New York University
Arthur L. Carter Journalism Institute
Syllabus JOUR-GA 1182.002
Reporters and Resistance
Spring 2019
Professor: Eliza Griswold
Th 3-6 7th floor Library

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Office hours: Thursday 1 PM to 3 PM or by appointment

Course Description
Reporters and Resistance will lead students through a history of popular social movements in the service of a broad range of issues to examine the role that reporters have played in the birth of social conscience.

Learning Objectives
In this course, students will:
● Demonstrate awareness of journalism’s core ethical values
● Write clear, accurate and engaging prose in an audience-appropriate manner
● Demonstrate critical thinking, independence, and creativity appropriate to the role of journalism in a democratic society
● Interview subjects, conduct research, and evaluate information
● Work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness, and diverse perspectives

Course Structure
Each week, students will be expected to participate in class discussion related to content, form, and reporting skills employed in each book or reading. Outside speakers, both activists and journalists, will address students throughout the semester on the role that journalism has played in relation to the movements we are discussing.

Readings
Asterisk indicates to buy the book. The required text for the course is:

  ○ excerpt will be sent out ahead of class
  - excerpt will be sent out ahead of class

An optional and recommended text is:


**Course Requirements**
For this class, all reading must be completed before the designated class, and students are expected to participate in every class. Each student is allowed one excused absence. Since journalism is driven by deadlines, assignments are expected to be handed in on time. Students are also expected to be familiar with and follow the University’s guidelines on academic integrity.

**Grading**
Final grades will be calculated as follows:

1. *Outline/Spine for Final Project*: Due 4/4 (20% of grade) This outline will serve as blueprint for your final project. In it, you will present four files that you have been keeping all semester: characters, experts, a reported chronology of the issue that you’re following, a list of models for your own 2500-word story.

2. *Oral History Draft*: Due 4/11 1500-2500 words (20% of grade) (Subject: Exodus Client or to be discussed) Final Draft Due with Portofolio 5/16. To be discussed in Class, each student will be working with a subject on recording an hour-long interview, transcribing, crafting narrative, and asking follow ups of either a formerly incarcerated person at Exodus or of her own choosing.

3. *Draft of your final project*: Due 4/25 (20% of grade) You will hand in a draft of your final feature related to a current or historical resistance movement and with original first-hand reporting, and each student will come to me during office hours or at scheduled time to edit in person.

4. *Final Portfolio* Due 5/16 (20% of grade) You will hand in final draft of oral history and final draft of narrative feature.
5. **Class Participation will make up the final 20% of your grade.** You will be expected to have read to completion each assignment before class and your professor has been known to call on those who are staring blankly into the distance :)

6. Two mandatory office hours: Each student will meet with me at least twice.
   1. We will discuss the draft of your spine and the direction of your final project.
   2. We will discuss the draft of your final project.

*Syllabus is subject to change.

**1/31/2019  The Progressive Era**

*In the United States, the history of magazine journalism and its relationship to resistance movements is rooted in McClure’s. This week, we will read a section from a forthcoming book called The Muckrakers, and explore the work of Ida Tarbell as a blueprint to follow--or not--throughout the semester.*

Guest Lecturer: Stephanie Gorton Murphy by Video

**PLEASE COME TO CLASS HAVING READ:**

  - excerpt will be sent out ahead of class

**2/7/2019  Reconstruction and Reparations, Then and Now**

*Since the work of Ida B. Wells on lynching following the Civil War, reporters have been actively involved in defining and forwarding the Civil Rights movement and the case for reparations. In this class, we will examine the two-year history of reporting related to racism.*

Readings:

2/14/2019  Mass Incarceration

This week we will host James Forman, Winner of the 2017 Pulitzer for Nonfiction via video link and have his book editor join us in class to talk about the role between academic, activist and journalist in dealing with one of the most pressing issues of our time. We will also have Exodus Transitional Communities joining us in class to talk about the challenges of coming out of state and federal incarceration and how reporters can responsibly handle such stories. Later in the semester we will be visiting ETC and each student will be conducting an hour-long oral history with a member of the community.

Guest Lecturers:
- James Forman - winner of the 2017 Pulitzer Prize in Nonfiction
- Alex Star - Forman’s editor at FSG
- Speakers from Exodus Transitional Communities

Readings:

2/21/2019  The Spanish Civil War and Antifa at Home and Abroad

This semester, as we examine current issues, we will frequently turn to the past to explore how reporters have written about such problems in the past. The current Antifa movement, and particularly its links to foreign fighters traveling to Syria to join Rojava among other groups, is not a new phenomenon. It has been happening since the Spanish Civil War, which drew the likes of Orwell, Gellhorn, Hemingway and others to its battlefields. Orwell, as we will read, abandoned reporting and became an active member of the resistance as a fighter. We will examine the ethics and efficacy of his decision as well as explore antifa in this class.

Readings:
- International Center of Photography. “Gerda Taro.” https://www.icp.org/browse/archive/constituents/gerda-taro?all/all/all/0


**2/28/2019 The Holocaust**

This week we will examine why and how the international media failed so miserably in its coverage of the Holocaust, and reflect on how such issues plague the news media today and what we might do to address underreported stories. In addition to the reading below, please come to class with a contemporary story in mind that isn’t getting covered.

Readings:

  - excerpt will be sent out ahead of class

**3/7/2019 The Birth of the Modern Environmental Movement, Climate Change and Man Made Environmental Disaster**

This week, we will explore the role that reporters have had in forming and forwarding the environmental movement. In many cases, reporters have become activists after covering the environment, disaster and climate change. In others, they remain more neutral. This week, we will discuss the role that Rachel Carson and Silent Spring had in founding this movement in the early sixties, and trace its growing urgency through today.

Readings:

  - excerpt will be sent out ahead of class
3/14/2019 American Poverty and the Opioid Crisis

DUE: OUTLINE/SPINE FOR FINAL PROJECT

MANDATORY OFFICE HOURS: THIS WEEK EACH OF YOU WILL COME DURING OFFICE HOURS OR A SCHEDULED APPOINTMENT TO SIT DOWN AND SPEAK ABOUT YOUR SPINE

This week we will examine how contemporary reporters have documented the issues related to American poverty in important ways. We will begin with Alex Kotlowitz’s seminal There Are No Children Here, and continue through unconventional portrayals of the opioid crisis unfolding in America now.

Readings

3/21/2019 SPRING BREAK

3/28/2019 Working Visit to Exodus Transitional Communities
This week we will meet in East Harlem at Exodus for a tour and for each student to be introduced to a subject for their oral history. Read more about Exodus here: http://www.etcny.org/

4/4/2019     The Women’s Movement and #MeToo

This week we will explore the role that reporters have played in launching major social and political movements related to gender equity and sexual harassment. Much as we did with the environmental movement and the crisis of climate change, we will trace the evolution of the women’s movement from the mid-twentieth century to its current evolution in the #MeToo era.

Readings
  ○ Skim this reading
  ○ Trigger warning: graphic depiction of rape

4/11/2019     Nixon, Watergate, the Pentagon Papers and Vietnam

As we trace historical movements and their contemporary counterparts, we will spend this week examining the relationship between the press and the Nixon White House, and how civil unrest in response to the Vietnam War helped support political opposition. We will discuss whether these elements are present in today’s opposition to Trump, what’s different and what’s the same?

DUE: ORAL HISTORY DRAFT

Readings
  ○ Only read the first 150 pages


4/18/2019 Trump’s America

We will explore the role that reporting has played in exposing and giving rise to opposition to Trump, and the limitations that fact-based reporting has faced as well. How does Trump undermine cases against him? How does he deflect criticism? We will apply the historical lessons and context of the Nixon Era to look at the role that reporting plays today in political resistance.

Readings


● Fahrenthold, David A. “Trump bought a 6-foot-tall portrait of himself with charity money. We may have found it.” *The Washington Post*, September 14, 2016. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/a-clue-to-the-whereabouts-of-the-6-foot-tall-portrait-of-donald-trump/2016/09/14/ae65db82-7a8f-11e6-ac8e-cf8e0dd91dc7_story.html?utm_term=.54bbd056917b](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/a-clue-to-the-whereabouts-of-the-6-foot-tall-portrait-of-donald-trump/2016/09/14/ae65db82-7a8f-11e6-ac8e-cf8e0dd91dc7_story.html?utm_term=.54bbd056917b)


  ○ excerpt will be sent out ahead of class

4/25/2019 “The War on Terror” - Afghanistan, Iraq, Civilian Casualties

DUE: FINAL PROJECT DRAFT - EACH STUDENT IS TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT IN THE NEXT TWO WEEKS TO DO A LIVE EDIT WITH ME OF THEIR PIECE DURING OFFICE HOURS

Reading

5/2/2019  Syria and Global Migration

As the civil uprisings in Syria devolved into civil war, they helped to put in motion a wave of human migration greater than any since World War II. We will look at the role that reporters have played in bringing the conflict to light, and how they have found ways to document the mass movement of people across countries and continents. There are many factors that lead to the current global migration crisis, and climate change, which is sending millions of Africans northward, for instance, is also a driver, but this week, we will focus primarily on Syria.

Readings

5/9/2019  Immigration and the Border

Many of the issues we’re exploring in this course come to bear in the border crisis currently unfolding between the U.S. and Mexico. This week, Jonathan Blitzer, who covers immigration and the border for the New Yorker, will join us to discuss the materials below.

Guest Lecturer: Jonathan Blitzer

Readings:
In this last week, we will spend our class time discussing what we’ve learned this semester and how these lessons can and will inform our own work.

DUE: FINAL PORTFOLIO (AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS), INCLUDING THE FINAL PROJECT, THE LAST DRAFT OF THE ORAL HISTORY AND SPINE REVISIONS

Accommodations
Students with disabilities that necessitate accommodations should contact and register with New York University’s Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) at 212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu. Information about the Moses Center can be found at www.nyu.edu/csd. The Moses Center is located at 726 Broadway on the 2nd floor.

Diversity & Inclusion
The Institute is committed to creating an inclusive learning environment. The Institute embraces a notion of intellectual community enriched and enhanced by diversity along a number of dimensions.