

## MODULE GUIDE: JOURNALISM IN CONTEXT

### JO 1228 Level 4 Semester 2

Module leader: Sara McConnell

Seminar tutors: Sara McConnell, Mary Braid

Weeks 1-12 lecture Thursday 11-1; seminar as timetabled Thursday

#### Aims

This module aims to introduce you to some of the main debates and discussions going on in the industry and put these in the context of current and historical commentary and literature in the journalism field. Have newspapers got a future in the age of 24/7 online coverage? What is news? Who controls it? Is there such a thing as “objective journalism” or do all writers have an agenda, even if they don’t realise it? Does this actually matter as long as readers understand where journalists are coming from? Should newspapers and magazines give their readers what they want or what editors think they should want? How much power has the media really got? Is there such a thing as “good journalism” and if so, how is this defined?

During this module you will learn how to argue a case on the questions above and other journalistic debates, through presentations, online discussion boards and classroom debates, learning to make connections between different issues. You will also learn how to tackle academic essays at university level – to write a good essay, you need to know how to put a case persuasively, setting out both sides of your argument and backing up your points with concrete examples.

#### Learning outcomes

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

- Demonstrate understanding of current industry debates
- Apply current thinking about journalism to academic discussions and essays
- Demonstrate the ability to think independently about complex issues as a critical, engaged journalist
- Approach essay writing with confidence

**How the learning outcomes link to your assessment**

Learning outcome	Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrate understanding of current industry debates</li> </ul>	Essay, seminar participation, critique of reading
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apply current thinking about journalism to academic discussions and essays</li> </ul>	Essay, seminar participation, critique of reading
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrate the ability to think independently about complex issues as a critical, engaged journalist</li> </ul>	Essay, seminar participation, critique of reading
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approach essay writing with confidence</li> </ul>	Essay

**Curriculum content**

Subjects covered will include:

- What is journalism and does it matter?
- The role of the journalist and the reader/journalist relationship
- The power of the media
- The future of journalism
- What commentators say and have said about these issues and who is saying what
- Using arguments put forward by expert commentators to develop your own arguments and points of view in presentations and essays

**Teaching and learning**

This module will be delivered through a two hour weekly lecture/workshop and a one hour seminar. You will be expected to prepare at least one piece of set reading for each seminar and participate in discussion and other seminar activities. As in other journalism modules, you will obviously be expected to read newspapers regularly and be aware of what is going on but you will also be expected to read books and journals about journalism and the journalism industry, starting with those on the book list in this guide. Many of these texts will be important sources for your development as a critical and engaged journalist throughout your time at Kingston and beyond.

Lecture/workshop: 2 hours a week.	Total: 22 hours
Seminars: 1 hour a week.	Total: 11 hours
Independent learning and directed learning	Total: 117 hours
Total:	Total: 150 hours

### **Assessment**

Assessment for this module is in two parts

- 1) A 1,000 word essay on a title from a list set by the tutor
- 2) A 1,000 word critique of an academic article/book chapter

The essay and critique are together worth 100% of the marks.

### **Marking criteria**

- 1) Essay. You will be marked on your ability to: set out a coherent and balanced argument; use your reading to produce appropriate examples to back up your argument; consult a varied range of sources (not just the reading passages and lecture notes provided); write in clear, grammatical English; reference correctly using the Harvard referencing system
- 2) Critique of academic writing: You will be marked on your ability to: understand the arguments put forward by the author in your chosen passage; critique the arguments (validity and limitations); show how the passage links to other debates and theoretical positions; write in clear, grammatical English; reference correctly using the Harvard referencing system

**The deadline for the assignment is Tuesday 10 May at 11am**

### **Programme**

#### **Week 1 w/b January 31 2011.**

Lecture: Introduction and overview of issues. What is journalism and what is it for? The role of the journalist in a democracy and in the public sphere; the idea and reality of a free press; the journalist in a global market

Seminar: introduction to module/ assessment. Introduction to critical reading skills. How to use the library effectively.

### **Reading:**

- Anderson (2007) Competing models of journalism and democracy in *The future of journalism in advanced democracies*
- Franklin 1997 The image and reality of journalism (chapter 2) in *News and Newsak*
- McNair (2006) Cultural chaos and the globalisation of journalism in *Cultural Chaos*
- Habermas (2002) The transformation of the public sphere's political function (chapter 6) in *The Structural Transformation of the public sphere*
- Currah (2009) "A democratic deficit?" (chapter 7) in *What's happening to our news?* Reuters: Oxford  
[http://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/fileadmin/documents/Publications/What s Happening to Our News.pdf](http://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/fileadmin/documents/Publications/What_s_Happening_to_Our_News.pdf)

### **Week 2 w/b February 7 2011**

Lecture: Who decides what is news? What do we mean by news values? News as a "mirror"; news as "objective" reality v news as a social construct.

Seminar: What is news? Defining the indefinable?

#### Reading

- Galtung and Ruge (1965) The structure of foreign news in *Journal of Peace Research, Vol. 2, No. 1*
- What is News? Galtung and Ruge Revisited (Harcup and O'Neill in *Journalism Studies, volume 2, Number 2 2001, pp261-280*
- Niblock, *Practice and Theory, What is news?* in Keeble, Print Journalism, a critical introduction
- Also: Allan, *News Culture* chapter 3; Allan, *Journalism: critical issues* chapter 6; Curran and Seaton *Power without responsibility* chapter 7;

### **Week 3 w/b February 14 2011**

Lecture: Who sets the news agenda? The power of the press barons and other elites. The power of PR and the pseudo event.

Seminar: The powers behind the press. Chomsky's propaganda model and the "five filters".

#### Reading:

- Herman & Chomsky, *Manufacturing consent* (Introduction);
- Curran and Seaton, chapter 20 The Sociology of the Mass Media in *Power without Responsibility*
- McNair (2006) From control to chaos (chapter 3) in *Cultural chaos*, London: Routledge
- Boorstin (1961) The Image in *Tumber News: A Reader* chapter 3
- Byrne Colin (2010) Living in Spin in ed Hobsbawm *Where the truth lies*
- Golding and Murdock (1991) Culture, communications and political economy *Tumber News: A Reader* chapter 18

#### **Week 4 w/b February 21 2011**

Lecture: bringing the arguments together. The art of researching an essay.  
Seminar: how do you answer that question? Discussion and planning of essays.

Reading: TBC

#### **Week 5 w/b February 28 2011**

Lecture: "Good journalism" – what is it? Journalism: profession or trade?

Seminar: The journalist as "objective" reporter v the journalist as empathetic and "subjective" eye witness.

Reading:

- Harcup, The journalist as objective reporter, *Journalism: Principles and Practice* chapter 5
- Allen, The Rise of Objective Newspaper Reporting in *News Culture* chapter 1
- Tuchman (1972) "Objectivity as strategic ritual" in *Tumber (1999) News: a reader* chapter 32

#### **Week 6 w/b March 7 2011**

The language of journalism: selectivity, framing and slanting

Reading:

- Conboy (2007) *The language of the news*
- Glasgow Media Group (2004) *Bad news from Israel* chapter 2
- Conboy (2005) *Tabloid Britain*
- Cottle (ed) *News, public relations and power* chapter 5

### **Week 7 w/b March 14 2011**

Lecture: journalists and their sources. How and why do we choose the sources we use? Social media as sources

Seminar: the source-journalist relationship as tug of war – changing relationships with sources

#### Reading

- Manning (2001) *News and news sources*
- Hall (1973) Policing the crisis Tumber: *News: A reader* chapter 27
- Gans, Deciding What's News in Tumber, *News: A reader* chapter 26
- Allan (2004) Making news: truth, ideology and newswork in *News Culture*

### **Week 8 w/b March 21 2011**

Lecture: who are our readers and what should they know? Journalists' relationship with readers. The journalist as gatekeeper v. the journalist as gatewatcher.

Seminar: Participatory journalism: ideal v reality

#### Reading.

- Keen (2008) The great seduction (chapter 1), *The Cult of the Amateur*
- Bruns, Gatewatching (chapter 2) in *Gatewatching-Collaborative Online News Production*
- Gillmor (2004) Professional journalists join the conversation (chapter 6) and The former audience joins the party (chapter 7), *We the media*

### **Week 9 w/b March 28 2011**

Lecture: Keep taking the tabloids. The tabloid phenomenon and the dumbing down debate.

Seminar: dumbed down? Broadsheet newspapers then and now compared..

#### Reading

- Franklin, Setting the Agenda, (Chapter 1) *News and Newszak*.
- Davies, *Flat Earth News* (chapter 1)
- McNair. *Journalism and Democracy* (chapter 1)

### **Week 10 w/b April 4 2011**

Lecture: the future of print media. Are newspapers dead? Are magazines surviving better? Why? Are paywalls the answer?

Seminar: how online journalism came of age. Discussion cases: 9/11 and 7/7.

Reading

- Franklin, Bob (2010) Introduction *Journalism Practice*, 4 (3)
- Zelizer, Barbie and Allan, Stuart (2003) *Journalism after September 11*, London: Routledge

### **Week 11 w/b April 11 2011**

Reading week – no class

### **W/b 18 April 2011**

Easter vacation

### **W/b 25 April 2011**

Easter vacation

### **Week 12 w/b 2 May 2011**

Individual essay and critical reading tutorials

### **Bibliography**

#### **Books**

#### **Core reading**

Tumber, Howard (1999), *News: A reader* Oxford: OUP  
Zelizer Barbie (2004), *Taking journalism seriously: news and the academy*, Thousand Oaks CA: Sage

#### **Recommended reading**

Aldridge, Meryl (2007) *Understanding the local media*, Open University Press  
Allan, Stuart ed. (2005), *Journalism: critical issues*, Open University Press  
Allan, Stuart (2004), *News Culture*, Open University Press  
Allan, Stuart (2005), *Online News*, Open University Press  
Anderson, Peter and Ward, Geoff (2007) , *The Future of Journalism in the Advanced Democracies*, Ashgate  
Boorstin, D (1964) *The Image- A guide to pseudo events in America* New York: Harper and Row

- Bruns (2006) *Gatewatching-Collaborative Online News Production* New York, Peter Lang
- Chippindale, Chris and Horrie, Peter (1999), *Stick it up your Punter*, Pocket Books
- Conboy, Martin (2005), *Tabloid Britain*, London: Routledge
- Cottle (ed) (2003) *News, public relations and power*, London: Sage
- Curran, James and Seaton, Jean (2010), *Power Without Responsibility: The Press and Broadcasting in Britain*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Davies, Nick (2008), *Flat Earth News*, London, Chatto and Windus
- Engel, Matthew (1996), *Tickle the public: One hundred years of the Popular Press* Orion
- Fenton, N (ed)(2010), *New media, old news: Journalism and democracy in the digital age*, Sage: London
- Franklin, Bob, *Newszak and News Media*, London: Arnold
- Frost
- Gillmor (2004) *We the media* California: O'Reilly
- Habermas (1989) *The structural transformation of the public sphere* Cambridge: Polity Press
- Harcup, Tony (2004), *Journalism Principles and Practice* , London: Sage
- Herman E and Chomsky N (1994), *Manufacturing Consent*, London: Vintage
- Hobsbawm J (ed) *Where the truth lies* London: Atlantic Books
- Keeble, Richard ed (2005), *Print Journalism – a critical introduction* Routledge
- Keen, Andrew (2008), *The Cult of the Amateur*, London: Nicholas Brealey
- McNair, Brian (2000), *Journalism and Democracy – An evaluation of the political public sphere*, London: Routledge
- McNair Brian (2006) *Cultural chaos Journalism, News and Power in a globalised world*. London Routledge
- McNair (2009) *News and journalism in the UK* 5<sup>th</sup> edition, Routledge
- Machin and Niblock (2006) *News production theory and practice* London: Routledge
- Malcolm, Janet (2004), *The Journalist and The Murderer* London: Granta
- Marr, Andrew (2004), *My trade* London Macmillan
- Pilger, John (2005) , *Tell me no lies*, London: Vintage
- Sanders, Karen (2003), *Ethics and Journalism*. London: Sage.
- Schudson (1996) *The power of news*, Harvard University Press
- Starkey, Guy (2007), *Balance and Bias in Journalism: Representation, Regulation and Democracy*. London: Palgrave.
- Zeliser, Barbie and Allan, Stuart (2003) *Journalism after September 11*, London: Routledge

## **Journals**

*British Journalism Review*

*Journalism Studies*

*Journalism Practice*