

HISTORY MAN



Media History

Syllabus

Read it carefully because it will answer all the questions you're going to ask the instructor later, and which he won't answer (because it's in the syllabus).

PROFESSOR: Tom Bivins (see below)

OFFICE HOURS: M/W 10:15-11:15, or by appointment, 311-B Allen Hall. In addition, if you email me at any reasonable hour, I'll do my best to respond. I'm also available to chat before class, if you want to come early. Of course, you may always email the Graduate Assistants with questions or concerns.

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GRADUATE ASSISTANTS' OFFICE HOURS: TBA

COURSE DESCRIPTION

American history and the history of the media are intertwined and both have influenced and continue to influence the other. This course will discuss some of the most significant events in communication history—including the development of media technology, the media industry itself, and its role and influence in society.

We will consider how media have shaped human experience, including how they have affected society, culture, politics, and much more. At first glance, there are many differences between the past and present but there are striking similarities and themes that repeat over time. The goal of this course is for you to begin to be more personally connected with media history and how your life relates to it.

READINGS

Listed by week and topic on the Readings and Assignments page. No textbook is required for this class. The length and number of readings will vary. It is best to read them early and not wait until the night before they are scheduled to be discussed.

IF YOU WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT ME (AND I'M NOT SURE WHY YOU WOULD), SEE MY PERSONAL WEBSITE BY CLICKING ON MY FACE. IT DOESN'T HURT.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course, you should:

- Understand the major developments in media history, including the history and role of professionals in shaping communications.
- Understand the complex relationship between technological, social, cultural, and economic developments in media.

- Understand more about how media of the past have affected personal identity, free expression, and social power—thus addressing diversity in relation to communication across time.

These goals will be accomplished primarily through assigned readings, lectures, class discussions, and occasional videos. They will be tested in various assignments, essays, and on the midterm and final. Your work in this class will draw on your understanding of media history, as learned through lectures and readings, as well as your skills as writers and researchers gained in previous classes. You will also be asked to think about history in a very personal way—a way that, hopefully, will make history not just a story about the past, but a new way to look at the present, and even the future.

WORK AND EXPECTATIONS

We'll use class time for lectures, discussions, and sometimes to listen to or view media from or about the past. You are expected to have read assigned materials for the entire week before the first class that week and be ready to discuss them.

Graded work for the course will consist of the following assignments, essays, and exams.

- **ACTIVITY ESSAYS:** Two activity essays. These must be posted to Canvas by the dates on the Readings and Assignments page. (see separate assignment sheet for directions): 30% each, for a total of 60%.

NOTE ON WRITING: There will be a brief style guide attached to each written assignment. You are expected to follow all the suggestions on this style guide. If you are an international student or a student who has problems with grammar and style, please seek advice from the the SOJC's "Writing Central" program:

(<http://journalism.uoregon.edu/sojc-writing-central/>)

They will help you with organization and editing of your work for grammar and style.

- **EXAMS:** Exam 1 over all work (readings, lectures, videos, audio) given around the middle of the term worth 20%. Exam 2 over all work from week 5 through week 10 (readings, lectures, videos, audio) given near the end of the term worth 20% for a total of 40%.

Grades are determined by weighted percentages as outlined above, **NOT** total points or a simple average. The "Total"

column on Canvas will always reflect your current standing in the class based on assignments that have been graded and entered into the Grade Book at that point. Once all assignments are entered, including the Final Exam, that column will represent your final grade in the class based on the following breakdown:

Summary of graded work

Activity Essay 1.....	30%
Activity Essay 2.....	30%
Midterm Exam.....	20%
Final Exam.....	20%

98-100 = A+
92-97 = A
90-91 = A-
88-89 = B+
82-87 = B
80-81 = B-
78-79 = C+
72-77 = C
70-71 = C-
69-60 = D
59 and below = F

YOU'RE GONNA WANT TO READ THIS PART OVER & OVER AGAIN THROUGHOUT THE TERM, ESPECIALLY AT THE END WHEN YOU CAN'T UNDERSTAND WHY YOUR GRADE IS SO LOW.



Click on Honest Abe to read about his innovative use of media during the Civil War

ATTENDANCE:

This class, like all SOJC classes, has a mandatory attendance policy. The main reason to come to class regularly is because it creates a better classroom environment for all of us, making the class more interesting and fun. And of course, you will need the lecture and discussion material for the exams. Students who do not attend class may be dropped. Students who stop attending and fail to do the assigned work will receive a final grade of F. You are expected to be in class unless you are ill or have another documentable reason not to be here.



To learn more about this groundbreaking female journalist click on Nellie's image.

HERE'S HOW
WE'RE GONNA
TELL WHETHER
YOU CAME TO
CLASS OR

Roll taking:

Roll will be taken for every class period beginning the second week. A class roster will be passed around. You are to legibly **PRINT** your name on this roster. If we can't decipher your name, you will be counted absent. If you forget to sign in, you will be

counted absent. If you sign in for another student, both you and the other student will be counted absent and both will be brought up on academic misconduct charges which can result in being expelled from the Journalism program and possibly even the University.

Penalty for unexcused absences:

You are allowed a maximum of 3 "free" absences during the term (15 percent of the class). These can be for any reason: illness, weekend trips out of town, athletic event participation, or just laziness. Every absence, beyond 3 will result in a two percentage point reduction of your final grade. So, if you have 80% (B-) at the end of the term and you have been absent 5 times, you will lose 4 percentage points off your grade, which would result in 76% (C). If you have reached your limit on absences, you will need a documentable excuse for any absence beyond that. Documentable excuses are limited to the following:

- Students participating in University-sanctioned athletic or academic events
- Verified illness. If you can get a medical person to verify, that would be best. If not, it's up to you to prove you have been ill.
- Religious observances verified through the UO Affirmative Action Office,
- Verifiable emergencies (other than personal illness) only if accompanied by a note from the office of academic advising.

If you are absent for any reason, you should e-mail the instructor or the GTFs about your absence **AS FAR IN ADVANCE AS POSSIBLE**. We will make arrangements for missed work and/or exams. If you do not advise us of your absence and the reason for it, you will be counted absent, regardless of the reason. It is in your best interest to adopt this approach right away and not wait until you have accrued your three allowable absences. That way, excusable absences will not count against your allowable absences.

You should check your grades each time they are entered. If you have a problem with your grade, you have one week after it are posted to bring it to the attention of the GTFs or instructor. For exams, questions should be directed to the course instructor. For essays, questions should be directed to the person who graded your work (one of the GTFs or the instructor). In other words, don't wait until the end of the term to question an individual grade. It is only negotiable within a week of its posting.

I forgot to email the
instructor that I had a doctor's
appointment during class time today.
... And I thought this was painful.



TYPICAL STUDENT

GRADING CRITERIA FOR WRITTEN WORK: essays, research papers, homework, and other assignments.

F—Reveals you really have no clue what is going on, or are so carelessly inattentive to matters of style as to write an incomprehensible response.

D—Reveals less than adequate understanding of theory, concept, or other relevant information. Answer may also misapply concept, use an inappropriate or weak example in attempting to clarify an explanation, or may ramble on in the hope that something will eventually hit the intended target. Answer also may be more or less on target, but carelessly or sloppily written/proofed.

C—Provides an on-target recitation of the correct material from the text or other sources being consulted. Answer meets the basic expectations with respect to number of outside sources, or other conditions of a specific assignment. The writing, while clear and comprehensible, is otherwise non-exceptional, or gives evidence of inattention to basic matters of grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

B—Is not only on-target, but is written in a clear, well-organized style, with few errors (and indicates attention given to correcting spelling or punctuation mistakes). In addition, examples illustrate thought beyond recall or recitation of a text's commentary and adds to the overall understanding of the theory, concept, or other materials being evaluated. There is evidence of having gone beyond the text to consult other sources of information that might be relevant.

A—Goes beyond that required for a "B" response to indicate critical analysis, offering evidence of a cogent, well-reasoned defense of a position or argument that is advanced relative to the object under consideration. In other words, the answer reveals a clear authorial voice in command of the material. In addition, the style is elegant, indicating careful attention to presenting a well-constructed, well-thought-out response that advances understanding, stimulates thought or is otherwise evidence of exceptional thinking.

Note: These standards apply as general guidelines for the evaluation of assigned papers, essays, etc. [for speeches, simply read as if one were presenting report orally]. As should be clear, inattention to matters of style/format will result in a corresponding decrease in a grade, even when content is otherwise clear and on-target. As a further explanation of these criteria, consider the following comments:

- (1) A "C" answer is a good answer—it simply does not do any more than is being asked.
- (2) A "B" answer is a better answer, but does not reveal depth of analysis that would be required to be considered exceptional.
- (3) An "A" is an exceptional piece of work. Simply understanding the material is not the equivalent of an "A."



This stuff is probably more important than the rest of the syllabus, because it has to do with the the conduct of the class. The extent to which you follow these guidelines may determine your final grade in this class.

To learn about the part he played in early American journalism, click on Ben's image.



BEN FRANKLIN

CLASS POLICIES

- **Participation:** Participation means more than just showing up for class. You should come prepared to listen attentively to lectures, ask questions, and take part in discussions.
- **Late work:** Work turned in after the due date posted on the schedule will lose 10% of the total points available for the assignment per calendar day that the work is late. It will not be accepted at all after three calendar days. Exceptions only with documentable excuse (such as doctor's note or athletic excuse.) Missed exams may be made up only with documentable excuse. The final in this class is scheduled by the Registrar's Office a year in advance. Early finals are rarely available. Acceptable reasons for an early final are the same as those listed above under Absences (excepting personal illness). **DO NOT MAKE TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS FOR A DATE PRIOR TO THE SCHEDULED FINAL EXAM.** Unless exempted from a portion of the course, you must do all assigned work in order to pass.
- **Questions about assignments:** If you have a question about an assignment, contact either the GTFs or the instructor for clarification BEFORE the assignment is due. **Discussing grades:** The GTFs will be grading many of your assignments and will be happy to discuss your grades during their office hours. I'm happy to discuss your grades, but only with individual students, and I prefer this be done in person, not via e-mail. If you need to discuss your grade, you should first see the GTF responsible for a particular assignment. If that doesn't satisfy you, come to see me during my office hours or make an appointment.
- **PLEASE NOTE:** It is in your best interest to check your grades on Canvas after each assignment. Any errors or corrections will need to be taken care of NO MORE THAN ONE WEEK after that assignment grade was posted. After that time, we will not change a grade.
- **Academic Misconduct:** The University Student Conduct Code (available at conduct.uoregon.edu) defines academic misconduct. Students are prohibited from committing or attempting to commit any act that constitutes academic misconduct. By way of example, students should not give or receive (or attempt to give or receive) unauthorized help on assignments or examinations without express permission from the instructor. Students should properly acknowledge and document all sources of information (e.g. quotations, paraphrases, ideas). If there is any question about whether an act constitutes academic misconduct, it is the students' obligation to clarify the question with the instructor before committing or attempting to commit the act. Additional information about a common form of academic misconduct, plagiarism, is available at <http://library.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/index.html>

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE

The following ground rules have been developed out of respect for both the students and the instructors in this class. Inhibiting the learning process of those seriously interested in this subject will be considered rude and immature.

- **Coming to class on time:** Coming to class late interrupts the flow of the lecture and distracts the rest of the students. You are expected to come on time and be seated and attentive when class begins. If you must be late for a legitimate reason, please inform the instructor or the GTFs in advance.

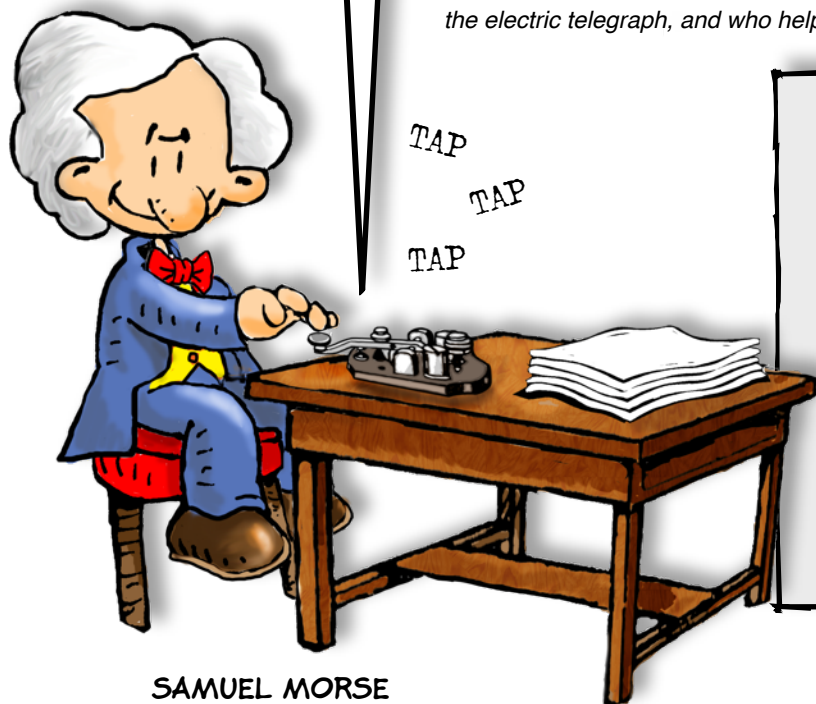
- Once class starts: Put away any distractions. Although you're not expected to be completely silent during the class, you are expected to keep your thoughts on the subject and your comments at least related to the topic.
- Leaving early: If you must leave early for a legitimate reason, please let the instructor or GTFs know in advance. This class is an hour and 20 minutes long. Unless you have a medical problem, please visit the restroom prior to class and refrain from leaving for that purpose during class.
- Laptop computers: Notes for most of the lectures are available online. Please read the explanation by a colleague on why I restrict laptop use in this class. If you feel you need to use a laptop in class, you must see me in person and explain your need, and you must sit in the first two rows and restrict your use to course-related work.
- Other electronic equipment: Texting is not allowed during class time. Cell phones must be turned off or set to silent. They must be put away and not visible to the instructor or GTFs. We mostly follow Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) rules here. Imagine you're flying. Don't forget to return your seat backs and tray-tables to their full, upright positions before we land. Once on the ground, you may reactivate your approved electronic devices.
- A word about free speech and civility: Everyone in this class is entitled to speak freely their thoughts and offer their opinions. However, we must keep in mind that speech may offend, and opinions can sometimes denigrate their opposites. When we offer our thoughts and opinions in class, we must do so with respect for those who might disagree, and with a level of civility expected of intelligent citizens operating within an environment that fosters learning.

There's a lot of other stuff about cheating (don't do it), special help for those who need it, how to be safe around campus, who to complain to if you don't like the instructor (wait, forget that one), and enough to fill another entire syllabus with things you won't read anyway. Just in case, here's some of it.

Click on Sam Morse to read about how he invented the electric telegraph, and who helped.

TAP
TAP
TAP

- <http://library.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/index.html>
- <http://aec.uoregon.edu>
- <http://safe.uoregon.edu/>
- <http://admissions.uoregon.edu/open/resources>
- <https://studentlife.uoregon.edu/mental-health>
- <https://studentlife.uoregon.edu/inclusion>
- <http://dos.uoregon.edu>



SAMUEL MORSE