

History and Principles of Journalism

JO 150 Spring 2019



Hunter S. Thompson
covering the 1972
presidential campaign

About this course

This course deals with the events, institutions and individuals that have shaped journalism in this country.

Each time we meet, I'll have stories to tell. On your own, you will read four books. Three times during the term, we will have exams.

The secret to success in this class comes in showing up. So roll out of bed and come to class to learn about your legacy.

Here's a chance to find out about the role the press has played in our history.

The history of this country is the history of journalism. This is your story; you need to know it.

Required:

- Lynsey Addario, *It's What I Do: A Photographer's Life of Love and War* (Penguin, 2015)
- Christopher B. Daly, *Covering America: A Narrative History of a Nation's Journalism* (University of Massachusetts Press, 2012)
- William McKeen, *Outlaw Journalist: The Life and Times of Hunter S. Thompson* (W.W. Norton, 2008)
- Steve Weinberg, *Taking on the Trust: The Epic Battles of Ida Tarbell and John D.*

Professor **William McKeen**

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Wednesdays, 10 am - Noon

Thursdays 1-2 pm and by appointment

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Rockefeller (W.W. Norton, 2008)

- A subscription to Top Hat, which we use to ask questions in class, take attendance, and report test scores. (See page three for more information.)

Boston University provides students with subscriptions to *The New York Times* and *The Boston Globe*. Read them daily in your preferred form.

Journalists *must* read.

Grading and related issues

There will be three tests. Since there is no textbook, you should conclude that attendance at the lectures is vital to success in the course.

The tests will have 25-30 questions from the lectures and five questions from the reading.

Your final grade is determined by your performance on the tests and class participation. And speaking of class participation: It should go without saying that I expect you not to talk, dance or make rude noises while I am trying to lecture. Any sort of disruptive behavior will be damaging to your grade. (See page four for more on grading.)

We follow the standard grading scale:

- 93 and up A
- 90 to 92.99 A-
- 87 to 89.99 B+
- 83 to 86.99 B
- 80 to 82.99 B-
- 77 to 79.99 C+
- 73 to 76.99 C
- 70 to 72.99 C-
- 67 to 69.99 D+
- 60 to 66.99 D
- 0 to 59.99 F

Attendance

Attendance is critical. Come to class fully prepared. Be caught up on the readings. Be well informed. We will use Top Hat to keep a record of your attendance.

If you don't show up, the quality of class is diminished. Remember your John Donne (and, of course, remove the gender bias from this centuries-old quote):

"No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main; if a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less.... (A)ny man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind; and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee."

In short, don't be a clod. But do be polite. There's no excuse for rudeness.

You will not be allowed to make up any missed work unless the reason for your absence is extremely grave (a death in the family or perhaps the contraction of some loathsome disease), and you call or email me *before* the class period to be missed.

I have strong feelings about attendance. It would be stupid to walk into Trader Joe's, fill your cart with yummy groceries, pay for the stuff, then tell the cashier, "Naw, you keep it." Yet that's what we often do in college. As Herman B (no period) Wells, chancellor of Indiana University (my beloved alma mater) once said: "Education is the one thing people pay for then do not insist upon receiving."

Learning objectives

Students will:

- Develop an awareness and appreciation of the foundations of journalism in a free society
- Develop an awareness of the the role of journalism in modern society
- Develop an appreciation of key journalists, works of journalism and institutions in our history
- Develop an understanding of journalism's legacy in a free society.

Top Hat: Our classroom response system

We will be using the Top Hat (www.tophat.com) classroom response system in class. You will be able to submit answers to in-class questions using Apple or Android smartphones and tablets, laptops, or through text message.

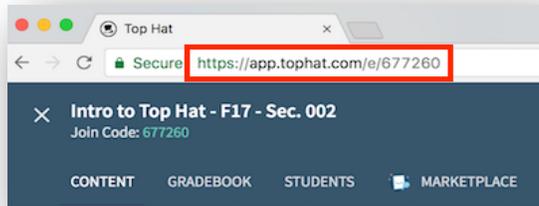
You can visit the Top Hat Overview (<https://success.tophat.com/s/article/Student-Top-Hat-Overview-and-Getting-Started-Guide>) within the Top Hat Success Center which outlines how you will register for a Top Hat account, as well as providing a brief overview to get you up and running on the system.

An email invitation will be sent to you by email, but if don't receive this email, you can register by simply visiting our course website: <https://app.tophat.com/e/432493>

Note: our Course Join Code is **432493**

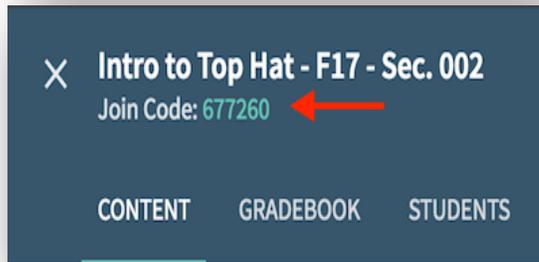
Top Hat may require a paid subscription, and a full breakdown of all subscription options available can be found here: www.tophat.com/pricing.

Should you require assistance with Top Hat at any time, due to the fact that they require specific user information to troubleshoot these issues, please contact their Support Team directly by way of email (support@tophat.com), the in app support button, or by calling 1-888-663-5491.



Notes

For your unique course URL, when logged into your Top Hat course, simply copy and paste the URL address in the address bar. See the example at left



As indicated by the image at the immediate left, your Course Join Code can be found under your course name in the upper left hand corner of your course.

If you are enrolled in different courses or sections with Top Hat you'll want to ensure you modify this code for each of your courses.

Breaking down the final course grade

Your final grade will be figured thus: Each test is worth 30 percent of your grade.

The final 10 percent of your grade is for class participation, which is drawn from the data accumulated by Top Hat through its attendance-checking feature as well as your participation in the short on-screen questions we post — on average — twice during each class period. Do not miss class except for the most dire reason.

Course outline

Oh, the places we'll go

The readings listed below (with each part of the course) are from *Covering America* by Christopher Daly. These readings are backup to the lectures in each of our sections. You will not be tested on Professor Daly's book.

The other books are *It's What I Do* by Lynsey Addario, *Outlaw Journalist* by William McKeen and *Taking on the Trust* by Steve Weinberg.

Tests are multiple-choice. Twenty-five questions come from the lectures (with the Daly book as backup) and five questions from the reading for that part of the course.

Each test covers a different book. These are unit tests. We *do not* have a cumulative final examination.

I have a journalism bibliography at the Courses tab of my website. Use it as a starter list for building a library of journalism history.



Ida Tarbell wrote the most thoroughly researched work of the Muckraking era, *The History of the Standard Oil Company*.

Part 1: The Best of Times, the Worst of Times

Readings: Chapters 5 and 6
Note: The companion book for the first section is *Taking on the Trust*, Steve Weinberg's biography of Ida Tarbell, the great investigative journalist of the Muckraking Era. One of the most diligent reporters in our history, she serves as an excellent role model for this part of the course. In this section we focus on some of the greatest moments in the history of American journalism, balanced by a few of our darkest hours.

JAN	22	T	Introduction
JAN	24	Th	Early Rumblings of the Adversary Press
JAN	29	T	Mucking About
JAN	31	Th	The Muck Stops Here
FEB	05	T	Fervent Idealists Teetering on the Brink of Righteousness
FEB	07	Th	Heroes Schmeroes

continued

Course outline continued

Part 2: **Disturbers of the Peace**

Readings: Chapter 1

Note: This section focuses on the creators of the flame and keepers of the flame. These are the pioneers – who invented American journalism and represent the best of that breed – the independent, autonomous journalist.

FEB	12	T	The Fabulous Franklin Brothers
FEB	14	Th	A Bum with Ideas
FEB	21	Th	The Main Street Militants
FEB	26	T	First Test

Note: Because of the Monday holiday, class will not meet on February 19.

25 multiple-choice questions from lectures, five multiple-choice questions on Taking on the Trust

Part 3: **Common Denominators**

Readings: Chapter 3, 5 and 7

Note: We focus on sensationalism, from colonial times to the present. You'll run into a lot of familiar names: Pulitzer, Hearst and Murdoch, to name a few scoundrels.

FEB	28	Th	The Sun Also Rises
MAR	05	T	The Scum Also Rises
MAR	07	Th	Tie a Yellow Journalist Around the Old Oak Tree

Note: Spring break is March 9-17

Part 4: **Wars and Peace**

Readings: Chapters 2, 4, 8, 9 and 11

Note: The companion book to this section is *It's What I Do* by Lynsey Addario. One of the values we use in deciding what is news is "conflict." We tend to think of wars, so naturally, this section of the course shows the press at tumultuous times. However, there are other sorts of conflict – domestic wars, we call them – worth study.

MAR	19	T	Have You Ever Heard of a Civil War?
MAR	21	Th	The Worm's Eye View
MAR	26	T	What's So Great About a Depression?
MAR	28	Th	The Children's Crusade

continued

Course outline continued

Part 5: Empires

Readings: Chapters 6, 10, 12, 13 and 14

Note: This section is devoted to individual histories of several media empires, including the *New York Times*, CBS News, the *Saturday Evening Post*, the *New Yorker*, the *Washington Post*, the *Los Angeles Times* and other companies.

APR	02	T	<i>The New York Times</i>
APR	04	Th	Second Test <i>25 multiple-choice questions from lectures, five multiple-choice questions on It's What I Do.</i>
APR	09	T	<i>The Saturday Evening Post</i>
APR	11	Th	<i>The New Yorker</i>
APR	16	T	CBS and <i>Rolling Stone</i>
APR	18	Th	<i>The Los Angeles Times</i> and <i>The Washington Post</i>

Part 6: Pressing On

Readings: None.

Note: The circle is unbroken. We use this last section of the course to bring us back to some of the themes with which we started. I'm getting nostalgic already. The companion book for this section of the course is my biography of Hunter S. Thompson, *Outlaw Journalist*.

APR	23	T	Citizen Twain
APR	25	Th	Zip! Zam! Zowie! Swoosh!
APR	30	T	Crank Time on the Low Road
MAY	02	Th	Third Test <i>25 multiple-choice questions from lectures, five multiple-choice questions from Outlaw Journalist.</i>



Katherine Graham led her family newspaper, the *Washington Post* through some of its greatest trials and triumphs.

A Note

This course does not follow the chronology of American journalism. It covers the territory thematically.

We consider the last 300 years of journalism on these shores in a somewhat unorthodox way. It seems like it's a good idea to go through this history, looking for themes and ideas and not conform to a diary-like telling of the story of American journalism.

If a break from chronology causes difficulty, please let me know. There are a number of good books that trace the chronology of American journalism.

The best narrative history of journalism is *Covering America* by my colleague Christopher Daly. You will enjoy it.

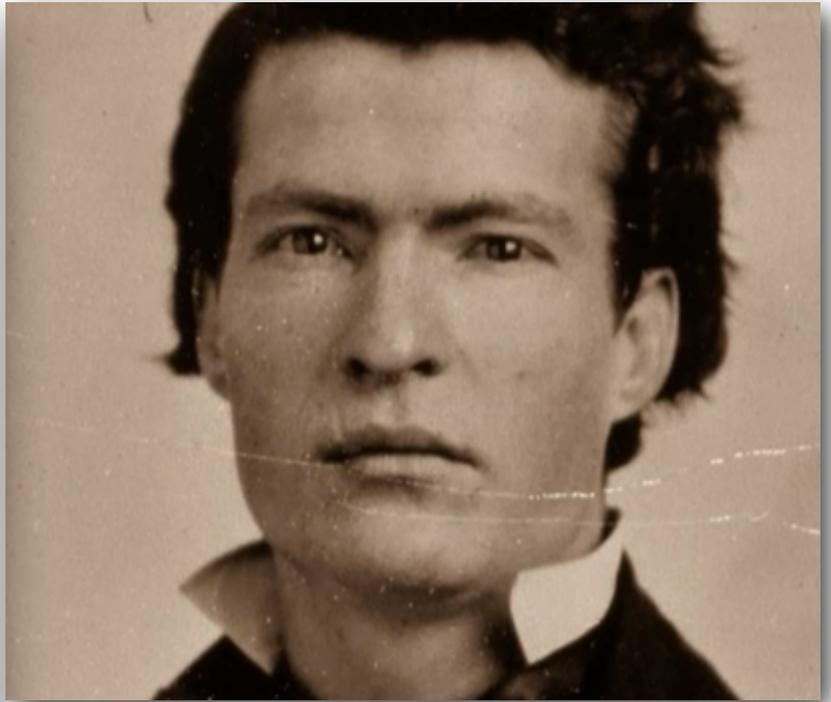
Fine print

BU has a student honor code. Take this pledge: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing the assignment."

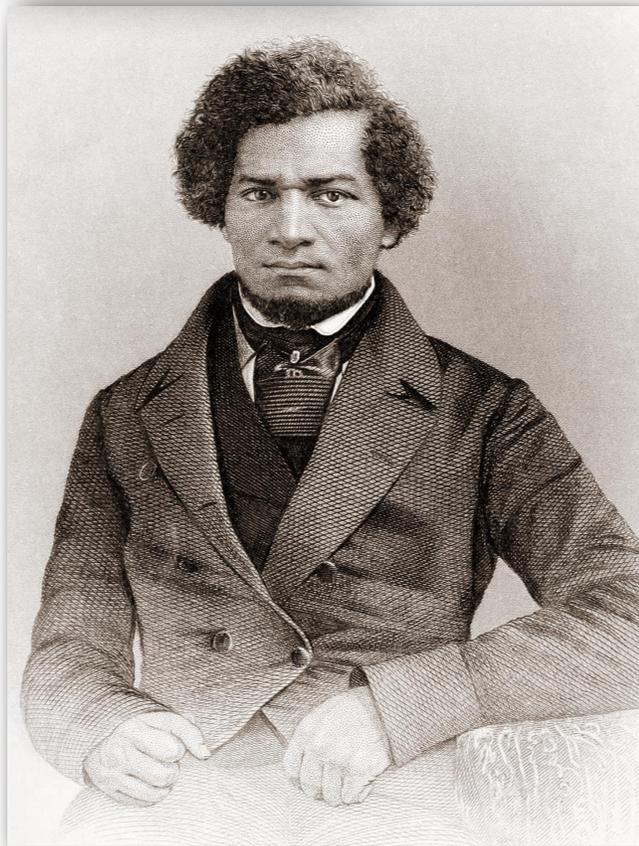
I will not tolerate cheating. If I discover that you have violated the honor code, I will do everything I can to boot you from the class and from the college.

The Boston University academic conduct code is here: www.bu.edu/academics/resources/academic-conduct-code/

Also see bu.edu/policies to learn about reporting sexual harassment and sexual misconduct. More information follows.



Mark Twain found his voice — one of the great voices of our literature — as reporter for the *Territorial Enterprise* in Nevada. Looks kind of like actor Dennis Quaid here, doesn't he?



Frederick Douglass was a runaway slave when he began writing for the *Liberator*, Boston's abolitionist newspaper.

Some final words

Consider this syllabus a contract. I've made promises I intend to keep. By not dropping the class, I assume you accept the conditions.

There are two guiding philosophers in my life: Elvis Presley (who said, "If this ceases to be fun, we will cease to do it.") and my late mother (who said, "If we all liked the same thing, it would be a pretty dull world.") Those two great thinkers shape my approach to this course.

I hope this course deepens your interest in journalism history and helps you understand the legacies of these storytellers.

Five important policies

1. Sexual misconduct

Boston University is committed to fostering a safe, productive learning environment. Title IX and our school policy prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, which regards sexual misconduct – including harassment, domestic and dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. We understand that sexual violence can undermine students' academic success and we encourage students who have experienced some form of sexual misconduct to talk to someone about their experience, so they can get the support they need. Confidential support and academic advocacy resources can be found with the Center for Sexual Assault Response & Prevention (SARF).

See: bu.edu/safety/sexual-misconduct/

2. Equal opportunity

BU has strict guidelines on classroom behavior and practices when it comes to treatment of students and guests on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, mental or physical disability, genetic information, military service, national origin, or due to marital, parental, or veteran status. Discrimination for any of these reasons is prohibited.

See: bu.edu/policies/ethics-governance/

3. Disability services

If you are a student with a disability or believe you might have a disability that requires accommodations, please contact the Office for Disability Services (ODS) at 617-353-3658 to coordinate any reasonable accommodation requests. ODS is located at 19 Deerfield Street, up on the second floor.

See: bu.edu/disability

4. Student athletes

All student athletes should be provided with a sheet from Student-Athlete Support Services regarding absences throughout the semester. These sheets should be handed in as soon as possible to avoid potential conflicts and so arrangements can be made to provide for missed lecture notes, classwork, or discussion.

5. Academic Conduct Code

All BU students are bound by the Academic Conduct Code. Please review to ensure you are acting responsibly and ethically in regard to your academics.

See: bu.edu/academics/policies/academic-conduct-code/



Mark your calendar: Journalist **Lynsey Addario** (at left), author of *It's What I Do* – which you may recognize as one of our required books this semester – visits the Department of Journalism on Tuesday, March 5. She is winner of this year's prestigious Hugo Shong Award for International Reporting. She will speak to BU journalism students about her career as a photojournalist in some of the most dangerous places on earth.

Some words about journalism

Favorite fancy-pants or funny quotes

The purpose of journalism is to irritate, infuriate and inform.

JESS LEWIS GARDNER III

A student in the first class I ever taught

The past actually happened, but history is only what somebody wrote down.

A. WHITNEY BROWN

Author and former 'Saturday Night Live' performer

All good research — whether for science or for a book — is a form of obsession.

MARY ROACH

Science journalist

It is not death or torture or imprisonment that threatens us as American journalists. It is the trivialization of our industry.

TED KOPPEL

Formerly of ABC News

The job of the newspaper is to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable.

FINLEY PETER DUNNE

Early 20th century journalist

The principal difference between a horse and a man is that you cannot rely on a horse to gather news.

MARK TWAIN

Who needs no introduction

I would be a journalist if for no other reason than I would rather drink with journalists than any other people on Earth.

HUNTER S. THOMPSON

Doctor of Gonzo Journalism

I wouldn't be here if there were no trouble. Trouble is news, and gathering news is my job.

MARGUERITE HIGGINS

Celebrated war correspondent

Reporters aren't very bright as a general rule. I mean, most of us learn to write when we're kids. Then we go on to other things.

BOBBY KNIGHT

Retired basketball coach



Marguerite Higgins covered three wars.

If journalism is good, it is controversial by its nature.

JULIAN ASSANGE

Wikileaks founder

I would trust citizen journalism as much as I would trust citizen surgery.

MORLEY SAFER

Formerly of CBS News

If you're good at it, you leave no fingerprints.

LILLIAN ROSS

Longtime reporter for the New Yorker

Be outrageous, ridicule the fraidy-cats, rejoice in all the oddities that freedom can produce.

MOLLY IVINS

Former reporter and columnist

History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be unlived, but if faced with courage, need not be lived again.

MAYA ANGELOU

Poet, speaking at President Clinton's first inauguration

Instructor biography

I worked for newspapers and magazines before I started teaching. My first job, at *The Courier-Tribune* in Bloomington, Ind., lasted until that fine little newspaper went out of business. I was at *The Palm Beach Post* briefly and then joined *The American Spectator*, then served two years at *The Saturday Evening Post*. While at the *Post*, I helped edit a couple of books, including an anthology called *The American Story*.

Since I started teaching, I've taken several short term jobs — sometimes in the summers, sometimes night work on the copy desk during the school year — on *The Norman (Okla.) Transcript*, *The Courier-Journal* (Louisville, Ky.), *The Tampa Bay Times* and *The Gainesville (Fla.) Sun*. I've written reviews and features for *The Orlando Sentinel*, *The Tampa Bay Times* and *The Boston Globe* fairly regularly since 1989.

I earned a bachelor's in history and a master's in journalism from Indiana University, writing a historical survey of the portrayal of journalists in popular culture. I earned my Ph.D. in higher education administration from the University of Oklahoma, though that was largely a history degree.

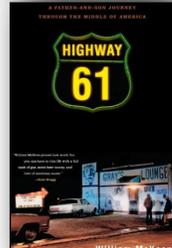
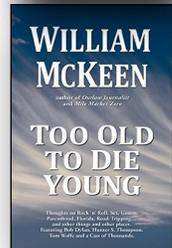
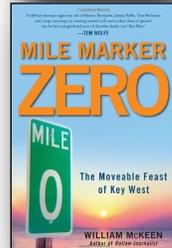
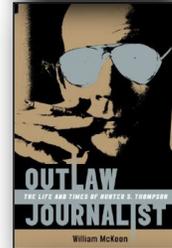
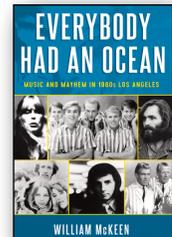
Some of my books:

- *Everybody Had an Ocean* (Chicago Review Press, 2017) tells the story of the intersection of music and crime in the Los Angeles rock'n'roll world of the 1960s.
- *Too Old to Die Young* (Dredger's Lane, 2015) is a collection of articles, short stories, reviews and other stuff.
- *Homegrown in Florida* (University Press of Florida, 2012) is a collection of stories about growing up in Florida.
- *Mile Marker Zero* (Crown Books, 2011) is about the writers, artists, actors and musicians who found their artistic identities in Key West.
- *Outlaw Journalist* (W.W. Norton, 2008) is a biography of Hunter S. Thompson.
- *Highway 61* (W.W. Norton, 2003) is a memoir of a 6,000-mile road trip with my eldest son.
- *Rock and Roll is Here to Stay* (W.W. Norton, 2000) is an anthology tracing the history of popular music.

I have seven children — Sarah, a designer with Pentagram Studios in New York; Graham, chief environmental officer for Indiana University; Mary, nightlife impresario in Chicago; Savannah, a junior at Santa Fe College in Florida; and Jack, Travis and Charley, all teen-age scholars in the Cohasset school system. I also have two magnificent granddaughters, Mabel and Pearl, and two more on the way

Before becoming professor and chairman of the Boston University Department of Journalism, I taught at Western Kentucky University for five years, the University of Oklahoma for four years, and the University of Florida for 24 years, the last dozen as department chairman. I've been at BU since 2010 and I think it's a darn swell place.

I hope you enjoy the course.

Shameless plug: I have seven children who'd like to go back to three meals a day. Feel free to purchase several copies to support this cause.