



Some of Newark's small newsboys. Afternoon. Newark, New Jersey, 1909.
Photo by Lewis W. Hine. National Child Labor Committee collection,
Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division.



There are 10,000 children living on the streets of New York. . . . The newsboys constitute an important division of this army of homeless children. You see them everywhere. . . . They rend the air and deafen you with their shrill cries. They surround you on the sidewalk and almost force you to buy their papers. They are ragged and dirty. Some have no coats, no shoes and no hat. Some are simply stupid, others are bright, intelligent little fellows.

Lights and Shadows of New York Life,
by James D. McCabe Jr. (1872)



FROM GUTENBERG TO GOOGLE: A HISTORY OF MEDIA

MEJO 242

Spring 2020

T/Th 3:30-4:45 p.m.

Carroll Hall 142

Instructor: Dr. Barbara Friedman

Office: 357 Carroll Hall

Office Hours: W 11-11:30 a.m, and by appointment

E-mail: Via Sakai Messages only

Course Description: In your relatively brief lifetime, the developmental progress of media technologies has reached dizzying proportions, and yet, all that is new emerges from the past. Consider, for example, that every form of media was new at one time, and that communication ‘revolutions’ are contingent on what precedes them. In this course, we’ll examine developments in media over time, with an emphasis on the ideas, figures and forces behind those changes. We will move through media and (primarily) US history in a linear fashion for the most part, but will

find opportunities to pause and occasionally detour to consider more deeply the place of media in civic participation, representation, resistance, surveillance, labor, emotions and memory, for example. You will also become familiar with some of the methods typically used to reconstruct and interpret media past. Importantly, we'll work together to cultivate the *habit of historical thinking* about the ways the past, present and future are connected.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of the semester, you should:

- be aware of significant events and people in American media history;
- understand major themes in our media history and how they resonate in contemporary media;
- be able to conduct basic historical research using primary and secondary sources;
- understand the advantages of historical consciousness or “thinking in time.”

Moreover, this course addresses **values and competencies required by AEJMC**, the Hussman School of Journalism and Media's accrediting body. While no single course can possibly provide you with [all of these](#) AEJMC principles and skills, MEJO classes are designed to collectively and incrementally build your abilities in these areas. Upon completing this course, you should be aware of certain core values and competencies, and you should be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
- Demonstrate an understanding of gender, race ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications;
- Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
- Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
- Think critically, creatively and independently;
- Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
- Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.

Readings: There is no required text for this course. Rather, the material you'll consume this semester represents a combination of scholarly works (~15-30 pages each), popular media (short reads), and audio and video. Readings or reading availability will be available via Sakai, and video/audio will be indicated on Sakai by URL. Check the syllabus, but **ALWAYS** check Sakai for updates.

Remember, all assigned material is to be read/viewed/listened to before you arrive to class. As you read, think about the study questions posed each week, so that you may participate in class discussions, respond thoughtfully to assignments and prepare for exams.

If you don't *understand* something about the reading, that's okay – pose your questions in class so that we can all benefit from clarification. If you don't *do* the reading, on the other hand – that's a problem. I reserve the right to administer quizzes if it appears students are not preparing adequately for class (more detail below).

Assignments and Evaluation

- Participation 10%
- Media history essays (2) 25%
- Group presentation 15%
- Mid-term exam 25%
- Final exam 25%
- Quizzes (as needed)

Participation (10%): We will spend time discussing the assigned readings and making connections between past and present together and in small groups. You are expected to make substantive contributions to this course every week, which can only be done via attendance and participation. Thus, in addition to showing up to class, you must come prepared -- that means completing assigned readings before you arrive to class and coming with relevant questions to deepen our understanding of the material. At midpoint in the semester, I will provide you with a temporary grade so that you can gauge your level of participation – but if you’re wondering how you’re doing, you can always ask:

Participation will be evaluated using these criteria:

- a) Content and understanding: Do you follow the class discussion and build on others’ ideas? When you don’t understand something, do you ask questions?
- b) Creativity: Do you generate your own insights and examples and share them with the class?
- c) Curiosity and interest: Do you bring enthusiasm to the classroom? Do you contribute consistently? Do you share ideas or issues you’ve come across in outside reading, other coursework, current events, or through personal experience?

Media History Essays (25%): You are responsible for writing two short (750 words max) essays related to media history. Check Sakai for prompts/instructions and deadlines – the first will be due before the midterm, and second will be due after the midterm and before the final.

Group Presentation (15%): In groups of 3-4, you will be responsible for locating a material object that reflects media history. You’ll explain the object to the class and lead a short discussion. You will need to have a handout or PowerPoint with key takeaways from your presentation, as well as a minimum of four questions to guide a class discussion. Send me an electronic copy of any material you use for your presentation. Each group member will receive the same grade for the assignment. Check the syllabus for the presentation sign-up schedule. More instructions to follow in class.

Exams (25% each): Two exams will be given in this course. Exams will cover all course content, including assigned reading that we do not discuss in class. They may include multiple choice questions, true/false, identifications, short-answer questions, and essays.

- The midterm will be held Thursday, Feb. 13.
- The final exam will be held Tuesday, April 28, at 4 p.m. (per University Final Exam Schedule)

Quizzes (as needed): I reserve the right to administer quizzes if I become convinced you are not completing assigned reading. Quizzes will consist of a single question and grades are 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 – quizzes cannot be made up). Grades will be counted toward your participation/attendance grade.



Donald and Myrtle Mallick. Myrtle is 8 years. Selling papers 1-1/2 years, average earnings 35 cents per day. Sells from choice. Begs pennies and works "last paper" scheme. Earnings not needed at home. Visits saloons. May 1910. Wilmington, Delaware.
Photo by Lewis W. Hine. National Child Labor Committee collection, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division.

UNIVERSITY AND COURSE POLICIES

Attendance. Under the University's revised attendance policy, "Regular class attendance is a student obligation. ...No right or privilege exists that permits a student to be absent from any class meetings, except for University-Approved Absences." If you miss three or more consecutive class meetings or more than five classes overall, I may report the facts to your adviser or academic dean. Habitual late arrivals or early departures from class will be converted to absences. Note that if a quiz is given on a day you miss, you will not be allowed to make it up, regardless of reason. If you need to seek an official excuse for absence(s), consult the [University Approved Absence Office \(UAAO\)](#).

Participation. In addition to coming to class on time and prepared, your active, thoughtful participation communicates to me that you are taking responsibility for your intellectual development and for your role in building and sustaining our learning community.

Special Needs: If you have any disability or other special situation that may make it difficult to meet the requirements described in the syllabus, please discuss it with me as soon as possible. If you have not done so already, you should also contact the [Department of Accessibility Resources & Service \(AR&S\)](#).

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, including confidential options, [here](#).

Diversity: UNC-Chapel Hill is obligated by law and mission to equality of educational opportunity. The University does not discriminate in offering access to its educational programs and activities on the basis of age, color, disability, gender, gender expression, gender identity, genetic information, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status. The Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office (214 W. Cameron Ave., Chapel Hill, NC 27599 or 919-966-3576) has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the University's non-discrimination policies. You may also/instead contact the [Office of the Dean of Students](#) (919-966-4042/711 NC RELAY).

The Hussman School's mission and vision statements related to diversity and inclusion are [here](#).

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. All academic work in this course is to be your own work and unique to this class, unless otherwise specifically provided. It is your responsibility if you have any doubt to confirm whether or not collaboration is permitted. 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.

The Honor Code includes provisions for plagiarism, defined as “deliberate or reckless representation of another’s words, thoughts, or ideas as one’s own without attribution in connection with submission of academic work, whether graded or otherwise.” If you have any questions about the way you are using source materials, consult UNC Libraries’ “Identifying Plagiarism” [tutorial](#) and/or see me. Should your work reflect inappropriate use of source materials, I reserve the right to adjust assignment/course grades downward and to report suspected violations to the Office of Student Conduct.

And About Technology... We are building a collaborative learning environment. My focus, when I am in class, is on the class. Yours should be, too. Cell phones must be muted or powered off and placed out of sight. You may have your laptop with you in class, but notes are to be taken by hand as much as possible. This policy is in response to research and testimonials indicating technology is distracting and disruptive to *everyone* in the class. In addition, instant-messaging, the most-common use of technology by students, has been correlated with poor performance on assignments.

In some instances, we may want to use technologies in the classroom and then, laptop use will be permitted. Additionally, exceptions to the laptop policy will be made for ARS-acknowledged disabilities.



A Note on Civility: The classroom is a particular environment in which students and faculty come together to promote learning and growth. It is essential to this learning environment that we maintain respect for the rights of others seeking to learn, for the professionalism of the instructor, and for the general goals of academic freedom. I expect us all to express ourselves with reason, clarity and compassion. Student conduct that disrupts the learning process will not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action and/or removal from class.

Smoking newsboys. May 10, 1910, St. Louis, Missouri. Photo by Lewis W. Hine. National Child Labor Committee collection, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division.

Grade Scale

A = 95.0-100	B+ = 87.0-89.99	C+ = 77.0-79.99	D = 66.0-69.99
A- = 90.0-94.99	B = 84.0-86.99	C = 74.0-76.99	F = 65.99 and below
	B- = 80.0-83.99	C- = 70.0-73.99	

Note: Grades are assigned according to criteria established by a UNC-CH Committee on Grading. For example, an “A” grade indicates superior work, whereas a “C” grade indicates sufficient performance and an “F” indicates an unacceptable performance. For an understanding of what the various grades mean, see the UNC Registrar’s page [here](#).

Grades are not negotiable, but I will discuss with you any substantive concerns you have about them, and you can check Sakai or ask me any time how you’re doing in the class if you’re unsure. If you want to discuss an assignment grade, please take 24 hours to reflect upon the work before coming to office hours or contacting me for an appointment. You must contact me with your concerns within (1) one week of receiving the grade.



∞

Newsgirls waiting for papers. Largest girl, Alice Goldman has been selling for 4 years. Newsdealer says she uses viler language than the newsboys do. Besie Goldman and Bessie Brownstein are 9 years old and have been selling about one year. All sell until 7:00 or 7:30 P.M. daily. March 1909, Hartford, Connecticut. Photo by Lewis W. Hine. National Child Labor Committee collection, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

∞

COURSE SCHEDULE

Following is a tentative week-by-week guide of what we'll be covering; readings will be posted to Sakai. Topics and readings may change so that we can respond to current events or to opportunities for appropriate guest speakers. While I will do my best to signal changes well ahead of a session, it is your responsibility to check Sakai regularly for content and readings.

A study question is provided for each session's reading. These questions are intended to help you more easily comprehend material, to connect the reading to the issues under consideration, and to aid your participation in classroom discussions and your preparation for assignments/exams.

Week 1: Getting Started

T Thurs, 1/9 Read syllabus

Q: In what ways does/doesn't your parents' media world resemble yours?

Week 2: Where Are We Going, Where Have We Been?

Tues, 1/14 Marwick

Q: What are the antecedents to Web 2.0, and what themes arise from the reading that we can apply to the study of media history?

T Thurs, 1/16 Tucher

Q: What is it about journalism in particular that makes it a vital site of historical study, according to Tucher?

Week 3: Talking About a (Printing) Revolution

Tues, 1/21 Kovarik
Franklin

Q: If print is dead, what's so revolutionary about printing?

T Thurs, 1/23 Fee

Q: What are the historical implications of social events like the Franklin Dinners?

Week 4: Building a Nation (When? Whose?)

Tues, 1/28 Garvey
Thurs, 1/30 Selections from '1619'

Q: In what ways do reperiodization and recontextualization engage the historical imagination?

Week 5: If I Had a Nickel for Every Penny Press

Tues, 2/4 Kovarik
Wu
"Fake News: An Origin Story"

Q: Was the American Penny Press an evolution of mass media or a revolution?

T Thurs, 2/6 Kovarik
Rodgers

Q: How did commercialization contribute toward democratization of the press?

Week 6: The Press in the Civil War Era

Tues, 2/11 Hume

Q: How did the press contribute to public memory during and after the war?
 Thurs, 2/13 Mid-Term Exam

Week 7: Progressive-Era Magazines and Muckrakers

Tues, 2/18 Kovarik
 Feimster
 Wells

Q: How did muckraking journalists change the relationship between politicians and the press?
The public and the press?

Thurs, 2/20 Soderlund
 Little
 “Nellie Bly was a Lady”

Q: In what ways did scandal shape early news principles?

Week 8: News/Media Workers

Tues, 2/25 Smythe
 Bekken
 Banks

Q: How is power expressed in these historical accounts of nineteenth century and early-twentieth century news workers?

Thurs, 2/27 Duffy
 Stone or Newton (content warning)

Q: How does the digital media economy foster inequality in the workplace?

Week 9: Photography and Illustrative Elements

Tues, 3/3 Dunkelman
 Brady
 Faust

Q: How did Civil War-era photography affect public notions about war and death?

Thurs, 3/5 Hardt and Brennen

Q: How do historians study photographs, and what can be learned about the past this way?

SPRING BREAK BEGINS 5 P.M. FRIDAY, MARCH 6
CLASSES RESUME 8 A.M. MONDAY, MARCH 16

Week 10: Radio: Working with Current

Tues, 3/17 Douglas

Q: How did radio help listeners imagine themselves in invisible communities, according to Douglas? How do modern podcasts evoke radio's Golden Age?

Thurs, 3/19 Group Presentations 1-3

Week 11: Television and the Post-Network Era

Tues, 3/24 Kovarik
 Lotz

Q: How have new distribution and viewing technologies extended the popularity of television?
What are the implications of changing rituals of television use?

Thurs, 3/26 Group Presentations 4-6

Week 12: Talking About a (Digital) Revolution

Tues, 3/31 Kovarik

Carey

Q: What are the nineteenth-century roots of today's digital revolution?

Thurs, 4/2 Noble

Rini

Q: In what ways has/hasn't the digital revolution proved to be a liberating technology?

Week 13: Soothsayers in the Digital Age

Tues, 4/7 Carey

Q: What does Carey say are the 'fatal flaws' of internet prognostication, and where are the most interesting discoveries to be located?

Thurs, 4/9 Shirky

Tufekci

Lumsden

Q: How have new technologies afforded grassroots movements power historically and contemporaneously?

Week 14: Presentations

Tues, 4/14 Group Presentations 7-10

Thurs, 4/16 Reserved for Group Presentations

Week 15 Presentations and Review for Final Exam

Tues, 4/21 Debrief on group presentations

Thurs, 4/23 Review session for final exam



FINAL EXAM
Tuesday, April 28, 4-7 p.m.
Carroll 142