



Journalism & Mass Communication

Who, what, where,
when, why and how

Courses in the
School of Communication



How to get involved in student media and internships
Careers in journalism & mass communication
Stand up for free speech and press

It's Free Speech week !

- Nonpartisan, non-ideological event to raise awareness and celebrate the importance of free speech and a free press in the US.
- Oct. 16-22, 2023.
- **What are the free speech issues in Virginia and at RU?**



“Freedom of the press is not just important to democracy, it is democracy.”

-Walter Cronkite

NEWS MEDIA
ALLIANCE

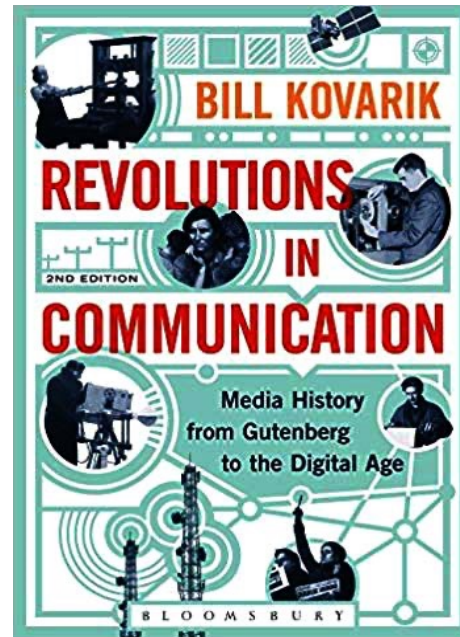
#FreeSpeechWeek

Prof. Bill Kovarik



billkovarik.com/

revolutionsincommunication.com/



My advice

- Join RU Student Media
- Journalism COMS 104
- COMS 300 media history
- COMS 400 comm law

RU Media Studies vs Communication

Media Studies = Digital mass communication

- News Analysts, Reporters, and Journalists
- Community media / Livestreaming
- Editors, writers, authors, book designers
- Film and video production and editing
- Photography and special effects
- Web designers and developers
- Advertising and marketing

Communications Studies prepares you for

- Public relations
- Grad school

** Job outlook – US Dept. of Labor <https://bls.gov/ooh/>
<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/media-and-communication/home.htm>

RU journalism & media opportunities

- **Join student media**

- Tartan (newspaper / web / social media)
- Radio Free Radford / podcasting
- Radford on Camera / video
- Whim (web mag), Exit 109 (lit mag), Beehive (yearbook)

Location: Basement of Walker Hall

- **Internships**

- On campus – sports info, performing arts, public affairs
- Locally – Radford Journal, New River Voice
- Regionally – WVTF radio (NPR), WDBJ-7, WSLS-10
- Regional newspapers -- Roanoke Times, Richmond Times-Dispatch, others
- National media – Wall St Journal, Wash Post, NY Times etc

Journalism sequence

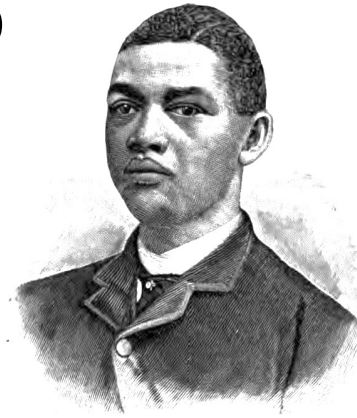
- COMS 104 — Basic News writing
- COMS 130 -- Mass Comm
- COMS 146 — Media Production 1
- COMS 204 — News reporting
- COMS 226 — Digital imaging / photography
- COMS 236 — Publication Planning and Production
- COMS 300 — Media history
- COMS 304 — Electronic news gathering (fall only)
- COMS 305 — Digital storytelling, drone video, livestreaming
- COMS 326 — Data driven web design
- COMS 330 -- Comm Theory
- COMS 335 — Media & Society
- COMS 381 — Student media practicum
- COMS 400 — Communication Law & Ethics
- COMS 404 — Advanced reporting / COMS 481 — Journalism portfolio (spring only, usually taken together)
- COMS 498 — Independent Study, COMS 499 — Internship

Prerequisite chain

Required in any order

Open Electives

Journalism: Who

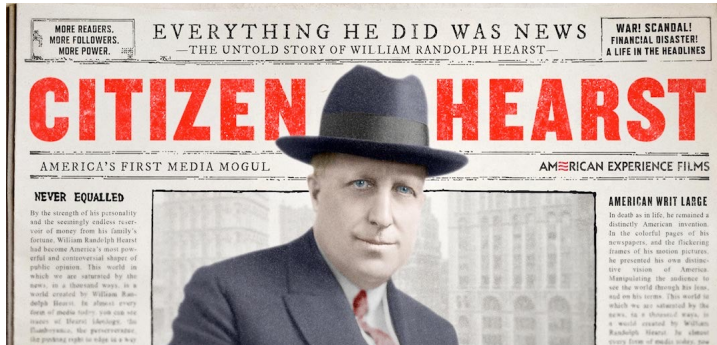


JOHN MITCHELL, JR.

Great journalists include writers, editors, photographers, videographers and others who seek the truth and act independently



Journalism: Who were the worst?



Journalism - Who

“There is an agony in your heart, and you almost feel ashamed to look at them. They are just guys from Broadway and Main Street, but you wouldn’t remember them.

They are too far away now. They are too tired. Their world can never be known to you, but if you could see them just once, just for an instant, you would know that no matter how hard people work back home they are not keeping pace with these infantrymen.”



Ernie Pyle

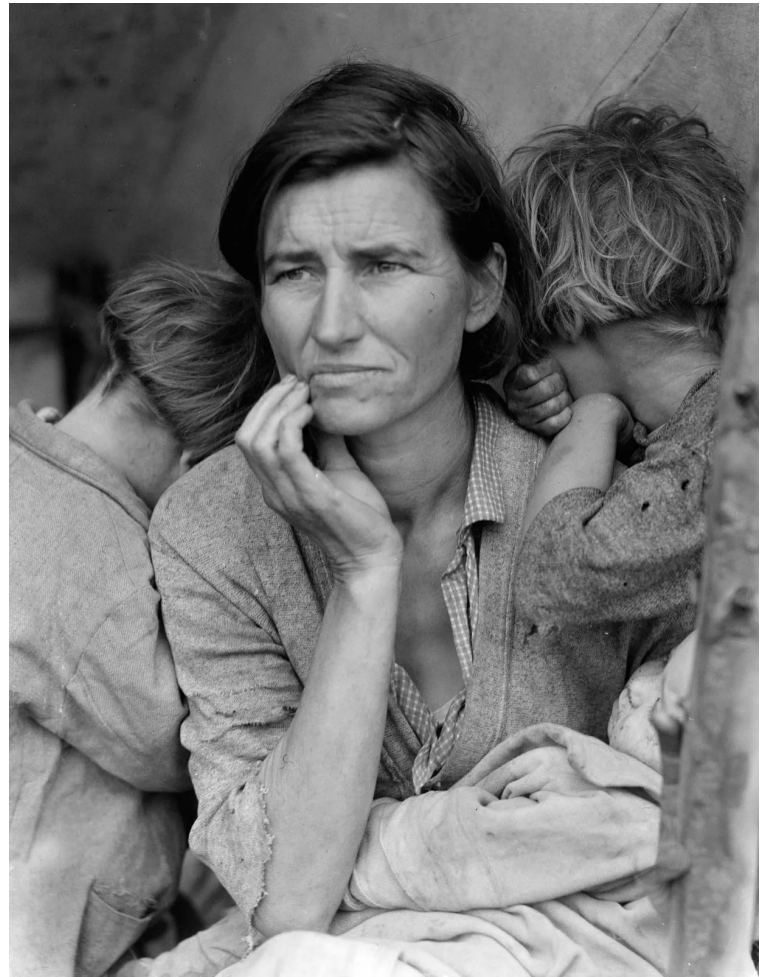
“The God-Damned Infantry”
May 2, 1943, Tunisia
WWII North African campaign

Journalism: Who

Dorothea Lange, the great Depression era photojournalist, was on assignment for the FSA in March 1936, and was headed home. It was raining. She was tired.

She saw the sign but tried to ignore it. She drove on in the rain for another 20 miles, convincing herself that she didn't need to go back to take one more set of photos.

But then:



“Almost without realizing what I was doing, I made a U-turn on the empty highway. I went back those 20 miles and turned off the highway at that sign, PEA-PICKERS CAMP. I was following instinct, not reason ... “

Journalism: Who

AP Photojournalist

Joe Rosenthal

Feb. 23, 1945

Iwo Jima



Journalism: What

Public service

News and information

Accurate and ethical

About public people and important events

Gathered using objective methods

Delivered in many formats:
(podcast, print, web, streaming multimedia)

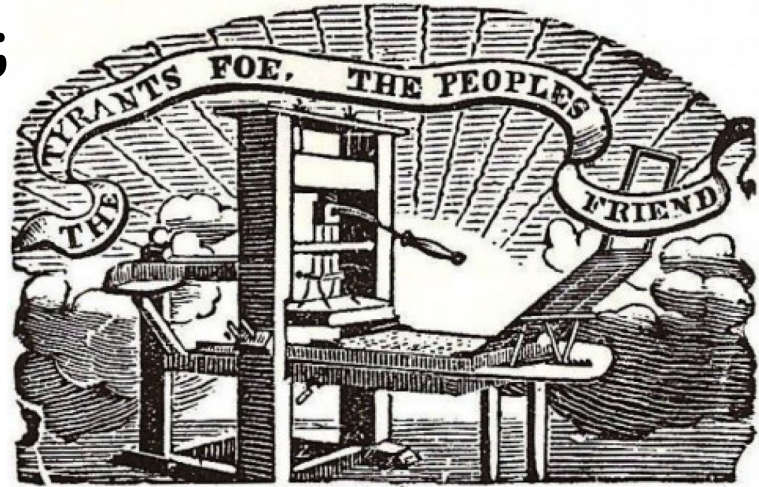
From many points of view

With editorials & opinion clearly labeled



Journalism: What

A truthful account of the day's events in a context which gives them meaning



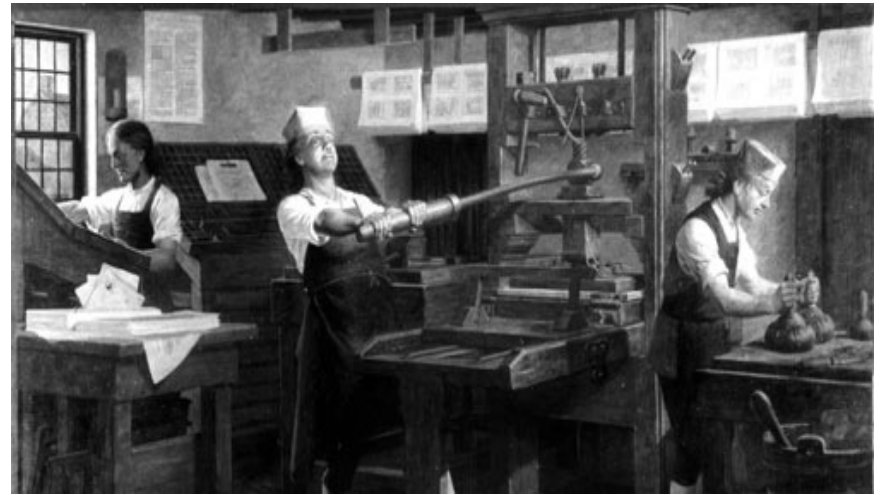
A forum for exchange of comment and criticism.

A way to reach every member of the society by the currents of information, thought, and feeling

A representative picture of social groups

In short, service to democracy

Journalism: What

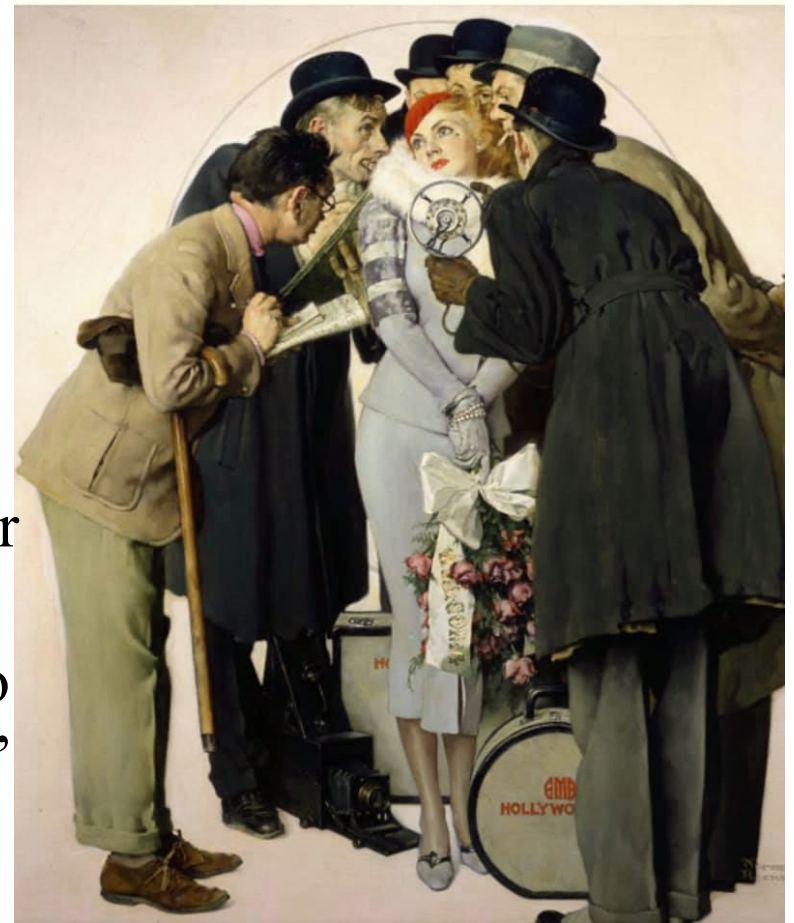


- News is a human need
- Media grew with the Renaissance
- “Fourth estate” newspapers 1700s – 1800s
- American revolution relied on newspapers 1775 – 1780s
- *“Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate to prefer the latter.”* Jefferson
- Penny Press – ads paid for editorial & circulation 1830s
- News via “wire service” 1860s, radio & TV 1930s – 50s
- News via web 1990s, social media 2010s
- End of the “penny press” model, need for new business models (more risk but more opportunity)

Journalism: What

What's in the public interest is usually not what interests the public. -- Fred Friendly, CBS, 1967

“If we amplify everything, we hear nothing ... The press is our immune system. If it overreacts to everything, we actually get sicker”
-- John Stewart, 2010



Journalism: Where & when

- Newspapers -- 6,377 in 2022, down from 8,891 in 2005
- Revenue - from \$50 billion to \$21 billion from 05 to 22

Table 1.

Decline of U.S. Physical Media by Estimated Revenue for Employer Firms: 2002-2020

(In millions of dollars)

NAICS industry ¹	2002	2010	2020
Newspaper Publishers	46,179	33,360	22,149
Periodical Publishing	40,181	31,876	23,919
Directory and Mailing List Publishing	16,920	11,987	4,409
Video Tape and Disc Rental	9,364	6,056	1,077

¹ North American Industry Classification System (NAICS).

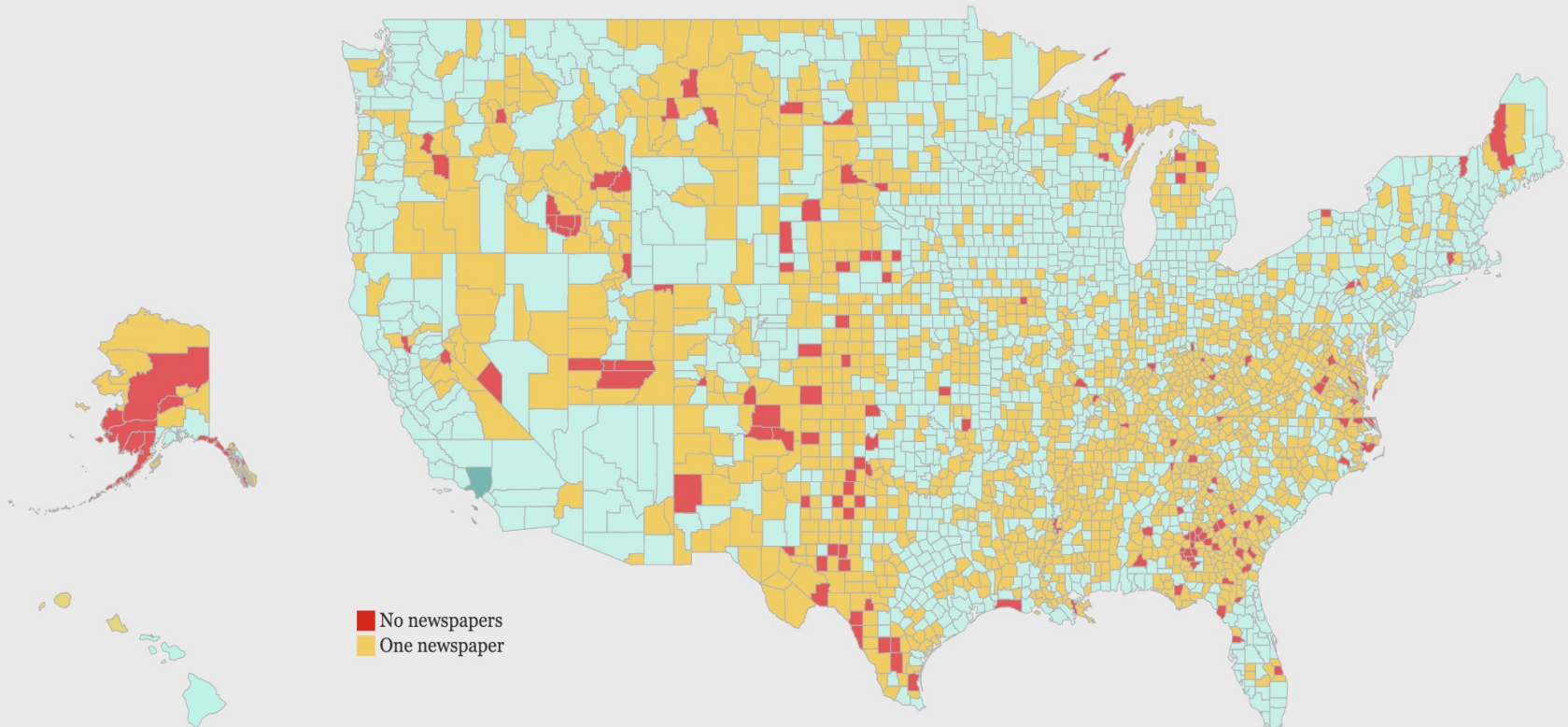
Note: Data not adjusted for price changes. Differences in revenue estimates may be attributed to sampling or nonsampling error, rather than underlying economic conditions. Caution should be used in drawing conclusions from the estimates and comparisons shown. Additional information on survey methodology, including sampling and nonsampling error, sample design, and confidentiality protection can be found at <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/sas/technical-documentation/methodology.html>. The Census Bureau has reviewed this data product for unauthorized disclosure of confidential information and has approved the disclosure avoidance practices applied (Approval ID: CBDRB-FY21-256).

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Service Annual Survey and Service Annual Survey Historical Tables.

Journalism: where & when

Do You Live in a News Desert?

In the U.S., 225 counties do not have a local newspaper. Half of all counties - 1,528 - have only one newspaper, usually a weekly.



Journalism: where & when

Between 2010 – 2020, “The news business has endured a bloodbath, with tens of thousands of journalists losing their jobs amid mass layoffs.

“The irony is, more people than ever are consuming news. There’s never been a greater need for factual reporting, from the White House down to the local school board.

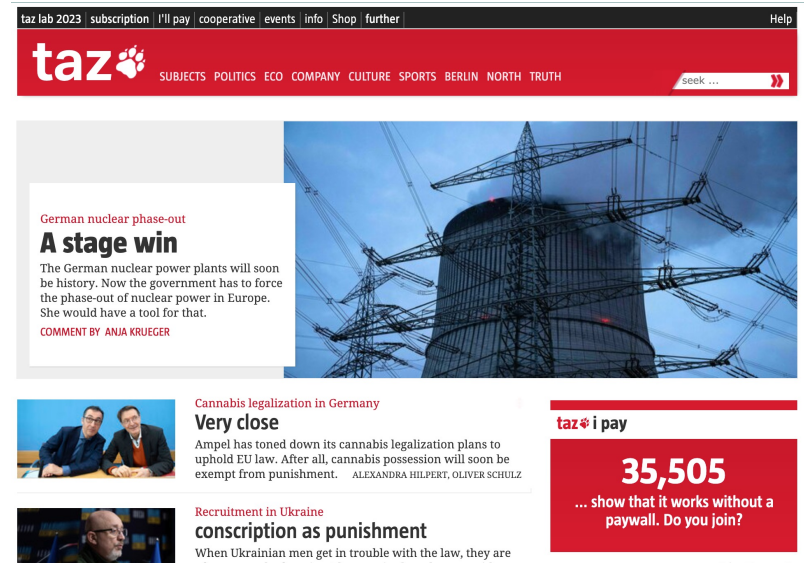
“Why the disconnect? Look no further than ... a study by the News Media Alliance, which found that in 2018, Google made \$4.7 billion off of news content – almost as much as every news organization in America combined made from digital ads last year.”

Legislation: [Journalism Competition and Preservation Act](#) – 2023 – “Waive antitrust law to allow local news organizations to negotiate collectively with tech giants such as Google and Facebook to receive more compensation for their content.”

Journalism: How

New business models

- Benefit corporations
(not obliged to max \$)
- Community media centers
- Non-profit news -- inn.org
- Media cooperatives -- taz.de
(producer co-op, consumer co-op)



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taz SUBJECTS POLITICS ECO COMPANY CULTURE SPORTS BERLIN NORTH TRUTH

German nuclear phase-out
A stage win
The German nuclear power plants will soon be history. Now the government has to force the phase-out of nuclear power in Europe. She would have a tool for that.
COMMENT BY ANJA KRUEGER

Cannabis legalization in Germany
Very close
Ampel has toned down its cannabis legalization plans to uphold EU law. After all, cannabis possession will soon be exempt from punishment. ALEXANDRA HILPERT, OLIVER SCHULZ

Recruitment in Ukraine
scription as punishment
When Ukrainian men get in trouble with the law, they are

taz i pay
35,505
... show that it works without a paywall. Do you join?

Journalism: How

New media venues

Podcasting

Livestreaming

Web & PDF publishing

Community Media Services

Social media publishing / content moderation



Journalism why

- Great way to make a living
- Independence of thought required
- Follow your curiosity
- Front row seat to great events
- Meet interesting people
- Live in the world of ideas
- Learn about the real world



Journalism why

- Develop your understanding of the public sphere – politics, justice, environment, economics, the arts, society, poverty, medicine, people, etc



Journalism is also very demanding

- It involves a lot of responsibilities
- It requires patience, a thick skin and a strong sense of balance & fairness

Ethics & Journalism

- Society of Professional Journalists code of ethics
<https://spj.org/ethics.asp>
 - Seek the truth and report it
 - Act independently
 - Minimize harm
 - Be accountable
- Media professionals always stand up for free speech and press
- Ethical issues also pertain to the study of media.

Whether or not it is required in your concentration at RU, you need to take the law and ethics course (COMS 400) or some equivalent course.

Ethical dilemma

Your editor assigns you to attend a civil rights demonstration in Charleston SC, but not to write about the speakers' points of view. Only write a story if there is violence, and then only write about the violence. But when you arrive, the police chief reminds you of your duty:



**“The more you
(journalists) do your
job, the less I have to
do mine.”**

-- Reuben M. Greenberg, Chief of Police,
Charleston SC
1982 – 2005

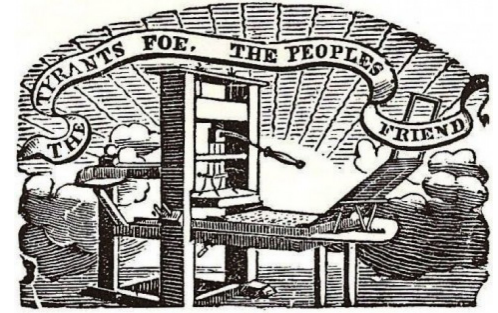
A few journalism issues

- Cultivation theory (mean world syndrome / TV rage machine)
- Is the medium the message? (What is the role of technology in shaping messages?)
- Dominion v Fox defamation lawsuit (What is reckless disregard for the truth?)
- Is the role of journalism to amplify conflict or non-violent change (ex civil rights movement)?
- In-depth news vs infotainment
- Can we revive community media?

Cultivation theory: then & now

- The news is always trying to make you scared. It's bad for us, but very good for news organizations: the easiest way to get an audience is through frightening people... We need to return to that sober mentality of the guys the news replaced: life is a cycle – there's no need to go from extreme hope to fear. Marta Bausells, The Guardian 2014
- Facebook knew that its policies and algorithms were stoking violence and hatred, but also knew that this increased user “engagement” and therefore profits, according to former Facebook employee [Frances Haugen](#), who testified on October 5, 2021, before a US Senate committee.

Seven Take-aways



- Celebrate free speech week -- Journalists always stand up for free speech and free press
- Join student media for the experience you need
- Consider the Journalism concentration as a great career option
- Public service is the point of journalism
- The core skill is quick, accurate writing
- The essential discipline is verification
- Journalism ethics: seek the truth, act independently, minimize harm, & be accountable

Thank you. Questions?

