

## JOURNALISM AND DIVERSITY: MODULE GUIDE

JO3168: Second semester 2010-11. JG5005, Thursdays 12-2am.

Module leader: Brian Cathcart.

Office hour: 2-3pm Thursday, MB307.

Little more than a generation ago the great majority of journalism in this country was produced for white men by white men. Women were routinely ignored and excluded, where they were not patronised, treated as objects or confined to ghettos. Minorities, ethnic and otherwise, could freely be mocked and collectively defamed.

A great deal has changed since then – the law, public discourse, the very composition of the profession and the society it serves – but no one could claim that today we have arrived at a comfortable consensus or a *modus vivendi*. In fact how journalism should function in a diverse society is a matter of everyday debate and dispute. Terms such as multiculturalism, stereotyping, institutional discrimination and political correctness are constantly in the headlines and they present a challenge to every working journalist. Understanding of such issues is essential.

This module analyses the fundamental principles and explores specific instances of debate and conflict from the recent past, as well as current controversies. It concentrates on what is relevant to journalism; wider issues are of course involved, but we look at the subject as it relates to and in the context of journalism, and in particular primary journalistic materials – written articles. Please note that the module is not intended as a guide to what is racist and what is not, or what is politically correct and what is not. It will robustly examine the relevant issues with a view to helping students build their own understanding of what matters.

### Aims

To help equip students to function as journalists in a diverse society;  
To further develop understanding of diversity issues in modern Britain;  
To foster understanding of the role of journalism both in giving expression to sexism, racism and other forms of discrimination, and in challenging them.

### Outcomes

On successful completion of the module, students will be able to demonstrate:  
A grasp of the operation of prejudice at both institutional and personal levels;  
Understanding of concepts such as “otherness”, “race”, “culture”, “stereotyping” and “institutional discrimination”;  
Understanding of common differences in the treatment of the sexes in the media and the treatment of different ethnic, religious and other social groups;  
Familiarity with recent developments in media coverage in the field of diversity;  
Ability to work independently and manage their time efficiently;  
Ability to produce an extended essay addressing an issue in this field.

### Delivery

The module is delivered in weekly two-hour sessions. Some of the lectures will involve visiting speakers. Reading materials are identified week by week, while an important part of the core reading is the daily press and online news media. Students are expected to read at least one “quality” (non red-top) paper every day, and to follow the online and broadcast news. In addition, a short bibliography is given below.

### Assessment

The module is assessed on the basis of a 2,000-word case study on a subject approved by and discussed with the module leader, to be submitted by 11am on Friday 13 May.

### Content

Since we have among our objectives (a) dealing with topical matters and (b) enabling students to define and develop their own areas of interest, what follows may be subject to alteration.

Week 1. 3 Feb.	Introduction to the module
Week 2. 10 Feb.	The Lawrence case and multiculturalism
Week 3. 17 Feb.	How to study journalism
Week 4. 24 Feb.	Representations of Muslims
Week 5. 3 March.	Political correctness
Week 6. 10 March.	Women in journalism (Viv Groskop)
Week 7. 17 March.	Anti-Semitism, the Holocaust and Israel
Week 8. 24 March.	Essays and how to write them
Week 9. 31 March.	Gays, lesbians and the media
Week 10. 7 April.	Reporting immigration
Week 12. 5 May.	Essay workshops

### Additional reading (besides newspapers and their media pages)

*Press Gazette* and *British Journalism Review*

Cottle, S. (2000) *Ethnic Minorities and the Media*. London, Open University Press.

Alibhai-Brown, Y. “The Media and Race Relations”, in Blackstone, T. et al, (1998) *Race Relations in Britain*. London, Routledge.

Dowling, J. and Husband, C. (2005) *Representing “Race”* London, Sage.

Mills, E. (ed). (2005) *Cupcakes and Kalashnikovs, 100 years of the best journalism by women*. London, Constable.

Society of Editors/Media Trust (2006) *Reporting Diversity: how journalists can contribute to community cohesion*, Cambridge/London: Society of Editors/Media Trust

Said, E. (1997) *Covering Islam: how the media and the experts determine how we see the rest of the world* London, Vintage.