fourth Estate. Funded by booming economies, sustained by freedom of speech, and devoted to objective reporting "without fear or favour" journalists dared to speak truth to power. Over time, values like objectivity and balance gave way to more nuanced concepts like 'fairness to the facts'. But whereas some saw journalists as heroes, sociologists saw gatekeepers exercising their privileged right to set agendas and decide what is news.
	Tutorial	**IN CLASS DISCUSSION:** Don your eyeshade, liberate your inner gatekeeper and feel the power. What makes headlines when you make editor? **ACTIVITY (INDIVIDUAL):** Access your favorite news publication and make a list of the headlines in order of prominence on the publication's webpage. Then go to another news website and list their stories in order of prominence. Explain to class how they differ, then proceed to create your own news list for that day based on your personal assessment of the importance of the stories of the day.
	Reading	Christopher Anderson, 'Journalism: Expertise, authority, and power in democratic life' in Hesmondhalgh and Toynbee, *The Media and Social Theory,* Stephen J.A. Ward, *The Invention of Journalism Ethics: the path to Objectivity and Beyond.* Gaye Tuchman, 'Objectivity as Strategic ritual' , American Journal of Sociology 77 Shoemaker. Vos and Reece, 'Journalists as Gatekeepers' in *The Handbook of Journalism*

		Studies
		Rodney Benson, 'Bringing the Sociology of Media back In', *Political Communication*
		Barbie Zelizer, 'Sociology and Journalism' in *Taking Journalism Seriously*
		Silvio Waisbord, (ed) *Media Sociology: A reappraisal*
		Herbert J. Gans, *Deciding What's News: a study of CBS Evening News, NBC Nightly News, Newsweek and Time.*
		Coleman, McCombs, Shaw and Weaver, 'Agenda Setting' in *The Handbook of Journalism Studies*
		Louis Filler, *The Muckrakers*
Week 4: 21 June - 25 June	Lecture	**'Then Everything Changed': The Fifth Estate and the people formerly known as the audience** In the 1990s, a triad of technologies--basically, word processors, networked computing, and wi-fi--transformed the way humans communicate. For journalists involved in the business of news, that meant competition, and a world of disruption, opportunity and pain. Empowered by easy access to the World Wide Web, would-be publishers with relatively meagre resources, moved into the space, committed to a very different idea about how journalism should work. The existential question on everyone's lips was "Are blogger's journalists?"
	Tutorial	**IN CLASS DISCUSSION :** The World Wide Web did not just change the way journalists worked, it changed who could be a journalist, and enabled the proliferation of the many new forms of journalism that we recognise today. Assignment 2 (Critical essay, 50%) invites you to immerse yourself in of those emerging journalistic genres. **ACTIVITY (ASSIGNMENT 2 PREP)** Students will come to class having selected an emerging genre. This week's class will workshop your early impressions, ideas and questions about your chosen genre and provide advice on how best to approach the questions posed by Assignment 2.

	Reading	Jay Rosen, 'The People Formerly Known as the Audience' in Michael Mandeberg, *The Social Media Reader.*
		Christopher Kremmer, 'The Gatekeepers' Legacy', Professionalism, ethics and expertise in the Age of Citizen Journalism' (Conference paper), Australia and New Zealand Communications Association, Queenstown, 2015.
		Chris Atton, 'Alternative and Citizen Journalism' in in *The Handbook of Journalism Studies*
		Nicholas Lemann, 'Amateur Hour: Journalism without Journalists" *The New Yorker*
		Santosh Kumar Biswal, Exploring the Role of Citizen Journalism in Rural India' in *Media Watch*
		Lewis, Kaufhold and Lasorsa, 'Thinking about Citizen Journalism: the philosophical and practical challenges of user-generated content for community newspapers' in *Journalism Practice*
		C.W. Anderson, 'From Indymedia to Demand Media: Journalism's vision of its audience and the horizons of democracy' in Michael Mandiberg, *The Social Media Reader*
		Lowrey and Anderson, ' The Journalist behind the Curtain: Participatory Functions on the Internet and their Impact on Perceptions of the Work of Journalism' in the *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication,*
		Stuart Allan, *Online News*
		Seth C. Lewis, 'The Tension between professional control and open participation' in *Information, Communication & Society.*
Week 5: 28 June - 2 July	Lecture	**Mainstream News Media's Existential crisis of confidence** Having questioned the credentials of the new wave of citizen journalists, the old elites had questions of their own to answer regarding the nature of their professionalism, and cosy relationships with media barons. As digital wrecked traditional new media business models, even respected outlets turned to clickbait for economic solace.

	Tutorial	**IN CLASS DISCUSSION:** Is Journalism a profession? What are your arguments for or against? **ACTIVITY:** Form groups of four students. Half the groups should argue for the proposition that "Rupert Murdoch is the greatest media proprietor of all time". The other half argue the propostion that "Rupert Murdoch is the worst media proprietor of all time".
	Reading	Mark Deuze, 'What is Journalism?' in *Journalism* (2005) Chris Atton, 'What is "alternative" journalism?' *Journalism* (2003) Andrew Leigh, *The Naked Truth? Media and Politics in the Digital Age* (online) Kevin Rudd, 'Citizen Murdoch's critical grip on democracy' *Sydney Morning Herald* 5 Jan 2019 Ronald Bishop, 'Critical Essays and Reviews: Robert W McChesney's *Rich Media, Poor Democracy* in *Journal of Communication Inquiry* Robert Stone, *Tabloid Days: An apprenticeship in the gutter* Philo, Hewitt, Beharrell and Davis, *Really Bad News* Stuart Allan, 'Hidden in plain sight - journalism's critical issues' in *Journalism: critical issues* Richard Keeble, Journalism ethics: Towards an Orwellian critique?'in *Journalism: critical issues*
Week 6: 5 July - 9 July	Online Activity	Postgraduate Reading Week usually involves tonnes of reading. Not this year! Instead, you get to flex your philosophical muscles by connecting to the cutting edge Australian philosophy podcast *The Minefield.* Choose one or more of the following episodes and settle in. As you listen, take notes on what you found interesting and relevant to the

		philosophies of journalism. Submit your brief report (300 words) via the Moodle link.
		Was Twitter right to suspend Trump?
		https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/the minefield/was-twitter-right-to-suspend-trump/13096910
		Facebook and the news: should the divorce be permanent?
		https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/the minefield/facebook-vs-the-news/13193110
		Is "opinion" doing more harm than good?
		https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/the minefield/is-opinion-doing-more-harm-than-good/13117292
		What if the greatest threat to a free media was from within?
		https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/the minefield/what-if-the-greatest-threat-to-a-free-media-was-from-within/11218640
		Is "cancel culture" really constricting free speech?
		https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/the minefield/is-cancel-culture-really-constricting-free-speech/12456888
Week 7: 12 July - 16 July	Lecture	**Fake News and alternative facts: journalists as 'The Enemy of the People"**
	Tutorial	Discussion: For decades, opinion polls have indicate public distrust of media and journalists. What can journalists do to improve their public image? Is more regulation needed? Or are there things journalists can do to tidy up their own house?
	Reading	David M.J. Lazer, 'The Science of Fake News' *in Science 359 2017* David Nolan, 'Lessons from America? News and

		Politics in Hard Times' in *Media International Australia,* Aug 2012
		Geoffrey Baym, *From Cronkite to Colbert:the evolution of broadcast news*
		Barbie Zelizer, 'Introduction: Why Journalism's changing faces matter' in *The Changing Faces of Journalism: tabloidization, technology and truthiness*
		Crawford, Hunter and Filipovic, *All your friends like this: How social networks took over news*
		Tom Goldstein*, Journalism and Truth: Strange Bedfellows*
		Christopher Kremmer, 'An Institute, society or college of journalists'. Conference Paper
		Arthur S. Hayes*, Press Critics are the Fifth Estate*
Week 8: 19 July - 23 July	Lecture	**Avenging Angels: Return of the Journalism of Verification**
	Tutorial	**IN CLASS DISCUSSION:** From postmodern muckrakers like Julian Assange, to Development journalism and Knowledge-Based Journalism, traditional 4th estate approaches are back in style. But is this the quiet before another new storm? Or is more and better journalism the answer?
	Reading	Thomas E. Patterson, *Informing the News: The need for Knowledge-based journalism*
		Matthew Powers, NGOs as Newsmakers: the Changing Face of International News
		Silvio Waisbord, 'Advocacy Journalism in a Global Context in *The Handbook of Journalism Studies*
		Xu Xiaoge, 'Development Jounalism' in *The Handbook of Journalism Studies*
		Anderson, Dardenne and Killenberg, *The Conversation of Journalism*
Week 9: 26 July - 30 July	Lecture	**TBA**
Week 10: 2 August - 6 August	Lecture	**TBA**

Resources

Recommended Resources

Course Evaluation and Development

Submission of Assessment Tasks

Turnitin Submission

If you encounter a problem when attempting to submit your assignment through Turnitin, please telephone External Support on 9385 3331 or email them on externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au . Support hours are 8:00am – 10:00pm on weekdays and 9:00am – 5:00pm on weekends (365 days a year). If you are unable to submit your assignment due to a fault with Turnitin you may apply for an extension, but you must retain your ticket number from External Support (along with any other relevant documents) to include as evidence to support your extension application. If you email External Support you will automatically receive a ticket number, but if you telephone you will need to specifically ask for one. Turnitin also provides updates on their system status on Twitter.

Generally, assessment tasks must be submitted electronically via either Turnitin or a Moodle assignment. In instances where this is not possible, it will be stated on your course's Moodle site with alternative submission details.

For information on how to submit assignments online via Moodle: https://student.unsw.edu.au/how-submit-assignment-moodle

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. It can take many forms, from deliberate cheating to accidentally copying from a source without acknowledgement.

UNSW groups plagiarism into the following categories:

Copying: using the same or very similar words to the original text or idea without acknowledging the source or using quotation marks. This also applies to images, art and design projects, as well as presentations where someone presents another's ideas or words without credit.

Inappropriate paraphrasing: Changing a few words and phrases while mostly retaining the original structure and/or progression of ideas of the original, and information without acknowledgement. This also applies in presentations where someone paraphrases another's ideas or words without credit and to piecing together quotes and paraphrases into a new whole, without appropriate referencing.

Collusion: working with others but passing off the work as a person's individual work. Collusion also includes providing your work to another student before the due date, or for the purpose of them plagiarising at any time, paying another person to perform an academic task, stealing or acquiring another person's academic work and copying it, offering to complete another person's work or seeking payment for completing academic work.

Inappropriate citation: Citing sources which have not been read, without acknowledging the "secondary" source from which knowledge of them has been obtained.

Duplication ("self-plagiarism"): submitting your own work, in whole or in part, where it has previously been prepared or submitted for another assessment or course at UNSW or another university.

Correct referencing practices:

- Paraphrasing, summarising, essay writing and time management
- Appropriate use of and attribution for a range of materials including text, images, formulae and concepts.

Individual assistance is available on request from The Learning Centre (http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/). Students are also reminded that careful time management is an important part of study and one of the identified causes of plagiarism is poor time management. Students should allow sufficient time for research, drafting and proper referencing of sources in preparing all assessment items.

UNSW Library also has the ELISE tool available to assist you with your study at UNSW. ELISE is designed to introduce new students to studying at UNSW but it can also be a great refresher during your study.

Completing the ELISE tutorial and quiz will enable you to:

- analyse topics, plan responses and organise research for academic writing and other assessment tasks
- effectively and efficiently find appropriate information sources and evaluate relevance to your needs
- use and manage information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- better manage your time

- understand your rights and responsibilities as a student at UNSW
- be aware of plagiarism, copyright, UNSW Student Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use of UNSW ICT Resources Policy
- be aware of the standards of behaviour expected of everyone in the UNSW community
- locate services and information about UNSW and UNSW Library

Some of these areas will be familiar to you, others will be new. Gaining a solid understanding of all the related aspects of ELISE will help you make the most of your studies at UNSW.
http://subjectguides.library.unsw.edu.au/elise/aboutelise

Academic Information

For essential student information relating to:

- requests for extension;
- late submissions guidelines;
- review of marks;
- UNSW Health and Safety policies;
- examination procedures;
- special consideration in the event of illness or misadventure;
- student equity and disability;
- and other essential academic information, see

https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/protocols-guidelines/

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Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Bedegal people who are the traditional custodians of the lands on which UNSW Kensington campus is located.