

**JOM407 The News Business: Module guide**  
**Semester 2,**

**Thursdays, 2-4pm in JG2012**

Module leader: Maurice Walsh. Also teaching: Brian Cathcart

**AIMS**

The aims of this module are to:

- explore current and historical debates relating to the profession of journalism and its practice in Britain and elsewhere;
- develop understanding of core theoretical and conceptual ideas in journalism;
- familiarise students with skills necessary for undertaking a dissertation or practical journalism project;
- develop critical understanding of the purposes and principles of journalism.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

On successful completion of the module, you will be able to:

- engage critically with current controversies and challenges in the news industry in Britain and elsewhere;
- function as critical practitioners in journalism, employing key conceptual and theoretical ideas;
- show skills needed to deliver a dissertation or practical journalism project to a high standard
- conduct in-depth research into a chosen topic of relevance to the contemporary news industry.

**CURRICULUM CONTENT**

This module is intended to develop your ability to make connections between practice and theory in the field of journalism. The **News Business** explores the various tensions emerging from the primary journalistic dilemma: namely to report objectively and ethically while maintaining a commercially viable output. In order to better negotiate such tensions, during this module you will develop research skills in content analysis, discourse analysis, critical analysis, semiotic analysis and reception studies, in relation to printed media texts.

During this module you will review the news media in Britain today, which will lead to the examination of relevant areas of journalistic practice. You will consider news in a “macro” sense, as a global commodity of which there is infinite supply, and ways in which the news agenda and news values are formed and disseminated. You will also examine case studies, looking at particular news organisations and particular controversies in the field of journalism.

**ASSESSMENT**

The assessment is designed to test ability to engage critically and in depth with a topical issue of relevance to the news industry in Britain and to set their research in the context of relevant theories. It takes the form of a 3,000-word case study on a subject that is relevant to the module content and is approved by and discussed with module tutors.

**NOTE: To pass, students must achieve a mark of at least 50 per cent.**

**Deadline for submission: 11am June 3**

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Tested in</b>
Engage critically with current controversies and challenges in the news industry in Britain and elsewhere	Essay
Function as critical practitioners in journalism, employing key conceptual and theoretical ideas	Essay
Show skills needed to deliver a dissertation or practical journalism project to a high standard	Essay
Conduct in-depth research into a chosen topic of relevance to the contemporary news industry	Essay

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

**Books:**

Barthes, Roland: *Mythologies*. Vintage, London (2000 or 2009)

Bourdieu, Pierre (1996). *On Television and Journalism*. London. Pluto.

Currah, Andrew (2009). *What's Happening to Our News: An Investigation into the likely impact of the digital revolution on the economics of news publishing in the UK*. Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, Oxford (2009)

Curran, James and Seaton, Jean (2009). *Power Without Responsibility: Press Broadcasting and the Internet in Britain (7<sup>th</sup> Edition)*. London. Routledge.

Davies, Nick (2008). *Flat Earth News*. London. London. Chatto and Windus

Engel, Matthew (1996). *Tickle the public: One hundred years of the popular press*. London. Orion

Evans, Harold (2009). *My Paper Chase: True Stories of Vanishing Times, An Autobiography*. Little Brown, London.

Fletcher, Kim (2005). *The Journalist's Handbook*. London: Macmillan.

Hallin, Daniel (1986). *The 'Uncensored War': The Media and Vietnam*. Oxford University Press (1986)

Herman, Edward S. and Chomsky, Noam (1994) *Manufacturing Consent*. London: Vintage

Keeble, Richard and Wheeler, Sharon (2007). *The Journalistic Imagination*. London: Routledge.

Laughey, Dan (2007). *Key Themes in Media Theory*. London: OUP

Lippmann, Walter (1997). *Public Opinion*. London Transaction (1997)

\_\_\_\_\_ (2008) *Liberty and the News*. Princeton University Press (2008)

Lloyd, John (2004). *What the media are doing to our politics* Constable and Robinson

Malcolm, Janet (2004). *The Journalist and The Murderer*. London: Granta.

Pedely, Mark (1995). *War Stories: The Culture of Foreign Correspondents*. London. Routledge

Richardson, John E (2007). *Analysing Newspapers: An Approach from Critical Discourse Analysis*. Palgrave.

Seaton, Jean (2005). *Carnage and the Media: The Making and Breaking of News About Violence*

Schudson, Michael (1995). *The Power of News*. Harvard University Press

Williams, Raymond. (1976) *Communications*. London. Penguin

**Journals:**

*Journalism: Theory, Practice, Criticism*. Howard Tumber and Barbie Zelizer (eds). London: Sage. (bi-monthly)

*British Journalism Review*. Bill Hagerty (ed). London: Sage. (Quarterly).

*Journalism Studies*. London: Routledge. (bi-monthly).

*Press Gazette*. London: (weekly)

You should also read the Media pages of the *Guardian* and the *Independent* on Mondays.

### Useful websites

For access to interesting articles and links to other sources: [www.aldaily.com](http://www.aldaily.com)

Roy Greenslade's blog: <http://blogs.guardian.co.uk/greenslade/>

Useful for students: <http://www.holdthefrontpage.co.uk/aboutus.shtml>

Also <http://www.journalism.co.uk/>

The Frontline Club: [www.frontlineclub.com](http://www.frontlineclub.com)

Polis: [www.polismedia.org](http://www.polismedia.org)

Good business information from the Newspaper Marketing Agency:

<http://www.nmauk.co.uk/>

Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC): <http://www.abc.org.uk>

National Readership Survey: <http://www.nrs.co.uk/>

National Union of Journalists: <http://www.nuj.org.uk/>

Society of Editors: <http://www.societyofeditors.co.uk/>

The Romenesko site (US): <http://www.poynter.org/column.asp?id=45>

Columbia Journalism Review (US): <http://www.cjr.org/>

Make use of the full resources of the library. Besides the Journalism collection, the Media section on the third floor will be a very valuable source of reading material for this module, and students are advised to make themselves familiar with what is there. The Politics, History and Sociology sections may also be useful. If in doubt, ask a librarian.

### TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGY

This module is delivered through weekly two-hour seminars. ***You must prepare for these discussions through reading the core texts for each week and participate in group discussions.*** They will also be expected to read widely from the other books and articles listed above as well as books that will be mentioned throughout the course.

Study time: seminars: 22 hours, independent learning: 128 hours.

All seminars include a review of, and discussion of, current events and controversies in the news media as reflected in such publications as the Guardian Media section (published on Mondays, available online), the Press Gazette (also available online) and Romenesko. Students must prepare for these discussions through reading the core texts for each week. In addition, it is essential to keep abreast of the news itself, by reading at least one national newspaper per day.

### PROGRAMME (Subject to amendment)

Week 1, 4 February – Introduction to the Course

Week 2, 11 February – Sociology of the Press: Outline of theories & concepts

Week 3, 18 February – What is News? – A Historical Assessment

Week 4, 25 February – The Reporter: A Biography

## For Distribution to CPs

- Week 5, 4 March – Janet Malcolm: *The Journalist and the Murderer*
- Week 6, 11 March – *Manufacturing Consent: The Ideas of Noam Chomsky*
- Week 7, 18 March – The Press and the Iraq War in the US and Britain
- Week 8, 25 March - John Lloyd: *Politics and the Media*
- Week 9, – READING WEEK
- Week 10, 22 April - Galtung and Ruge and measuring news values (tbc)
- Week 11 29 April - The Future of News in the Internet Age
- Week 12, 6 May – Preparing for Your Essay: one-to-one consultations