



Black Wall Street in Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1921, of which news media was a direct cause for the violence.

JOU 4341
Multimedia Capstone:
Media, Cities, and Cultural Critique

School of Journalism & Mass Communication, Florida International University

Summer 2015

(Updated 4/15/15)

Tuesday/Thursday
9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

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Individual workshop hours: Tuesday/Thursday, 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. (or by appointment)

Course Overview and Purpose

This course examines the conflicts and controversies of dominant narratives surrounding U.S. cities. As the culmination of students' experiences not only in the SJMC but in college, the Capstone is viewed as a way to showcase what they 'know' about their field, their profession, and their careers. In this course, we will examine how what we have learned through our educations and our socializations to the profession result in complacency and subjugation through the very communicative functions we have been told are used to combat oppression. The image at the top of this document holds multiple meanings – the very least, as many of us have been taught, as being a sign of vandalism and hatred toward authority. But to what degree does the language, the act of tagging, the burning of blocks of buildings, the aggression against capitalism and 'virtuous' policing maintain its own legitimacy and power? How do we (particularly those of us in journalism and other fields of strategic communication) describe the authority of such acts in our messages?

By turning to scholarship and critical analysis of professional practice, students in this course will be expected to express both critical and practical analyses and possible solutions by viewing and discussing news and other representations of cities. This course is designed to make the Capstone experience one in which students can produce media that represent their progression through the program and that shows a potential for professional success while also critically examining the role of media in the creation of neighborhood news. Such reflective acts are especially salient in a decade already so tarnished by heavily mediatized events related to race, cities, and the questionable role of rhetoric and media representations from the news in the creation and execution of these issues. Therefore, this course is heavy in analysis, discussion, reading, and writing. The final products from this class will be a research paper on media representation of cities and an accompanying multimedia/journalistic project influenced by the research.

Student Learning Objectives

1. To express a wide and deep understanding of the journalistic profession's influence on society.
2. To interpret media representations in terms of historical, cultural, and critical means of explanation.
3. To conduct media critique through a conceptual lens.
4. To express the role and function of the press in characterizing social issues, geographies, and people through a lens of power.
5. To produce media representations that either reify or resist dominant ideological interpretations of U.S. cities.

Accreditation Objectives

The FIU School of Journalism and Mass Communication is nationally accredited by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC), which requires that 12 core values, competencies and abilities be addressed in a program's overall curriculum. The following are ACEJMC student learning outcomes, all of which will be targeted in this course:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping global communication strategies in a wide range of organizational settings.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of professional and ethical practices and principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society.
4. Think critically, creatively, and independently.
5. Critically evaluate your own work and that of others.
6. Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions and audiences and the purposes they serve.
7. Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

Applying Learning Objectives

Students can see in the schedule below how these objectives are applied through a written "purpose" for that course period, assignments, readings, and discussion topics.

Required Readings

A Transplanted Chicago: Race, Place, and the Press in Iowa City, Gutsche, 0786473673, 2014
[Royalties go to the Community Foundation of Johnson County (Iowa)]

Mediated Communities: Civic Voices, Empowerment and Media Literacy in the Digital Age,
Shumow (editor), 1433124548, 2014

Readings as assigned, which will be provided the first class period

Required Material

*External 1T hard drive compatible for MAC/PC

*Digital audio recorder

*Digital video/still camera

*Clip-on and/or handheld microphone with a mini jack

*Tripod

*This equipment can be checked out through the equipment room, once you have signed a "Release and assumption of risk" form (see end of syllabus)

Assignments/Assessments

In-class Responses to Readings (5): 20 percent

Students will be required to submit a one-page response to the readings; these will be conducted in class. Students must define the concepts that tie the readings together for the week and apply them through an original, scholarly analysis of an assigned reading, connecting all readings for the week with proper APA citations and thought that extends beyond personal opinion. These assignments are pass/fail. To "pass," papers must: 1) include a concept definition that is applied correctly to the readings; 2) address new ideas and conceptualizations of how the readings operate together (or do not); 3) not include first-person and blatant opinion, but be presented in a scholarly and logical progression; 4) appear to be thoughtful and written at a high level of comprehension and construction.

Midterm Exam: 15 percent

Students will take a short answer exam at midterm related to the concepts (and definitions) and the application of those concepts to the readings and course discussions.

Research Paper

All students will write a research paper for this class. This is not a group exercise. In addition, to help relate the course to practical experiences and current news, each of student will choose a local news outlet within the U.S., preferably in print or online, or recent news event to follow for the course. This news outlet and its coverage of crime and social issues will provide the basis for your midterm and final papers/presentations. These media critiques will allow you to relate the readings and our discussions through analyzing the news coverage of neighborhoods, communities, criminal activity, etc. This will not be an assignment based solely on the perspectives of the author, but will consist of interviews with newsmakers, newswriters, community members, public officials, activists, etc. For this paper, you must select a topic presented in class, preferably a concept or controversy/case and the theories used to identify

issues of power within your readings. You must follow APA style, have at least 10 scholarly citations, and produce an original argument about how the concepts and controversies/cases interact. This should be viewed as original research, which we will be reading in class. Therefore, you must follow a structure that will be presented in lecture – including an introduction, a thesis, a problem, relevant scholarship on the topic, and then your analysis (the latter being the majority of the paper). The paper will be written in third-person and with APA style references.

Paper Draft: 10 percent

The paper draft will consist of a narrative including the following elements,

1. Statement of Purpose: What the focus of this paper? What concept is it furthering? What case will be used to illustrate the paper? What methods are you proposing?
2. Research Questions: What are the two major research questions that address the problem/purpose from above?
3. Annotated Literature Review/Conceptual Framework: List at least 10 academic studies (no more than two can have been published from before 2008) that you will use to construct the conceptual section of the paper? An annotated list is one that not only lists the journal/article information, but provides three or four sentences that explains the citation's overarching arguments, methods, and contribution to your proposed paper.

Using each of the components above, altered and edited from professor and class feedback, this should be a completed first draft, not merely an extended outline, but an actual paper that provides the best work possible for further feedback that will be applied during revision.

Final Paper: 20 percent

Papers should be between 12 and 18 pages, not including references.

Final Project

Based upon their interest and experiences in the course, as well as their interactions with specific news outlets and issues from their research paper, students will be working on a project from the early weeks of the course to construct a visual project that could be used to inform journalists, activists, business leaders, etc. about dominant narratives in those respective communities. These projects could be shared as media critiques with journalists and others within their respective communities as a means to help influence social change and awareness of media influence.

Project Draft: 10 percent

Final Project: 25 percent

Assessment

The following grade scale will be used as a guideline for determining final grades:

| | | |
|----|---|-------------|
| A | = | 93-100 |
| A- | = | 90-92 |
| B+ | = | 87-89 |
| B | = | 83-86 |
| B- | = | 80-82 |
| C | = | 70-79 |
| F | = | 71 or below |

Attendance Policy

Traffic and rain are not appropriate explanations for lateness or absences. We live in Miami. Therefore, only one class missed this summer without appropriate documentation (see later in syllabus) will be allowed. Every absence after that reduces the student's final grade by half a grade. In other words, an A would become an A-. Additionally, two tardies will equal an absence; attendance is taking immediately at 9 a.m.

Makeup/Late Work

Excused absences involve true emergencies (i.e. illness or death in the family, or otherwise according to FIU policy). In order to receive consideration for an excused absence, you must do several things:

1. It is your responsibility to get in touch with me within one business day in the event you qualify for a makeup exam or quiz in order to be considered for makeup or to have a late assignment graded. Otherwise, all missed work will receive a zero.
2. You must provide appropriate documentation. In the case of a medical emergency, you need a doctor or hospital note that says you could not attend class on that date. In the case of a death (family emergency), you need to provide something documenting the dates and your relationship to the deceased, such as an obituary or funeral program. Examples of unacceptable documentation include a note saying you were seen by a doctor or health center, airline tickets to a family event, etc. Other absences that will not count as excused include family events (wedding, family trip, etc.), conflicts with other classes or school related activities (such as grammar exams or reviews), car trouble, a work conflict or an internship obligation. Failure to provide appropriate documentation means the absence will not be excused.

Attitude

It's everything. We all have bad days, but we don't need to make our own issues known to the world. If you are having troubles that you think would make their way into the classroom, please let me know. In this class, let's support each other – and that means

showing respect. In fact, if you have something going on that may put you out of commission for the class period, just tell me that (I don't need to know details). Students who fail to do this will be asked to leave during that class period. Give respect. Get it.

SJMC Diversity Statement

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication (SJMC) fosters an environment of inclusivity and respect for diversity and multiculturalism. The SJMC educates students to embrace diversity and understand the root causes of discrimination, as well as social, ethnic, sexual, disability and gender-based exclusion.

Discussion of Sensitive Topics and Policy Related to Student Concerns

At times, conversation in the course, and in journalism, advertising and public relations, may have offensive (or uncomfortable) tones. Covering such topics is a necessary part of the journalist's role in society and dealing with these topics is an element every communication professional will face at one time or another. Discussing these topics also is important to being a critical media user and member of society. However, this freedom to discuss issues of a sensitive nature does not allow for sexual harassment, racism and other forms of discrimination. If you have concerns about conversations in the classroom or the content shared, please discuss them with me.

If you have issues or concerns, I encourage you discuss them with me BEFORE proceeding to the Department Chair (this is not regarding concerns of sexual harassment, of physical safety, or of individualized harassment). Per Academic Affairs, "If a student has a complaint against a faculty member, the student should attempt to resolve the complaint by an informal meeting with the faculty member involved. If the student believes that he or she cannot discuss the complaint with the instructor, the student should submit a written letter of complaint specifying the details of the grievance and the actions he or she is requesting to the chair of the department within which the faculty member is located. The student should file this complaint in as timely a manner as possible, but in no case can the complaint be filed later than the limits prescribed above."

Lastly, and just to let you know, **in all facets of this course, you are responsible for your own education and knowledge-base.** I am here to help lead you in the "right direction(s)." That means, stopping by during workshop hours (or making appointments outside of those hours).

Academic Honesty

Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas and community service. All students should respect the right of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and honestly to demonstrate the quality of their learning.

Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to a standard of academic conduct, which demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of the University. All students are deemed by the University to understand that if they are found responsible for academic misconduct, they will be subject to the Academic Misconduct procedures and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Handbook.

Misconduct includes: Cheating – The unauthorized use of books, notes, aids, electronic sources; or assistance from another person with respect to examinations, course assignments, field service reports, class recitations; or the unauthorized possession of examination papers or course materials, whether originally authorized or not.

Plagiarism – The use and appropriation of another’s work without any indication of the source and the representation of such work as the student’s own. Any student who fails to give credit for ideas, expressions or materials taken from another source, including internet sources, is responsible for plagiarism.

Any student who fails to meet these expectations will not only fail the course, but will also be reported to the Chair of the Department of Journalism & Broadcasting and to the Dean of SJMC.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The Disability Resource Center collaborates with students, faculty, staff, and community members to create diverse learning environments that are usable, equitable, inclusive and sustainable. The DRC provides FIU students with disabilities the necessary support to successfully complete their education and participate in activities available to all students. If you have a diagnosed disability and plan to utilize academic accommodations, please contact the Center at 305-348-3532 or visit them at the Graham Center GC 190. Students are encouraged to register with Student Disability Services to verify their eligibility for appropriate accommodations. **Requests for academic accommodations need to be made to me during the first week of class. Accommodations made mid-semester are not retro-active.**

Course Schedule and Assignment Dates

T, June 23: Introduction to Cities

Course information

Discuss projects; how to find outlets for project/papers/research

Visit www.citylab.com

Visit www.theguardian.com/cities

Read: *The case for reparations*, Coates

View: *Dragnet* (:30)

View: *Falling Down* (2:00)

Purpose: Learning Outcome 1, 4

Due: Signed Risk Form

R, June 25: Introduction to Media Culture and Power

Read: *Beyond processes and effects*, Shoemaker and Reese

Read: *A beginner's guide to doing qualitative research in Mass Communications*, Pauly

View: *Emergency!* (:30)

View: *Requiem for Detroit* (1:20)

Purpose: Learning Outcome 3

Due: Response Paper

T, June 30: Introduction to Critical Race Theory

Read: *Locating whiteness in journalism pedagogy*, Alemán

Read: Introduction to *Social media: A critical introduction*, Fuchs

Read: *White fragility*, D'Angelo

View: *Color of Fear* (1:30)

Purpose: Learning Outcome 2

Due: Select News Outlet

Due: Response Paper

R, July 2: Storytelling of Cities

Read: *In the life of the wire*, Moore

Read: *News Place-making: Applying 'mental mapping' to explore the journalistic interpretive community*, Gutsche

View *The Wire* (1:00)

View: *Bill Moyers interview* (~:20)

Purpose: Learning Outcome 1, 4

Due: Response Paper

T, July 7: Media Representations of Miami

Visit: <http://eyeonmiami.blogspot.com>

Visit: <http://www.pooroleta.com>

Read: *America's Playground in A World More Concrete*, Connolly

Read: *Miami, the great world city, is drowning while the powers that be look away.*

Read: *Mediated Communities*, Shumow, Part 1

View: <https://vimeo.com/110682099> (Right to Wynwood)

View: *Adam 12* (:30)

View: *COPS* (:30)

View: *South Park: Child Abduction Isn't Funny* (:30)

Purpose: Learning Outcome, 1, 4, 5

R, July 9: Media (Mis)Representations of Power

Read: *Boosterism as banishment: Identifying the power function of local, business news and coverage of city spaces*, Gutsche

Read: *There's no place like home: Storytelling of war in Afghanistan and street crime "at home" in the Omaha World-Herald*, Gutsche

Read: *Mediated Communities*, Shumow, Part 2

View: *When the Levees Broke, Parts 1 and 2* (2:10)

Purpose: Learning Outcome 2, 3

Due: Paper Proposal

Due: Project Proposal

MIDTERM

T, July 14: Visual Presentations of City "Stories"

Read: *Mediated Communities*, Shumow, Part 3

Read: *This 19th Century 'stench map' shows how smells reshape New York City*, Misra

Read: *Zombies, drugs, and Florida weirdness: "Imaginative power" and resonance in coverage of Miami's "Causeway Cannibal,"* Gutsche

View: *Killer Legends* (1:30)

Purpose: Learning Outcome 4

Due: Paper Draft

R, July 16: Urban Legends, Urban Truths

Read: *A Transplanted Chicago*, Gutsche, Intro to Chapter 3

View: *Cropsy* (1:20)

Purpose: Learning Outcome 3

Due: Response Paper

T, July 21: Workshop

Read: *A Transplanted Chicago*, Gutsche, Chapter 3 to 6

Purpose: Learning Objective 4, 5

Due: Project Draft

R, July 23: Workshop

Read: *A Transplanted Chicago*, Gutsche, Chapter 7 to end

Purpose: Learning Objective 3, 4, 5

Due: Response Paper

T, July 28: Workshop

Purpose: Learning Objective 5

Due: Course Evals

R, July 30: Final Class

Due: Final Paper

Due: Final Project

Purpose: Learning Objective 4, 5

Due: Committee Evaluation

Multimedia Capstone, Summer 2015
Project Descriptions

Purpose of Project

- 1) Articulate the coverage of issues and geographies, etc. through reporting and empirical research about specific media outlets and messages.
- 2) Analyze the local power structures through a network analysis of reporting and journalistic texts.
- 3) Articulate the influence of power within local journalistic interpretive communities.
- 4) Contribute to the discussion of local power issues related to journalism and geographic storytelling through a multimedia project.

Finding an Outlet

All news outlets must be approved by the professor. Each student will select one news outlet that she/he will follow throughout the semester. Legacy media might be best, as well as news outlets outside of the major cities might provide easier access to reporters and other sources. The best sources for this project are those that provide easy access to news items on websites, through cheap or free access to news sites, or that are archived in library databases. Such a database through FIU can be accessed through the Access World News archive. A possible source for finding an outlet: newseum.org/todaysfrontpages.

How to “Read” an Outlet: What to Look For

Students should begin, immediately, following the news of the approved news outlet. This is a daily process. In addition to examining the issues and stories that appear, students should look at clip searches for events and issues being discussed to gain and understanding of four or five major issues, geographies, personalities, or events that have made news. After selecting the issues, students should find ways to collect and to organize the news issues that will allow for them to easily access and means by which to conduct research. The professor can help individuals with potential strategies. Students should also do background checks on the main reporters and news outlets themselves.

Understanding News Influence in the Community

In addition to examining the news, students must be able to conduct an analysis of the local community that relies on also understanding the spaces and people of that geography. There are several elements that explain dominant identities of a given community. To be clear, there are differences in “audience” and “community.” It is recommended that students examine all readings for the class ahead of time to see if there is information there to help build an understanding of news influence for the purpose of this project. At least one of the semester’s readings would be helpful to visit early in the semester: “Boosterism as banishment: Identifying the power function of local, business news and coverage of city spaces.”

Geographies

Students should gain multiple maps of the region and the city under study. A simple map from Google may not do. What maps are available that show the history and development of the region or city? What maps do police officials use to delineate between patrol sections? What school district maps exist and how might they articulate issues of class and race? A most basic but interesting visual can get you started by going to *The New York Times* project that outlines every block in the U.S., <http://projects.nytimes.com/census/2010/explorer>. The professor will be available to help find other resources, if asked.

Demographics

U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/index.html>
U.S. Labor Department: <http://www.dol.gov/dol/topic/statistics>
Respective state offices of workforce development and other agencies
Local school districts, county offices/agencies are also important spaces for information

Audience

You will need to identify the audience, which is a difficult task. For more on methods and meanings related to “perceived dominant news audience,” which is what the professor means in this project by “audience,” search the library’s Communication and Mass Media Complete database for: Gutsche, Jr., R. E. & Salkin, E. R. (2015). “Who lost what? An analysis of myth, loss, and proximity in news coverage of the Steubenville rape,” *Journalism: Theory, Practice, and Criticism*. Students can also consult the professor for specific texts that might help, including Bonnie Brennan’s *Qualitative Research Methods for Media Studies* (Routledge, 2013). Less important to this project (and given less weight by the professor) is a brief analysis of the news outlets’ social media audience. Calls to the marketing departments of these outlets would help provide the adequate information for you to begin your independent analysis, as modeled in the article listed immediately above.

Local Histories

Respective state, city, county and private history museums and archives
Books that can possibly be found through the Library’s Interlibrary Loan, though this can take some time. For questions about the Library, ask the professor or contact George Pearson, Coordinator of Library Instruction, pearsong@fiu.edu. Histories may also be found by searching competitors’ websites and regional or state news outlets (maybe even national and international outlets). Be aware that there are likely multiple histories of communities based upon geographies, classes, genders, etc.

Network Analysis of Sources

To understand the network of sources and information that appears in the local news:

- Identify 30 stories from three reporters
- Consider what sources, names and positions in communities appear

- Question the ideological positions that appear in the news coverage
- Examine secondary sources – those used or referenced by initial sources
- Collect contact information for these sources and reporters
- Repeat by source; reporter

“Reading” News as “Text”

Students are encouraged to read the first few chapters of *A Transplanted Chicago* early in the course to familiarize themselves with the process of reading news as “text.” Another source that may be helpful for understanding this is *The Handbook of Media Audiences*, Nightingale, which is available as an ebook through the FIU Library. The professor also has resources.

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Final Paper

(20 points possible in each section; each assignment valued at 100 points)

Compliance & Presentation

Does this assignment follow the requirements?
Is the assignment correct in APA format?
Is the assignment presented in a clean fashion?
Are concepts from the course applied?

Research Quality & Sources

What is the academic rigor of this assignment?
Does the assignment have adequate sources?
Are concepts from the course applied correctly?

Writing Quality

Does this assignment use proper grammar & punctuation?
Is the writing strong, active, and interesting?
Are sentences concise and clear?
Does the assignment flow through proper transitions?

Argument

Are the arguments clearly stated?
Are the arguments sound and focused?
Does the evidence provided support the arguments?
Are the arguments conceptually based?

Analysis

Is the analysis analytical rather than descriptive?
Does the analysis utilize appropriate scholarship?
How well does the analysis capture the literature?
Does the analysis contribute to future research?
Are concepts from the course explicated throughout?

General Comments:

RELEASE AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK

I, the undersigned, being of legal age, do hereby agree and promise the following for and in consideration of my participation in the **Multimedia Capstone** class for the **Summer 2015** semester and all activities related thereto:

I agree and acknowledge that participation in the fieldwork for this class and its related activities is of my own free will. I acknowledge that I am acting neither as an employee nor agent of the State of Florida, the Florida Board of Governors, The Florida International University Board of Trustees, Florida International University, or any of their respective officers, employees or agents.

I further acknowledge that in the course of the performance of any of the fieldwork which I have voluntarily assumed to perform during my enrollment in this class, I expose myself to risks, known and unknown, of property damage or loss, as well as personal injury that could be painful, permanently disfiguring or debilitating and fatal. I fully assume these risks, which include, but are not limited to, the risks associated with ground travel, the urban setting, visits to various facilities and communities at different times of the day and night, and the activities undertaken in connection with them.

I, FOR MYSELF, MY HEIRS, EXECUTORS, ADMINISTRATORS AND ASSIGNS AGREE TO RELEASE, WAIVE, DISCHARGE AND RELINQUISH AND TO HOLD HARMLESS THE STATE OF FLORIDA, THE FLORIDA BOARD OF GOVERNORS, THE FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY BOARD OF TRUSTEES, FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY, AND THEIR RESPECTIVE OFFICERS, EMPLOYEES, AND AGENTS, FROM AND AGAINST ALL CLAIMS AND CAUSES OF ACTION WHICH MAY ARISE FROM MY PARTICIPATION IN THE FIELDWORK FOR THIS CLASS AND ITS RELATED ACTIVITIES OR FROM PERSONAL UNRELATED ACTIVITIES WHETHER THE SAME SHOULD ARISE BY REASON OF NEGLIGENCE OF ANYONE ORGANIZING OR PARTICIPATING IN THE FIELDWORK OR OTHERWISE, AND AGREE THAT UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WILL I OR ANYONE CLAIMING THROUGH ME, PROSECUTE OR PRESENT ANY CLAIMS FOR PERSONAL OR BODILY INJURY PROPERTY DAMAGE OR LOSS, OR WRONGFUL DEATH AGAINST THE STATE OF FLORIDA, THE FLORIDA BOARD OF GOVERNORS, THE FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY BOARD OF TRUSTEES, FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY, OR THEIR RESPECTIVE OFFICERS, EMPLOYEES, OR AGENTS.

I, for myself and any others claiming through me, accept full responsibility for safety and expenses and assume the complete risk of any injury to myself or my property which may arise out of or in the course of my participation in this class fieldwork.

I expressly agree that this release and assumption of risk is intended to be as broad and inclusive as the laws of the State of Florida allow and that, if any portion of the agreement is held invalid, the balance shall notwithstanding remain in full force and effect.

I acknowledge that I have read this document carefully, fully understand all of its terms and requirements, fully agree to all conditions contained herein, voluntarily sign it and agree to perform this class fieldwork.

(Signature) (Date)

(Print Name)

(Address)