

Spring 2024 – Mondays – 2-4:30 p.m.

Section: 21598R

Location: ANN 309

Instructor: Prof Mike Ananny, PhD

Office: ANN-310B

Office Hours: Mondays, 1-2pm & by appointment

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Pronouns: he/him

Course Description

It is vital that journalists – and students of journalism in particular – reflect critically on the broader, embedded forms of power within society and are able to interrogate journalism’s own ideological structures and commitments. If journalists fail to recognize how the news media engages in “agenda setting” practices (McCombs and Shaw 1972), and if they remain unaware of how media organizations and their own professional ideologies frame what is newsworthy in the first place, then journalists are likely to reproduce misunderstandings of the world around them. That is to say, journalists may end up promoting a worldview that simply reinforces the assumptions of those with power and influence.

In this context, it is important to understand that news itself is a “product.” It is an outcome of human creation, and in a more specific, economic sense, it is a commodity that is subject to market forces and exchange. The production of journalism in the public interest, or “journalism that matters,” can only happen if journalists are aware of the production and reproduction of power within the societies and communities they write about, *and* if they think critically about the role of power *on and within* journalism.

Interrogating the formation of journalism’s power structure allows journalists to consider which voices are allowed through the news gates to comment on the issues at hand, and how this process fashions a bandwidth of permissible ideas. This class will help students understand how certain ideas come to be understood as “legitimate,” therefore, and how the promotion of these ideas often relies primarily on citing authority figures as news sources, which reproduces the values of industrial power. In considering these questions, we will begin to develop specific methods of honing critical thinking skills, which allow journalists to better evaluate evidence and make sound judgments.

At a time when “truth” can appear relative depending on your zip code, we will attempt to bridge the gap of fact and perception rooted in politics, race, class and geography. Among the additional questions we will consider: Where, as journalists, should we point the microphone? Who among journalism’s “subjects” gets to tell the story? Why, in a media-saturated world, do vast, compelling narratives so often go overlooked? How do journalists overcome the limitations and pressures of their profession to tell comprehensive narrative stories from underreported places? And where in this maze do simple facts – honest witness reported on the ground – fit in?

In addition, both producers and consumers of media must understand the dynamics of the marketplace in which news is transacted.

Student Learning Outcomes

Critical Thinking aims to equip students with the critical theories necessary for good journalism and to help students better understand the place of journalism within society. By understanding the crucial role of journalism in society—and the ability of individuals, governments and corporations to manipulate the process—students will learn to make discerning decisions about the flood of information that swamps them daily. They will learn how not to be fooled so easily by the misuse of numbers, misleading (or absent) context, or deceptive wording. They will conduct original research, write (or produce) media analyses, and participate in detailed arguments about how key issues are framed

and covered. They will analyze the ways reporters too often get trapped by biases, despite their best efforts and instincts. Students will develop further critical analysis skills through their immersion into the content, process, motivations and impact of leading narrative journalists, many of who have crossed boundaries out of their own comfort zones, or immersed themselves into their own communities and histories, to tell deeply reported stories.

Reflective Practice is an approach to learning grounded in the idea that professionals acquire skills and develop their perspectives on craft, in part, by being able to see how their practices are actually the result of forces that they cannot shape completely for themselves. These are a mix of economic, political, normative, technological, historical, cultural, and social forms of power that shape what parts of their practices are considered “normal”, “profitable”, “ethical”, and “changeable”. Becoming a “reflective practitioner” means seeing how those forces shape practices, understanding your role as an individual professional in relation to them (some you might accept, others you might resist), and seeing how *other* professionals (*e.g.*, your colleagues, competitors) make sense of and react to those forces. Put differently, part of “not getting fooled” is learning to see, describe, adopt, change, and resist professional traditions, so you are not fooled by your own profession’s unexamined habits and routines. Students will learn how to become reflective practitioners by being able to name, navigate, and negotiate with the forces that define their professional identities and communities.

Metajournalistic Discourse is a phrase used in Journalism Studies (the academic study of journalism) to describe the conversations that journalists have about themselves, with themselves. Sometimes also called the “trade press”, stories about journalism by journalists appear in places like Harvard’s Nieman Lab, the Columbia Journalism Review, the Poynter Institute, and many others. Part of journalists being reflective practitioners who think critically about their profession means thoughtfully engaging with this metajournalistic discourse – *e.g.*, learning how other journalists see their professional obligations, navigate controversial events, defend actions, define ethics, and more. As this course will encourage you to do, you may even participate in metajournalistic discourse, crafting your own views on the profession. Put differently, part of “not getting fooled” is participating in conversations that journalism has about itself, with itself. This is a key requirement for being not just a reflective practitioner but a field leader, too. Students will learn to become critical consumers and producers of metajournalistic discourse.

To achieve these learning goals, the course is organized around weekly themes. Each theme is both a dynamic of professional, contemporary journalism, and a potential aspect of “being fooled” – by data, platforms, artificial intelligence, whistleblowing, mistakes, investigations, localities, elections, money, climate, and labor. There are obviously many more dynamics than these—a single semester is too short to cover everything!—but by the end of the course students will have had practice critically and skeptically engaging these dynamics. When they do encounter other dynamics not explicitly covered by the course, they will be ready with the critical thinking, reflective practices, and metajournalistic discourses that will equip them to act with sophistication and integrity.

A final framing note: in 2003, journalists Tom Rosensteil and Amy Mitchell published the collection *Thinking Clearly: Cases in Journalistic Decision-Making*. That volume is now over 20 years old. What would a 2024 update to that collection look like – what cases, controversies, tensions, and dynamics would it engage? By the end of this course each student should have an answer to this question.

Description and Assessment of Assignments

The course is organized around three types of assessments and assignments (reflection, observation, collaboration), each described here:

Reflection

- **Essay 1 (5%, due Jan 22): Professional Identity (version 1)** – a ~500-word essay that answers the question “what does being a ‘skeptical journalist’ mean to you?” Who or what are you currently worried about being “fooled” by, why does that worry matter, how might you address it this semester?
- **Essay 2 (15%, due Jan 29): Data Skepticism** – an ~800-word pitch for a skeptical investigation of one of the datasets in the “Data is Plural” archive, to be examined together in class. More detail provided in class.
- **Essay 3 (15%, due Mar 25): Book Review** – a ~1200-word review of a contemporary book *about* journalism. In

the style of an LA Review of Books, or Paris Review article, this essay will show the relevance, power, weaknesses, and applicability of a book *about* journalism to a general public. More detail provided in class. (A list of potential books provided after the “weekly breakdown” below but please check with me first if you want to use a different text.)

- **Essay 4 (15%, due various dates):** Recognizing that people have different interests and different semester rhythms, choose *one of these topics and associated due dates*:
 - **Option A (due Feb 12): Creating a Generative AI FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) Policy for a local newsroom.** Research existing GenAI policies (resources will be provided), reflect on what differences *local* news contexts bring, talk with local journalists about their experiences, choose a way of communicating the policy that will be practical and helpful to journalists, so they don’t get fooled by AI! The FAQ should be ~800 words and contain about 8-10 significantly rigorous question-answer pairs.
 - **Option B (due Mar 4): Covering a Technological Mistake.** There are several databases (to be provided in class) of moments when technologies fail, make an error, or otherwise break down in unexpected ways. Write an ~800-word story that covers one of those mistakes in a way that helps readers think differently about what “error” means, and how journalism can be smarter about covering technology.
 - **Option C (due Apr 1): Making Elections Smarter Op-ed.** Coverage of the US 2024 presidential election will likely mimic old journalistic patterns and bring new challenges. Drawing from past examples and imagining outcomes that you think journalists should avoid, write a ~800 op-ed-style essay intended for a public or professional audience that helps journalists and the public better navigate this election year.
- **Essay 5 (5%, due Apr 15): Professional Identity (version 2)** – a ~500-word follow-up essay-to-essay #1 that reconsiders the question “what does being a ‘skeptical journalist’ mean to you?” At the end of the course, who or what are you worried about being “fooled” by, why does that worry matter, how has your answer to this question changed (or not!) this semester?

Observation

Building the Examples Inventory (10%, due weekly) - each week, students will make at least one entry in the class’s group Google Sheets database of journalistic examples. I will explain more in class, but the database will be a growing list of examples of journalism that students think show a particularly notable / egregious / admirable / controversial / generative / confusing example of journalistic practice. It might be a piece of news that navigated a tricky data situation thoughtfully, a correction that was made to a previous story, an investigation that shows how to be skeptical of sources, or anything else that strikes students as meaningful. Students may (but are not required to) draw from sources like Harvard’s Nieman Lab, Columbia Journalism Review, Poynter, On The Media, Platformer, or any of the other various outlets for reflecting on news. *Each week I will randomly ask 2-3 students to discuss their examples, so students should arrive to class with the entries already made, and ready to share and reflect with the group!*

Collaboration

Group Project (35% total: 15% presentation, 20% write-up) – I will say more about this in class, but the aim of this project is to give you a chance to practice critical thinking as part of a small team (3 people) of reflective practitioners who create a collaborative piece of meta-journalism. Specifically, you will: *pick 3 examples* from the class inventory of examples (see ‘observation’); *situate these examples* in relation to the class’s weekly themes; *pitch a significant intervention* that extends / enriches / improves upon these examples (e.g., a multi-month reporting project, a new technology, a startup, a new beat); explain how your intervention *advances “reflective practice”* in some way. You have considerable freedom to define and communicate this project however you think best, but it should ideally be thoughtful, rigorous, connected to the class, and somehow helpful to your professional future.

- **Presentation (15%, due in-class Apr 22):** an approximately 15-minute group presentation explaining the project’s elements
- **Write-up (20%, due May 6 in lieu of final exam):** a group-authored write-up explaining the project’s elements, whatever media the team judges appropriate.

Course Notes and Policies

“Participation” & Expectations:

I understand that “participation” can mean many different things and that not everyone feels comfortable speaking up in every class meeting, so I don’t explicitly assign points for participation. However, I do ask that everyone is *engaged* in the class. This might mean offering an original interpretation or thoughtful reaction, taking the conversation in a new direction, asking an insightful question at just the right moment, or even listening intently and generously.

A class like this only works when people show up prepared, contribute in substantive ways, are generous and thoughtful with each other. I guarantee that if you’re *not* participating in meaningful ways, your grades on all the other elements will tend to suffer!

You are required to do all course reading, attend all classes, and complete all assignments. This course is about *you* and *your learning*, so showing up and engaging are important. If circumstances prevent you from attending class or actively participating, please inform me by email immediately. Regardless of why you are missing a class, you should keep me informed. If you need to miss class for a religious or university-sanctioned activity, please let me know at the beginning of the term. You are responsible for accessing and staying abreast of course content in cases where you miss class, and for communicating with me in a timely manner if you have any obstacles to doing your work or successfully completing the course. While this is an in-person class, depending on guest availability, some parts of some of our classes might be on Zoom; if we meet on Zoom, I expect you to have your camera on and actively participate.

Finally, I know that different parts of the semester can be more or less stressful, and that people experience that stress differently. In addition to seeking help (see “support systems” below), please let me know if there is anything going on that prevents you from actively participating in the course and thriving in the class community. Rather than falling behind on attendance, readings, or assignments, it’s far better to just approach me directly; we can always find a solution or adjustment that helps you succeed.

Communication:

You can email me if you have a question/concern or you want to make a time to meet outside of my official office hours. I’ll answer your email in about 24-36 hours, but I usually don’t answer email on weekends and after 7pm. If it’s urgent or an emergency, please mark the subject line ‘urgent’.

If you have a longer question that’s best addressed in a conversation, ***please visit my office hours*** (see top of first page of syllabus). More involved questions about course content or personal matters are often best answered individually.

Make friends with your fellow students! They’re often a good point of contact if you missed a class or want to compare assignment approaches. The course works best with a strong class culture.

Basic Needs:

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in this course, is urged to review the resources at the end of this syllabus and contact Annenberg’s Associate Dean of Student Affairs, Vince Gonzalez (vince.gonzales@usc.edu). Further, if you are comfortable, please feel free to let me know about your situation, so that I may help connect you with the support you need.

Required Readings, hardware/software, laptops and supplementary materials

Except where noted, all required readings will be provided electronically and made available through the class Blackboard site.

All USC students have access to the AP stylebook via the USC library.
(https://libproxy.usc.edu/login?url=http://www.apstylebook.com/usc_edu/.)

Students will be graded on adherence to AP style in assignments, including when writing about race and ethnicity. The updated AP style guidelines include capitalizing Black and deleting the hyphen in terms such as Asian American.

The following style guides will be available on BB:

NLGA Stylebook on LGBTQ Terminology: <https://www.nlgja.org/stylebook/> National

Center on Disability and Journalism: <https://ncdj.org/style-guide/>

Native American Journalists Association: <https://najanewsroom.com/reporting-guides/> National

Association of Black Journalists: <https://www.nabj.org/page/styleguide>

Asian American Journalists Association: <https://aaja.org/2020/11/30/covering-asia-and-asian-americans/> The

Diversity Style Guide: <https://www.diversitystyleguide.com>

The NAHJ Cultural Competence Handbook: <https://nahj.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/NAHJ-Cultural-Competence-Handbook.pdf>

Transjournalist Style Guide: <https://transjournalists.org/style-guide/> SPJ

Diversity Toolbox: <https://www.spj.org/diversity.asp>

Annenberg also has its own style guide that students can access through the app Amy the Stylebot on the Annenberg Media Center's Slack workspace. Annenberg's style guide is being developed with input from students, and whether or not students use our guide, they can provide valuable input here: <http://bit.ly/annenbergediting>

In addition, Annenberg Media's Guide for Equitable Reporting Strategies and Newsroom Style (<https://bit.ly/AnnMediaEquitableReportingGuide>) created by students, has detailed guidelines on thoughtful language and best practices for creating journalism respectful and reflective of a diverse world. Along with other useful resources, it can be found on Blackboard and is incorporated into Amy the Stylebot (mentioned above).

All undergraduate and graduate Annenberg majors and minors are required to have a PC or Apple laptop that can be used in Annenberg classes. Please refer to the Annenberg Digital Lounge for more information. To connect to USC's Secure Wireless network, please visit USC's Information Technology Services website.

Annenberg is committed to every student's success. There are multiple resources available to assist students with issues that limit their ability to participate fully in class. Please reach out to a professor and/or advisor for help connecting with these resources. They include the Annenberg Student Success Fund, a donor-funded financial aid account available to USC Annenberg undergraduate and graduate students for non-tuition expenses related to extra- and co-curricular programs and opportunities, and other scholarships and awards.

News Consumption and Knowledge of Current Events

As journalists, you should keep up with what is happening on campus, in the Los Angeles area, in the United States and around the world. USC provides subscriptions for students, staff and faculty to The New York Times and the Los Angeles Times, as well as the Wall Street Journal.

Through the USC library, you have access to many regional news outlets and a variety of publications that cover specific communities. You should be familiar with publications covering the many communities of Los Angeles such as The Los Angeles Sentinel, The Los Angeles Blade, The Los Angeles Wave, La Opinión, L.A. Taco, The Eastsider, The Armenian Weekly, High Country News, the Asian Journal and others. You should keep up with the Daily Trojan and uscannenbergmedia.com, including USC student-led verticals Dímelo and Black., listen to NPR and news radio, watch local and national television news, read news email newsletters and push alerts and follow news organizations social networks, including Twitter, Instagram and TikTok. You're encouraged to sign up for Nieman Lab's newsletter, which publishes brief, readable articles on important issues in the media. Following the news will sharpen your judgment and provide good (and bad) examples of the state of mainstream journalism.

Grading

a. Grading Breakdown

Description of assessments and corresponding points and percentage of grade.

Assignment	Points	% of Grade
Essay 1: Professional Identity, v1	5	5%
Essay 2: Data Skepticism	15	15%
Essay 3: Book Review	15	15%
Essay 4: Topic and due date are student choice, see above	15	15%
Essay 5: Professional Identity, v2	5	5%
Building the Examples Inventory	10	10%
Group Project: Presentation	15	15%
Group Project: Write-up	20	20%
TOTAL	100	100%

b. Course Grading Scale

Letter grades and corresponding point value ranges.

Letter grade and corresponding numerical point range		
95% to 100%: A	80% to 83%: B-	67% to 69%: D+ (D plus)
90% to 94%: A- (A minus)	77% to 79%: C+ (C plus)	64% to 66%: D
87% to 89%: B+ (B plus)	74% to 76%: C	60% to 63%: D- (D minus)
84% to 86%: B	70% to 73%: C- (C minus)	0% to 59%: F

c. Grading Standards

Journalism

Our curriculum is structured to prepare students to be successful in a professional news organization with the highest standards. Students will be evaluated first on accuracy and truthfulness in their stories. Good journalism prioritizes transparency, context and inclusivity. All stories should be written in AP style unless Annenberg style conflicts, in which case students can follow Annenberg style.

The following standards apply to news assignments.

“A” stories are accurate, clear, comprehensive stories that are well written and require only minor copyediting (i.e., they would be aired or published). Video work must also be shot and edited creatively, be well paced and include good sound bites and natural sound that add flavor, color or emotion to the story. Sources are varied, diverse and offer a complete view of the topic.

“B” stories require more than minor editing and have a few style or spelling errors or one significant error of omission. For video, there may be minor flaws in the composition of some shots or in the editing. Good use of available sound bites is required. Sources are mostly varied, diverse and offer a complete view of the topic.

“C” stories need considerable editing or rewriting and/or have many spelling, style or omission errors. Camera work and editing techniques in video stories are mediocre or unimaginative, but passable. Sound bites add little or no color - only information that could be better told in the reporter’s narration. Sources are repetitive or incomplete.

“D” stories require excessive rewriting, have numerous errors and should not have been submitted. Camera work is unsatisfactory or fails to show important elements. Sources are repetitive or incomplete.

“F” stories have failed to meet the major criteria of the assignment, are late, have numerous errors or both. Your copy should not contain any errors in spelling, style, grammar and facts. Any misspelled or mispronounced proper noun will result in an automatic “F” on that assignment. Any factual error will also result in an automatic “F” on the assignment. Accuracy is the first law of journalism. The following are some other circumstances that would warrant a grade of “F” and potential USC/Annenberg disciplinary action:

- Fabricating a story or making up quotes or information.
- Plagiarizing a script/article, part of a script/article or information from any source.
- Staging video or telling interview subjects what to say.
- Using video shot by someone else and presenting it as original work.
- Shooting video in one location and presenting it as another location.
- Using the camcorder to intentionally intimidate, provoke or incite a person or a group of people to elicit more “dramatic” video.
- Promising, paying or giving someone something in exchange for doing an interview either on or off camera.
- Missing a deadline.

For assignments other than conventional news reporting, quality of research and clarity of expression are the most important criteria. In research papers, good research should be presented through good writing, and good writing should be backed up by good research. Clarity of expression includes thoughtful organization of the material, insight into the subject matter and writing free from factual, grammatical and spelling errors. Research should draw on a diverse range of sources.

Students are encouraged to submit their work for consideration to Annenberg Media or the Daily Trojan, or pitch it to mainstream media outlets. Visit <http://bit.ly/SubmitAnnenbergMedia> for more information about that submission and review process and email Daily Trojan news editors at dt.city@gmail.com for more on how to pitch work to the campus newspaper.

Academic Integrity

The University of Southern California is foremost a learning community committed to fostering successful scholars and researchers dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Academic misconduct is in contrast to the university’s mission to educate students through a broad array of first-rank academic, professional, and extracurricular programs and includes any act of dishonesty in the submission of academic work (either in draft or final form).

This course will follow the expectations for academic integrity as stated in the [USC Student Handbook](#). All students are expected to submit assignments that are original work and prepared specifically for the course/section in this academic term. You may not submit work written by others or “recycle” work prepared for other courses without obtaining written permission from the instructor(s). Students suspected of engaging in academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity.

Other violations of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication (e.g., falsifying data), knowingly assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty, and any act that gains or is intended to gain an unfair academic advantage.

The impact of academic dishonesty is far-reaching and is considered a serious offense against the university and could result in outcomes such as failure on the assignment, failure in the course, suspension, or even expulsion from the university.

For more information about academic integrity see the [student handbook](#) or the [Office of Academic Integrity’s website](#), and university policies on [Research and Scholarship Misconduct](#).

Policy on Generative AI (GenAI)

Though I understand the appeal of GenAI tools (such as ChatGPT, Bard, Midjourney, DALL-E, etc.), their use is *not*

permitted in this class. I *may* permit exceptions during supervised in-class exercises, but we will discuss and contextualize these in class. If you are ever in doubt about these tools or their use, ask me *in advance*. Do not submit any work that uses GenAI without discussing with me how and why you would like to use them, and we agree on the ground rules. Any other use will be considered plagiarism.

Course Content Distribution and Synchronous Session Recordings Policies

USC has policies that prohibit recording and distribution of any synchronous and asynchronous course content outside of the learning environment.

Recording a university class without the express permission of the instructor and announcement to the class, or unless conducted pursuant to an Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) accommodation. Recording can inhibit free discussion in the future, and thus infringe on the academic freedom of other students as well as the instructor. ([Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook](#), page 13).

Distribution or use of notes, recordings, exams, or other intellectual property, based on university classes or lectures without the express permission of the instructor for purposes other than individual or group study. This includes but is not limited to providing materials for distribution by services publishing course materials. This restriction on unauthorized use also applies to all information, which had been distributed to students or in any way had been displayed for use in relationship to the class, whether obtained in class, via email, on the internet, or via any other media. ([Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook](#), page 13).

Add/Drop Dates for Session 001

(15 weeks: 1/8/2024 – 4/26/2024; Final Exam Period: 5/1-8/2024)

Link: <https://classes.usc.edu/term-20241/calendar/>

Last day to add: Friday, January 26, 2024

Last day to drop a class without a mark of “W,” except for Monday-only classes, and receive a refund: Friday, January 26, 2024

Last day to change enrollment option to Pass/No Pass or Audit: Friday, January 26, 2024 [All major and minor courses must be taken for a letter grade.]

Last day to add/drop a Monday-only class without a mark of “W” and receive a refund or change to Audit: Tuesday, January 30, 2024

Last day to withdraw without a “W” on transcript or change pass/no pass to letter grade: Friday, February 23, 2024 [Mark of “W” will still appear on student record and STARS report and tuition charges still apply.]

*Please drop any course by the end of week three for session 001 (or the 20 percent mark of the session in which the course is offered) to avoid tuition charges.]

Last day to drop with a mark of “W”: Friday, April 5, 2024

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

This syllabus is subject to change - and probably will change - based on the progress of the class, news events, and/or guest speaker availability.

WEEK	DATE	THEME	MATERIALS	DUE
1	Jan. 8	Introduction	<p>Lowery, W. (2020). A Reckoning Over Objectivity, Led by Black Journalists. <i>New York Times</i>. https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/23/opinion/objectivity-black-journalists-coronavirus.html</p> <p>Schudson, M. (2008). Six or seven things news can do for democracy. In <i>Why democracies need an unlovable press</i> (pp. 11-26). Polity Press.</p> <p>Wells-Barnett, I. (2012). Southern horrors: Lynch law in all its phases. In E. King & J. L. Chapman (Eds.), <i>Key readings in journalism</i> (pp. 259-265). Routledge.</p> <p>Zelizer, B. (2017). Twelve metaphors for journalism. In <i>What journalism could be</i> (pp. 11-32). Polity.</p> <p><u>In-class activity:</u> critical engagements with the Online News Association’s “Build Your Own Ethics” tool, https://ethics.journalists.org/</p> <p><u>Optional:</u> Skim this and think about what a 2024 version of it should include: Rosenstiel, T., & Mitchell, A. (Eds.). (2003). <i>Thinking Clearly: Cases in Journalistic Decision-Making</i>. Columbia University Press.</p>	<p>Bring:</p> <p>an example news piece you think is stellar;</p> <p>an example news piece that irked you.</p>
2	Jan. 15	MLK Jr Day - No Class Meeting		
3	Jan. 22	Data	<p>Wiggins, C., & Jones, M. L. (2023). <i>How Data Happened: A History from the Age of Reason to the Age of Algorithms</i>. W.W. Norton. → <i>read the whole book</i></p> <p><u>In-class activity:</u> critical engagements with “Data is Plural” archive, in preparation for completing Essay 2.</p>	ESSAY 1
4	Jan. 29	Platforms	<p>van Dijck, J., Poell, T., & de Waal, M. (2018). The platform society as a contested concept. In <i>The Platform Society</i> (pp. 7-30). Oxford University Press.</p> <p>Gillmor, D. (2023). Journalists (And Others) Should Leave Twitter. Here’s How They Can Get Started. <i>TechDirt</i>. https://www.techdirt.com/2023/01/04/journalists-and-others-should-leave-twitter-heres-how-they-can-get-started/</p> <p>Newman, N. (2022). “How publishers are learning to create and distribute news on TikTok.” Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism. https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/how-publishers-are-learning-create-and-distribute-news-tiktok</p> <p>Petre, C. (2021). <i>All the news that's fit to click</i>. Princeton University Press. → Introduction & Chapter 1</p>	ESSAY 2

5	Feb. 5	Artificial Intelligence	<p>Broussard, M. (2023). "How to Investigate an Algorithm." Issues in Science & Technology. Retrieved from https://issues.org/algorithm-auditing-more-than-glitch-broussard/</p> <p>Ciston, S. (2022). <i>A critical field guide for working with machine learning datasets</i>. Knowing Machines. https://knowingmachines.org/critical-field-guide</p> <p>Planet Money. (2023). <i>Planet Money makes an episode using AI</i>. NPR. https://www.npr.org/series/1178395718/planet-money-makes-an-episode-using-ai → listen to all 3 episodes</p> <p>Tarnoff, B. (2023). Weizenbaum's nightmares: how the inventor of the first chatbot turned against AI. <i>The Guardian</i>. https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2023/jul/25/joseph-weizenbaum-inventor-eliza-chatbot-turned-against-artificial-intelligence-ai</p> <p>Skim to Compare:</p> <p>Reporters Without Borders. (2023). <i>RSF and 16 partners unveil Paris Charter on AI and Journalism</i>. Reporters Without Borders. https://rsf.org/en/rsf-and-16-partners-unveil-paris-charter-ai-and-journalism</p> <p>Associated Press. (2023, August 16, 2023). <i>Standards around generative AI</i>. Associated Press. https://blog.ap.org/standards-around-generative-ai</p> <p>Partnership on AI. (2023). <i>AI Adoption for Newsrooms: A 10-Step Guide</i>. Partnership on AI. https://partnershiponai.org/ai-for-newsrooms/</p> <p>In-class activity: critical engagements with "AI Pedagogy" tool https://aipedagogy.org/</p>	
6	Feb. 12	Whistleblowing [Guest: Prof Afua Hirsch]	<p>Assmann, K. (2022). Whistleblowers and their Faith in Journalism. <i>Journalism Practice</i>, 1-20. doi:10.1080/17512786.2022.2161067</p> <p>Bogost, I. (2022). Whistleblowing Is Broken. <i>The Atlantic</i>. https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2022/08/zatko-twitter-tech-industry-whistleblowers/671227/</p> <p>Hendrix, J. (2022). Facebook Whistleblower Frances Haugen and WSJ Reporter Jeff Horwitz Reflect One Year On. <i>Tech Policy Press</i>. https://techpolicy.press/facebook-whistleblower-frances-haugen-and-wsj-reporter-jeff-horwitz-reflect-one-year-on/ → Read or watch</p> <p>Palmer, R. (2017). <i>Becoming the news: How ordinary people respond to the media spotlight</i>. Columbia University Press. → chapters 2, 3, 4</p>	ESSAY 4a
7	Feb. 19	Presidents Day - No Class Meeting		

8	Feb. 26	Investigation [Guest: Prof Mark Schoofs]	<p>Ettema, J. S., & Glasser, T. L. (1998). <i>Custodians of conscience</i>. Columbia University Press. → chapters 1, 2, 3.</p> <p>Protest, D. L., Cook, F. L., Doppelt, J. C., Ettema, J. S., Gordon, M. T., Leff, D. R., & Miller, P. (1991). <i>Journalism of outrage: Investigative reporting and agenda building in America</i>. The Guilford Press. → chapters 1 and 2</p> <p>Fridman, M., Krøvel, R., & Palumbo, F. (2023). How (not to) Run an AI Project in Investigative Journalism. <i>Journalism Practice</i>, 1-18. https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2023.2253797</p> <p><u>In-class activity:</u> experiment with: Pro Publica. (2023, November 8). <i>Find out why your health insurer denied your claim</i>. https://projects.propublica.org/claimfile/</p>	
9	Mar. 4	Mistakes	<p>Campbell, J. W. (2016). <i>Getting It Wrong: Debunking the Greatest Myths in American Journalism</i> (2nd ed.). University of California Press. → <i>pick any one chapter you like and come ready to discuss</i></p> <p>Palmer, R. (2017). <i>Becoming the news: How ordinary people respond to the media spotlight</i>. Columbia University Press. → <i>chapter 5</i></p> <p>Salkin, E., & Grieves, K. (2022). The “major mea culpa:” Journalistic Discursive Techniques When Professional Norms are Broken. <i>Journalism Studies</i>, 23(9), 1096-1113. https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2022.2069589</p> <p>Snyder, G. (2020, June 22, 2020). “The Times corrects factual errors. What about bigger controversies?” <i>Columbia Journalism Review</i>. Retrieved November 1, 2020 from https://www.cjr.org/public_editor/nyt-correction-factual-errors-editors-note.php</p> <p><u>In-class activity:</u> critical engagement with databases of reporting on technology errors.</p>	
Spring Break	Mar. 11	Spring Break - No Class Meeting		
10	Mar. 18	Localities [Guest: Prof Gabe Kahn]	<p>Bengani, P. (2021). Part One: The Metric Media network runs more than 1,200 local news sites. Here are some of the non-profits funding them. <i>Tow Center for Digital Journalism</i>. https://www.cjr.org/tow_center_reports/metric-media-lobbyists-funding.php</p> <p>Singhvi, Y. P.-K. a. A. (2021). <i>How We Reconstructed the Neighborhood Destroyed by the Tulsa Race Massacre</i>. New York Times Open Team. https://open.nytimes.com/how-we-reconstructed-the-neighborhood-destroyed-by-the-tulsa-race-massacre-33fcf32dd086</p> <p>Weber, M. S., & Mathews, N. (2022). Explicating Local: An Audience-Based Framing of Local Community and Local News. <i>Digital Journalism</i>, 1-20. doi:10.1080/21670811.2022.2142629</p> <p>Wenzel, A. (2023, November 21, 2023). <i>Antiracist Journalism: Creating accountability infrastructure for equitable local news</i>. Columbia Journalism Review. https://www.cjr.org/tow_center_reports/antiracist-journalism-creating-accountability-infrastructure-for-equitable-local-news.php</p>	

11	Mar. 25	Elections [Guest: Prof Christina Bellantoni]	<p>Benson, R. (2018). The case for campaign journalism. In P. Boczkowski & Z. Papacharissi (Eds.), <i>Trump and the media</i> (pp. 213-220).</p> <p>Kreiss, D. (2018). The media are about identity, not information. In P. Boczkowski & Z. Papacharissi (Eds.), <i>Trump and the media</i> (pp. 93-99).</p> <p>Lowery, W. (2023). A Test of the News: Objectivity, democracy, and the American mosaic. <i>Columbia Journalism Review</i>. https://www.cjr.org/analysis/a-test-of-the-news-wesley-lowery-objectivity.php</p> <p>On The Media. (2023). <i>The Press Is Still Failing to Responsibly Cover the GOP and Trump</i>. WNYC Studios. https://www.wnycstudios.org/podcasts/otm/segments/press-still-failing-cover-gop-and-trump-on-the-media</p> <p>Pope, K. (2023). <i>Looking back on the coverage of Trump</i>. Columbia Journalism Review. https://www.cjr.org/special_report/trumped-up-press-versus-president-ed-note.php → skim all 4 parts</p> <p>Rothschild, D. M., Pickens, E., Heltzer, G., Wang, J., & Watts, D. J. (2023, November 20). <i>Warped Front Pages: Researchers examine the self-serving fiction of 'objective' political news</i>. https://www.cjr.org/analysis/election-politics-front-pages.php</p>	ESSAY 3
12	Apr. 1	Money	<p>Greenwell, M. (2023, October 16). <i>Solutions Oriented: How foundation money is transforming local news</i>. https://www.cjr.org/local_news/solutions-oriented-cleveland-documentars-community-foundation.php</p> <p>McManus, J. (2019). Commodification of News. In T. P. Vos, F. Hanusch, D. Dimitrakopoulou, M. Geertsema-Sligh, & A. Sehl (Eds.), <i>The International Encyclopedia of Journalism Studies</i>. Wiley.</p> <p>Newman, N., & Robertson, C. T. (2023). <i>Paying for news: Price-conscious consumers look for value amid cost-of-living crisis</i>. Reuters Institute, University of Oxford https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/paying-news-price-conscious-consumers-look-value-amid-cost-living-crisis</p> <p>Pickard, V. (2019). The violence of the market. <i>Journalism</i>, 20(1), 154-158. doi:10.1177/1464884918808955</p>	ESSAY 4c
13	Apr. 8	Climate [Guest: Prof Adrienne Russell]	<p>Aronczyk, M., & Espinoza, M. I. (2022). <i>A Strategic Nature: Public Relations and the Politics of American Environmentalism</i>. Oxford University Press. → Introduction only</p> <p>Lester, L. (2022). Journalism and environmental futures. In S. Allan (Ed.), <i>The Routledge Companion to News and Journalism</i> (pp. 299-306). Routledge.</p> <p>Rahimi, T. (2022). How journalists can better sound the alarm on climate change. <i>Center for Journalism Ethics, University of Wisconsin-Madison</i>. https://ethics.journalism.wisc.edu/2022/07/20/how-journalists-can-better-sound-the-alarm-on-climate-change%E2%82%AC%80/</p> <p>Russell, A. (2023). <i>The mediated climate: How journalists, big tech, and activists are vying for our future</i>. Columbia University Press. → Introduction only</p>	

14	Apr. 15	Labor [Matt Pearce, <i>Los Angeles Times</i>]	<p>American Press Institute. (2023, July 31). <i>Journalists and mental health: An API resource guide</i>. https://americanpressinstitute.org/mental-health-resources-for-journalists/</p> <p>Bélaïr-Gagnon, V., Holton, A. E., Deuze, M., & Mellado, C. (Eds.). (2024). <i>Happiness in Journalism</i>. Routledge. → <i>Introduction</i></p> <p>Cohen, N. S., & Peuter, G. d. (2020). <i>New Media Unions: Organizing Digital Journalists</i>. Taylor & Francis. → selections</p> <p>Greenhouse, S. (2022). <i>Newsrooms Are Unionizing Pretty Much “Nonstop.” Here’s Why</i>. Nieman Reports. https://niemanreports.org/articles/newsrooms-labor-unions/</p> <p>Kennedy, D. (2023, October 30). <i>How a journalism professor helps students understand harassment — and how to protect themselves</i>. Poynter. https://www.poynter.org/commentary/2023/online-harassment-journalists-training-class-protection/</p> <p><u>Optional:</u></p> <p>Bélaïr-Gagnon, V., Bossio, D., Holton, A. E., & Molyneux, L. (2022). Disconnection: How Measured Separations From Journalistic Norms and Labor Can Help Sustain Journalism. <i>Social Media + Society</i>, 8(1), https://doi.org/10.1177/20563051221077217</p> <p>Sammut, F., Bezzina, M., & Scerri, J. Under Attack in the Cyber Battlefield: A Scoping Review of Journalists’ Experiences of Cyberharassment. <i>Journalism Practice</i>, 1-29. https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2023.2294290</p> <p>Steinke, A. J., & Belair-Gagnon, V. (2020). “I Know It When I See It”: Constructing Emotion and Emotional Labor in Social Justice News. <i>Mass Communication and Society</i>, 23(5), 608-627. https://doi.org/10.1080/15205436.2020.1772309</p> <p>Sybert, J. (2023). Navigating Precarity: Disruption and Decline at the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. <i>Journalism Practice</i>, 17(4), 737-754. https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2021.1939105</p>	Reflective biography - v2
15	Apr. 22	Final Group Project Presentations		
Exam Period	May 6	Summative Experience :: Submit Group Project Write-up		

Sample List of Books for Essay 3 (Book Review):

Please check with me first if you'd like to review a book not on this list.

- Anderson, C. W. (2018). *Apostles of certainty: Data journalism and the politics of doubt*. Oxford University Press.
- Boczkowski, P. (2021). *Abundance*. Oxford University Press.
- Broussard, M. (2018). *Artificial Unintelligence: How Computers Misunderstand the World*. MIT Press.
- Broussard, M. (2023). *More than a Glitch: Confronting Race, Gender, and Ability Bias in Tech*. MIT Press.
- Callison, C. (2014). *How climate change comes to matter: The communal life of facts*. Duke University Press.
- Christin, A. (2020). *Metrics at Work: How Web Journalists Make Sense of their Algorithmic Publics in the United States and France*. Princeton University Press.
- Coddington, M. (2019). *Aggregating the news*. Columbia University Press.
- Diakopoulos, N. (2019). *Automating the news*. Harvard University Press.
- Ganapathy, D. (2022). *Media and Climate Change: Making Sense of Press Narratives*. Routledge.
- Hawhee, D. (2023). *A Sense of Urgency: How the Climate Crisis Is Changing Rhetoric*. University of Chicago Press.
- Horwitz, J. (2023). *Broken Code: Inside Facebook and the fight to expose its harmful secrets*. Penguin Random House.
- Matassi, M., & Boczkowski, P. (2023). *To Know Is to Compare: Studying Social Media across Nations, Media, and Platforms*. MIT Press.
- Minow, M. (2021). *Saving the News: Why the Constitution Calls for Government Action to Preserve Freedom of Speech*. Oxford University Press.
- Palmer, R. (2017). *Becoming the news: How ordinary people respond to the media spotlight*. Columbia University Press.
- Palmer, L. (2019). *The Fixers: Local News Workers and the Underground Labor of International Reporting*. Columbia University Press.
- Petre, C. (2021). *All the news that's fit to click*. Princeton University Press.
- Petryna, A. (2022). *Horizon Work: At the Edges of Knowledge in an Age of Runaway Climate Change*. Princeton University Press.
- Pickard, V. (2020). *Democracy without journalism*. Oxford University Press.
- Powers, M., & Vera-Zambrano, S. (2023). *The Journalist's Predicament: Difficult Choices in a Declining Profession*. Columbia University Press.
- Reese, S. D. (2021). *The crisis of the institutional press*. Polity.
- Ressa, M. (2022). *How to Stand Up to a Dictator*. HarperCollins.
- Russell, A. (2023). *The mediated climate: How journalists, big tech, and activists are vying for our future*. Columbia University Press.
- Shepperd, J. (2023). *Shadow of the New Deal: The Victory of Public Broadcasting*. University of Illinois Press.
- Sullivan, M. (2022). *Newsroom Confidential: Lessons (and Worries) from an Ink-Stained Life*. Macmillan.
- Tandoc, E., Jenkins, J., Thomas, R., & Westlund, O. (Eds.). (2021). *Critical Incidents in Journalism: Pivotal Moments Reshaping Journalism around the World*. Routledge.
- Tucher, A. (2022). *Not Exactly Lying: Fake News and Fake Journalism in American History*. Columbia University Press.
- Usher, N. (2021). *News for the Rich, White, and Blue: How Place and Power Distort American Journalism*. Columbia University Press.
- Wakkary, R. (2021). *Things We Could Design: For More Than Human-Centered Worlds*. MIT Press.
- Wallace, L. R. (2019). *The View from Somewhere: Undoing the Myth of Journalistic Objectivity*. University of Chicago Press.
- Wenzel, A. (2023). *Antiracist Journalism: The Challenge of Creating Equitable Local News*. Columbia University Press.
- Zelizer, B., Boczkowski, P. J., & Anderson, C. W. (2021). *The Journalism Manifesto*. Wiley.

Internships

The value of professional internships as part of the overall educational experience of our students has long been recognized by the School of Journalism. Accordingly, while internships are not required for successful completion of this course, any student enrolled in this course that undertakes and completes an approved, non-paid internship during this semester shall earn academic extra credit herein of an amount equal to 1 percent of the total available semester points for this course. To receive instructor approval, a student must request an internship letter from the Annenberg Career Development Office and bring it to the instructor to sign by the end of the third week of classes. The student must submit the signed letter to the media organization, along with the evaluation form provided by the Career Development Office. The form should be filled out by the intern supervisor and returned to the instructor at the end of the semester. No credit will be given if an evaluation form is not turned into the instructor by the last day of class. Note: The internship must be unpaid and can only be applied to one journalism or public relations class.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct

The USC Student Handbook (https://policy.usc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/USC_StudentCode_August2022.pdf)

Academic Integrity

USC's Unifying Value of integrity is a foundational principle that inspires the community to match its values to its actions. Academic integrity is ultimately the sole guarantor of the legitimacy of one's education, and therefore, is vitally important not just for oneself, but for the entire USC community. The value of all USC degrees is negatively impacted by violations of academic integrity. In the classroom, general principles of academic integrity include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles.

Academic Integrity violations (academic dishonesty) include, but are not limited to:

Plagiarism and Cheating

- The submission of material authored by another person but represented as the student's own work, whether that material is paraphrased or copied in verbatim or near-verbatim form.
- Re-using any portion of one's own work (essay, term paper, project, or other assignment) previously submitted without citation of such and without permission of the instructor(s) involved.
- Improper acknowledgment of sources in essays or papers, including drafts. Also, all students involved in collaborative work (as permitted by the instructor) are expected to proofread the work and are responsible for all particulars of the final draft.
- Acquisition of academic work, such as term papers, solutions, or other assignments, from any source and the subsequent presentation of those materials as the student's own work, or providing academic work, such as term papers, solutions, or assignments that another student submits as their own work.

USC School of Journalism Policy on Academic Integrity

https://catalogue.usc.edu/preview_entity.php?catoid=16&ent_oid=3459

"Since its founding, the School of Journalism has maintained a commitment to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found plagiarizing, fabricating, cheating on examinations, and/or purchasing papers or other assignments faces sanctions ranging from an "F" on the assignment to dismissal from the School of Journalism."

In addition, it is assumed that the work you submit for this course is work you have produced entirely by yourself, and has not been previously produced by you for submission in another course or Learning Lab,

without approval of the instructor.

Students and Disability Accommodations:

USC welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter disability-related barriers. Once a student has completed the OSAS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and accommodations are determined to be reasonable and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be available to generate for each course. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at osas.usc.edu. You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at osasfrontdesk@usc.edu.

Support Systems:

Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline - 988 for both calls and text messages – 24/7 on call

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. The Lifeline is comprised of a national network of over 200 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices. The new, shorter phone number makes it easier for people to remember and access mental health crisis services (though the previous 1 (800) 273- 8255 number will continue to function indefinitely) and represents a continued commitment to those in crisis.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL) – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender- and power-based harm (including sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking).

Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX (EEO-TIX) - (213) 740-5086

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) - (213) 740-0776

OSAS ensures equal access for students with disabilities through providing academic accommodations and auxiliary aids in accordance with federal laws and university policy.

USC Campus Support and Intervention - (213) 740-0411

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion - (213) 740-2101

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-1200 – 24/7 on call

Non-emergency assistance or information.

Office of the Ombuds - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC)

A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.

Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice - (323) 442-2850 or otfp@med.usc.edu

Confidential Lifestyle Redesign services for USC students to support health promoting habits and routines that enhance quality of life and academic performance.

Annenberg Student Success Fund

<https://annenbergscholarships.usc.edu/current-students/resources/annenbergscholarships-and-awards>

The Annenberg Student Success Fund is a donor-funded financial aid account available to USC Annenberg undergraduate and graduate students for non-tuition expenses related to extra- and co-curricular programs and opportunities.

Annenberg Student Emergency Aid Fund

<https://annenbergscholarships.usc.edu/current-students/resources/annenbergscholarships-and-awards>

Awards are distributed to students experiencing unforeseen circumstances and emergencies impacting their ability to pay tuition or cover everyday living expenses. These awards are not intended to cover full-tuition expenses, but rather serve as bridge funding to guarantee students' continued enrollment at USC until other resources, such as scholarships or loans, become available. Students are encouraged to provide as much information in their application, as well as contact their academic advisor directly with questions about additional resources available to them.

About Your Instructor

Mike Ananny is an Associate Professor of Communication and Journalism and Affiliated Faculty of Science, Technology, and Society at the University of Southern California's Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism. He studies the public significance of networked news infrastructures and the politics of algorithmic systems. He is the author of numerous articles and the book *Networked Press Freedom* (MIT Press, 2018), co-editor (with Laura Forlano and Molly Wright Steenson) of the volume *Bauhaus Futures* (MIT Press, 2019), and is preparing a manuscript on the public power of silence and mediated absences (under contract with Yale University Press). He holds a PhD from Stanford University and a Masters from the MIT Media Laboratory.