



**NEWSTORIES:
ORAL HISTORIES OF NORTH CAROLINA
NEWS WORKERS & NEWS MAKERS**

JOMC 490.001

Spring 2016

Tues/Thurs 3:30-4:45 p.m.

CA 338

Instructor: Dr. Barbara Friedman

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

The history of journalism and communication is populated by innovators and imitators, crusaders and scoundrels, heroes and villains, and, mostly, “ordinary” workers. To know more about media past, we can turn to the many excellent histories of our field – and we can turn to the individuals among us who have experienced firsthand important changes in our field. While some of their stories are known, many others wait to be discovered and incorporated into our field’s larger historical narrative.

The purpose of this class is to introduce you to the theory and practice of oral history, the “systematic collection of living people’s testimony about their own experiences.” For decades, historians have used oral history to document and understand the experiences of individuals and communities. As our subjects (narrators) give meaning to their lives through storytelling and conversation, you will see that oral history interviews are an important way to *document the past* and *understand the present*, since many of the issues facing our field have persisted over time, although they may take different form.

Our focus will be the history of media communication broadly construed. Students will conduct and record oral history interviews with figures of their choosing who have worked in media, and contribute their work to a corresponding digital archive (<http://newstories.mj.unc.edu>). Outstanding interviews will also be catalogued in the University’s renowned Southern Oral History Program.

In the **first part of the course**, we will read about and discuss the goals of oral history, as well as the methodologies and practices developed by scholars to gather historical recollections from a range of groups. You will hear the stories of journalists past and present, and have opportunities to practice interview skills. We will explore notions of memory—how it is constructed, altered, and forgotten; we will discuss the relationship between oral history and journalism; consider prevailing critiques of oral history and contemplate methodological challenges. You will conduct research using primary and secondary sources to understand the time period and specific field in which your narrator worked.

In the **second part of the course**, you will apply what you’ve learned. You will conduct and transcribe an interview with a selected journalist, interpret and assess evidence in relationship to your primary/secondary research, prepare your material and contribute your interview to the *NewStories* archive.

The semester will **conclude** with presentations and performances of your oral histories, to which we will invite our narrators and others.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

In this course you will add to your historical knowledge of our field as you contribute to it. You will learn new skills and build on existing ones. The skills you will acquire or refine this semester include: active listening, critical thinking (including the ability to synthesize multiple sources of information), and how to conduct archival and secondary research.

The course fulfills values and competencies established by our accrediting body, the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC). They include student ability to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
- Think critically, creatively and independently;
- Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.

Please note that this is NOT a production course. While you will be given basic instruction in the use of audio equipment, neither editing nor production will be taught in this class. Students entering the class with those skills are always welcome to contribute to the advancement of *NewStories*’ digital presence.

Required Texts:

- Valerie Raleigh Yow, *Recording Oral History: A Guide for the Humanities and Social Sciences*, 2nd ed. (Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, 2005).
- “A Practical Guide to Oral History,” Southern Oral History Program, University of North Carolina (available on Sakai, “SOHP” on syllabus)
- Additional weekly reading will be available via Sakai (“Resources” tab) or the web, as indicated on the syllabus.
- Our Sakai site includes RSS feeds from both the Oral History Association, a professional organization for those engaged in oral history work; and the UNC Southern Oral History Program (SOHP). You are expected to peruse the news

feeds for content related to our work -- such as examples of projects, ideas for presenting and publicizing projects, troubleshooting, ethical considerations and such – and to introduce what you learn from those sources to our class discussions and to your group and individual work.

NOTE: You are expected to take responsibility for your learning – a key way to do that is to come to class prepared. That means, among other things, that you will read assigned material *before* arriving to class each day. Quizzes, discussions and many of your short writing assignments will depend on your familiarity with and understanding of the reading.

Recommended Reading (part of the Park Library collection):

- Tom Bowers, *Making News: One Hundred Years of Journalism and Mass Communication at Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2009).
 - Written by a professor emeritus, this book includes multiple oral history interviews among other primary and secondary sources to tell the history of the School.
- Jean Folkerts, Dwight Teeter, and Ed Caudill, *Voices of a Nation: A History of Mass Media in the United States*, 5th ed. (Boston: Pearson, 2009).
 - Provides an overview of the history of journalism and communication.

NOTE: For recording your oral history project as high-quality digital audio that can be uploaded to the NewStories digital archive, you may borrow Zoom recorders from the equipment room in Carroll Hall (CA 239), from the Media Resources Center at the Undergraduate Library, and, in a pinch, from the instructor. You can also purchase for a nominal fee QuickVoice Recorder app for your phone, although students have typically relied on their phone recorders *as backup* to a more reliable recorder.

Important: The Carroll Hall equipment room (CA 239) has limited hours – Mon-Thurs 9-12, 1-3:30; Friday 9-12. If you plan to use equipment from the Media Resources Center at the UL, you may want to check availability -- <http://library.unc.edu/house/mrc>.

Coursework and Important Deadlines (Note: Deadlines are also indicated on Sakai calendar, and on the syllabus with due dates and asterisks):

| Assignment | Due date | % of course grade |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| Short Writing Assignment #1 | Jan. 19 | 20% (1 of 3) |
| Narrator Statement | Jan. 26 | Ungraded |
| Short Writing Assignment #2 | Feb. 16 | 20% (1 of 3) |
| Research & Interview Guide | March 1 | 20% |
| Short Writing Assignment #3 | March 24 | 20% (1 of 3) |
| Reading Quizzes | | 10 % |
| Final Project | Introduction – April 5 | 50% |
| | Transcript – April 12 | |
| | Upload to NewStories – April 21 | |
| | Performance – April 26 | |

Short Writing Assignments (20%):

#1 - Introduction to Oral History: Listen to and read the transcript for any single oral history interview on the NewStories digital archive (newstories.mj.unc.edu) and write a 250- to 350-word essay responding to the following questions: How does the interview contribute to our understanding of media history? Where does this individual's story fit into the broader historical narrative? What are your thoughts on interview method or style?

#2 – Peer Interview and Transcription: List 5 questions you could pose to a classmate in preparation for writing about their experience and career aspirations. In class, conduct and record a brief interview. Transcribe the interview using the proper form (guidelines provided on Sakai) and making sure the piece is free of errors.

#3 – Essay: Write a short (300-500 words) blog-style essay about an issue related to oral history. The essay is for possible publication on the Southern Oral History Program blog. Your essay should include reflection on your own experience reading about and conducting oral history interviews, but not be limited to that. More instructions provided in class.

Research Summary & Interview Guide (20%): Read a range of secondary and primary source material to help you understand your narrator, the field and the period in which he/she labored. Write a 500- to 750-word research essay including proper citation and a list of sources (MLA, APA, or Chicago Style accepted). Follow that with an interview guide that emerges from your research. Use the style indicated in class and in your reading.

Reading Quizzes (10%): You will be quizzed randomly during the semester as a way for me to know you are keeping up with and comprehending the reading and concepts therein. The quizzes are closed-book and closed-notes. They will be unannounced and can be administered at any time during the class session. At the end of the term, I will drop your lowest quiz score (including 'o' scores). If you miss a quiz, you may not make it up. Grades will be calculated this way: 100% (answered the question correctly); 50% (did the reading, answered the question incorrectly); 10% (you were present for the quiz); 0% (you were absent for the quiz).

Final Project (50%): Consists of multiple parts, due as indicated above and on week-by-week schedule.

- *Introduction*
- *Transcript*
- *Upload contents to NewStories*
- *Performance (preparation and execution)*

Unless otherwise noted on syllabus, papers and other material are due at the beginning of class. Barring extreme circumstances, I do not accept late assignments. In addition to work you'll do independently, you are afforded several "work days" during which you'll complete assignments in class or out of class (with instructor available for consult).

Grades for this course will be determined as follows:

| | | | |
|-----------------|------------|------------|------------------|
| A = 95 or above | B+ = 89-91 | C+ = 79-81 | D+ = 69-71 |
| A- = 92-94 | B = 85-88 | C = 75-78 | D = 60-68 |
| | B- = 82-84 | C- = 72-74 | F = 59 and below |

Note: For an understanding of what the various grades mean, see the UNC Faculty Council's statement [here](#).

Attendance Policy: As University policy states, “regular class attendance is a student obligation, and a student is responsible for all the work, including tests and written work, of all class meetings. No right or privilege exists that permits a student to be absent from any class meetings except for excused absences for authorized University activities or religious observances required by the student's faith.”

I understand, however, that some absences are unavoidable. Following the custom of some other MEJO courses, you are allowed two absences for any reason (including illness, university-related activities, or other obligations. Once you exceed two absences, *your final grade will be docked five points for each unexcused absence.*

It is your responsibility to sign the attendance sheet each day (to ask someone else to sign in for you constitutes academic dishonesty).

Important Notes About This Course:

Disability Accommodations. Students in this course seeking accommodations to disabilities must first consult with the Office of Accessibility Resources & Service and follow the instructions of that office for obtaining accommodations. For more information, contact 919.962.8300 or accessibility@unc.edu. Please understand that I'm neither qualified nor permitted under University policies to provide any disability-related accommodations without authorization from OARS.

Safe@UNC. The University's [Policy on Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment and Other Misconduct](#) states that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are civil rights offenses subject by federal law to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other [protected categories](#). If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources [here](#).

UNC Honor Code. Students must adhere to the letter and spirit of the [university honor system](#). Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated—this includes plagiarism, cheating or any false means of obtaining a grade—and may result in failure of the course, and suspension or expulsion from the university. If I suspect academic dishonesty, I have a duty to report it to the School's Associate Dean, the Student Attorney General, or the judicial programs officer in the Dean of Students' office for further action. To learn how to avoid plagiarism, go to the university's honor system [plagiarism](#) site or The Writing Center's [plagiarism](#) site.

Sakai: UNC-CH's [Sakai](#) site is the primary way I'll communicate with you outside the classroom. That means you are responsible for checking the site regularly for course updates, announcements, documents, and such. Correspondence sent from Sakai (and from Connect Carolina) is routed to your UNC e-mail address, so be sure to check that regularly, too.

Technology: To allow us to focus collectively on the work we're here to do, computers may be used in class only when an in-class assignment requires them (or in cases in which a student has a registered and documented disability that requires the use of

assistive devices). Notes should be handwritten. Phones must be turned off when you enter the classroom and remain turned off for the duration of the class. Students who violate this policy will be asked to leave the classroom, earn an absence for that day and not be permitted to make up the day's work.

***PROPOSED WEEK-BY-WEEK GUIDE**

**Instructor reserves the right to make changes as necessary to accommodate student progress/ability or guest speakers*

WEEK 1

Jan. 12 - Introductions

- Sakai - JOMC 490 Syllabus
- Vivian Yee, "Capturing the Stories of a Hurricane's Survivors," *New York Times*, March 3, 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/15/nyregion/in-long-beach-recording-ales-of-hurricane-survival.html?_r=0 (read story online & listen to accompanying 3 audio interviews with Wheelock, Hodge, and Moss brothers)

Jan. 14 – Definitions & Concepts

- Yow, chapter 1, "Introduction to the In-Depth Interview," pp. 1-34.
- Sakai - Coleman, "Oral and Life Histories" in *Qualitative Research in Journalism: Taking It to the Streets*, ed. Sharon Hartin Iorio (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2004), pp. 93-107.
- Oral History Association "Principles and Best Practices," <http://www.oralhistory.org/about/principles-and-practices/#best>

WEEK 2

DUE Tues., Jan. 19 - Short Writing Assignment #1

****Jan. 19 – Journalism History as Oral History***

- Sakai - Brennen, "Toward a History of Labor and News Work: The Use of Oral Sources in Journalism History," *Journal of American History* 83, no. 2 (1996): 571-579.
- Sakai - Roy Reed, "The Newsroom," in *Looking Back at the Arkansas Gazette* (Little Rock: University of Arkansas Press, 2009), pp. 99-123.
- Sakai - Reed, "The Cast" in *Looking Back at the Arkansas Gazette*, pp. xv-xxvii.
- Sakai - Everette E. Dennis, "Foreword: Background Check—Why the Public Needs to Know More About News People," in David H. Weaver and G. Cleveland Wilhoit, *The American Journalist in the 1990s: US News People at the End of an Era* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1996), pp. ix-xvi.

Jan. 21 – Journalists as Oral Historians

- Sakai - Feldstein, "Kissing Cousins: Journalism and Oral History," *Oral History Review* 31, no. 1 (2004): 1-22.
- Sakai - "The Guerilla Journalist as Oral Historian: An Interview with Louis 'Studs' Terkel," *Oral History Review* 29, no. 1 (2002): 87-107.
- Sakai - Studs Terkel, "C. P. Ellis," in *American Dreams: Lost and Found* (New York: New Press, 1980), 200-211.

WEEK 3

DUE Thurs., Jan. 28: Narrator Statement

Bring to class a brief statement (typewritten) indicating who you have selected to interview and how you believe his/her experience will add to our understanding of media history. Include contact information and at least two secondary sources that you will draw on/have drawn upon for research. This is an ungraded assignment, but failure to bring this to class will constitute an unexcused absence.

Jan. 26 – Planning the Project

- *Sakai* - Stephen H. Paschen, "Planning an Oral History Project," in *Catching Stories*, ed. Donna M. DeBlasio, et al. (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2009), 20-41.
- *Sakai* - Weaver and Wilhoit, "Basic Characteristics of US Journalists," chap. 1, *The American Journalist in the 1990s*, pp. 1-28.

***Jan. 28 – Planning the Project, cont.**

WEEK 4

Feb. 2 – Reliable Narrators

- *Sakai* - John Tisdale, "Different Assignments, Different Perspectives: How Reporters Reconstruct the Emmett Till Civil Rights Murder Trial," *Oral History Review* 29, no. 1 (2002): 39-58.
- *Sakai* - Lynda Mannik, "Writing Individual Journalist's Memories Into Collective Memory," *Journalism Studies* (2014), DOI: 10.1080/1461670X.2014.922294

Feb. 4 - Research

Guest: Stephanie W. Brown, Park Library Director

- http://guides.lib.unc.edu/jomc490_1
- *Sakai* - "Contacting your Narrator" Script

WEEK 5

Feb. 9 – Interviewing Preparation & Formalities

- Yow, chapter 3, "Preparation for the Interviewing Project," pp. 68-91.
- Yow, chapter 5, "Legalities and Ethics," pp. 121-156.
- Yow, Appendix A, "Sample Interview Guide," 335-341.
- *Sakai* - Release/Interview Agreement

Feb. 11 – Peer Interviewing (Note: Bring a recording device)

- Yow, chapter 4, "Interviewing Techniques," pp. 92-120.
- Faulkenbury, "Oral History and Childhood Memories," Oxford University Press blog, <http://blog.oup.com/2015/11/oral-history-childhood-memory/>
- *Sakai* - SOHP, "Notes on Interviewing," pp. 6-8.
- *Sakai* - SOHP, "Ten Tips for Interviewers," p. 9.

WEEK 6**DUE Tues., Feb. 16 (at end of class): Short Writing Assignment #2*****Feb. 16 - Transcription (In class) (Note: Bring your laptop and earphones)**

- Sakai – NewStories Transcription Guidelines
- Sakai - Transcript Format Requirements, NewStories
- Sakai - Transcript Format Example, NewStories

Feb. 18 – Interview Guide (Note: Bring your research)

- Yow, Appendix A, “Sample Interview Guide”
- Sakai - Interview Guide (Winston Cavin)

WEEK 7**Feb. 23 – Situating Your Subject As Labor**

- *UNC Libraries online access*/Reed, “The Last Days,” in *Looking Back at the Arkansas Gazette* (Little Rock: University of Arkansas Press, 2009), pp. 260-270.
- Read/Listen “John Robinson: Letter to the Editor,” NewStories, <http://newstories.mj.unc.edu/john-robinson-letter-to-the-editor/>
- Watch (approx. 30 mins.) “Photo Brigade” video podcast #8 – Rob Hart and Brian Powers, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G6dVrW7hVHo#at=235>

Feb. 25 – Situating Your Subject in Politics

- Reading TBD (check Sakai)

WEEK 8**DUE Tues., March 1: Research Summary and Interview Guide*****March 1 – Situating Your Subject As Outsiders**

- Sakai - Kay Mills, “Women of Color,” in *A Place in the News: From the Women’s Page to the Front Page* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1988), 175-195.
- Sakai - Wallace Terry, “James Hicks,” *Missing Pages: Black Journalists of Modern America, An Oral History* (New York: Carroll & Graf, 2007), 135-148.

March 3 – Situating Your Subject with “New” Technologies

- Sakai - Sharon Meraz, “The Blogosphere’s Gender Gap: Differences in Visibility, Popularity, and Authority,” in *Women, Men, and News: Divided and Disconnected in the Media Landscape*, ed. Paula Poindexter, Sharon Meraz & Amy Schmitz Weiss (New York: Routledge, 2008), 129-151.
- Dean Starkman, “Confidence Game: The Limited Vision of the News Gurus,” *Columbia Journalism Review*, Nov. 8, 2011, http://www.cjr.org/essay/confidence_game.php?page=all

WEEK 9**March 8 – Situating Your Subject In Crises**

- “Witness to Apocalypse,” <http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/us/sept-11-reckoning/viewer.html> (scroll to “That Day” section for the link to this Columbia U oral history project)

- Sakai - Cathy Trost, *Running Toward Danger: Stories Behind the Breaking News of 9/11* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002), selections.

March 10 – Situating Your Subject In Conflict

- Owen Johnson, “Broadcast Journalist Lara Logan,” WIFU, Feb. 11, 2001, <http://indianapublicmedia.org/profiles/broadcast-journalist-lara-logan/>
- Sakai - Michelle Ferrari, “Christiane Amanpour” in *Reporting America at War: An Oral History* (New York: Hyperion, 2003), 207-218.
- Bill Katovsky, “An Oral History Tells Stories Seldom Heard During the War,” Nieman Reports, <http://niemanreports.org/articles/an-oral-history-tells-stories-seldom-heard-during-the-war/>



SPRING BREAK

Begins at 5 p.m. Friday, March 11

Classes resume 8 a.m., Monday, March 21

WEEK 10

DUE Thurs., March 24: Short Writing Assignment #3

March 22 – Work Day

(Work on your own; instructor available for consultation)

****March 24 – Presenting Oral History Projects***

- “Hip Hop and the Black Radio” podcast (16 mins.), <https://soundcloud.com/sohp/hip-hop-and-black-radio-podcast>
- “StoryCorps’ 15 Favorites of 2015” (listen to one or more of the recordings), <https://storycorps.org/blog/storycorps-15-favorites-of-2015/>
- Watch one or more of StoryCorps’ animated oral histories, <https://storycorps.org/animation/>

WEEK 11



This week:

Finalize guest list and
send invitations
for April 26 performance

March 29 – Writing the Introduction

- Sakai - Martin, “Life After Graduation,” in “Navigating Schools 2015-2016,” *Chapel Hill Magazine*, p. 39. Also available online: <http://issuu.com/shannonmedia/docs/ns15issuu?e=0/30396276#search>
- Lorraine Ahearn, “Winston Cavin: 1979 Nazi-Klan Shootings,” Nov. 8, 2012, NewStories, <http://newstories.mj.unc.edu/cavin-shootings/> (Read introduction and listen to interview)
- Anhthu Vong, “Jane Brown: Finding Bliss in Journalism,” NewStories, Nov. 16, 2012, <http://newstories.mj.unc.edu/interview-with-jane-brown/> (Read introduction and listen to the interview)

March 31 – Work Day

(In-class transcription, editing)

WEEK 12**DUE Tues., April 5: Introductions*****April 5 – Performing Oral History**

- Sakai/Natalie Fousekis, “Experiencing History: A Journal From Oral History to Performance,” in *Remembering: Oral History Performance*, ed. Della Pollock (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 167-186.
- Barbara Friedman, “Let’s Put On a Show! Oral History, Journalism and Performance,” Southern Oral History Program, <http://sohp.org/2015/08/10/lets-put-on-a-show-oral-history-performance-journalism/>

April 7 – Performing Oral History, cont.

- Watch Moxie Project Presentation 2013, <https://vimeo.com/74484432>
- Group work on performance

WEEK 13**DUE Tues., April 12: Edited transcripts prepared for narrator*****April 12 – Sharing With Your Narrator****April 14 – Work Day**

(Work on your own; instructor available for consultation)

WEEK 14**DUE Thurs., April 21: All edited work uploaded to NewStories website (by start of class)****April 19 – Group work on performance*****April 21 – Group work on performance**

WEEK 15***April 26 – Performance******April 30 – Final Exam Period*** (last day to send instructor corrections/changes to your NewStories transcript, by 4 p.m.)