JAMS 460 - History of Mass Media, Spring 2019
Tues./Thurs: 2-3:15pm; BOL B46

Instructor: Richard Popp, Ph.D, Associate Professor, Dept. of Journalism, Advertising, and Media Studies; Bolton Hall 582 / popp@uwm.edu
Office Hours: Tues. 3:30-4:45pm, Thurs. 9:45-10:30am, and by appointment

Teaching Assistant: Claire Hackett; Bolton Hall 516; hackett7@uwm.edu
Office Hours: Tues. 12-2pm and by appointment

History of Mass Media: Welcome to the History of Mass Media. The purpose of this class is to explore the social and cultural development of modern media. We’ll go all the way back to Medieval times, but much of the course will focus on the roughly 150 years stretching from the Civil War-era to the late 20th century, when media like the popular daily paper, the photograph, film, radio, mass magazines, the telephone, comics, recorded music, and TV became engrained parts of everyday life. Though the focus will be on the United States, the course will pay close attention to how American media took shape in an international context.

During class, we’ll take an in-depth approach by examining media from the eras discussed. We’ll also talk about the tools (beyond Google and YouTube) that are out there for unearthing these bits of the past. Because the readings will provide the groundwork for our discussions, it is imperative that you keep up with the readings.

Course Objectives: By the end of this course, you will:
1) Understand how media industries and technologies took shape over time and roles they have played in broader processes of social change
2) Understand how media are shaped by the social, cultural, and economic currents of their time
3) Improve your ability to find the media artifacts that scholars, journalists, PR professionals, and other content creators use to write about the past
4) Improve your media analysis skills, both oral and written
5) Improve your ability to read and understand media studies research and scholarship

Readings: All course readings are available for free, either as PDF documents or as links to websites. These files and links are posted to the course Canvas page.

If you have problems accessing online course material, please call the campus help desk 229-4040 or email help@uwm.edu.

Class expectations:
You are expected to come to each lecture having done the readings for that day.
While you are encouraged to engage in class using whatever tools best meet your needs, you are also expected to avoid distracting your classmates by talking or using connected devices for non-class purposes. You are responsible for your own attention, but you are also responsible for not creating a distracting and disinterested climate in the classroom.

From time to time your instructors will send you e-mail(s) at your UWM account, which you should check daily to make sure you are up-to-date on course business. The best way to contact your instructors is by visiting their office hours or sending them an email.

Your instructors will do their best to respond to your emails promptly, but may not read email at all on the weekend or in the evening. If you email the professor or TAs at night or on the weekend, please do not expect to hear back until the next weekday.

**Course requirements:**
The total number of points for this course is 100. See schedule below for due dates. Assignments will be submitted electronically using Canvas.

- **Analysis Papers**, 30 points (three papers, 10 points each). In these assignments, you’ll analyze historical texts (ie. old journalism, TV shows, pop songs, etc.).

- **Scavenger Hunts**, 20 points (two papers, 10 points each). In these assignments, you’ll learn how to track down historical sources.

- **Popular History Project**: 14 points. In this assignment, you’ll present content about media history using the popular genres of 21st century digital communication (blog posts, memes, etc.).

- **Exams**, 36 points (two exams, 18 points each). Both exams will consist of a mix of multiple choice and short-essay questions. You’ll take them on the course Canvas site. None of the exams will be cumulative. Please see the section on course policies below regarding makeup exams.

**Course policies:**
Attendance is mandatory. Most of the material on the tests will come directly from the lectures. Although there’s no formal penalty for missing a class, you’ll find it just about impossible to do well in the course if you don’t attend.

Late papers will be penalized one point out of ten per weekday. If your paper is more than one week late (7 calendar days), you will receive a zero on the assignment.

Makeup exams will be given only for students who have a legitimate religious observance. If you have to miss an exam day for any other reason, please do not take this course this semester. No early exams will be given for any reason.

No extra credit assignments will be given for any reason to any student. Please do not ask your instructor or the TAs for extra credit.
If you need special accommodations in order to meet any of the requirements of this course, please contact your instructor as soon as possible, preferably during the first week of the semester. You must have an Accessibility Resource Center (ARC) visa to receive any accommodation. For more see: http://uwm.edu/arc/

Academic misconduct, including plagiarism, will be treated severely. Students are responsible for the honest completion and representation of their work and for the proper citation of sources. Please familiarize yourself with the university’s policies and procedures regarding academic misconduct.

University policies:
Please familiarize yourself with the university’s policies on students with disabilities, religious observance, students called to active military duty, incompletes, discriminatory conduct (such as sexual harassment), academic misconduct, complaint procedures, grade appeal procedures, and final examinations. Go to http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/SyllabusLinks.pdf for more information about these policies.

Allocation of student time for the semester:
Time in the classroom (face-to-face instruction): 37.5 hours
Time taking exams: 4 hours
Time completing assignments: 70 hours
Time for preparation and study: 32.5 hours
Total: 144 hours

Grade breakdown:
93-100 A  90-92 A-  88-89 B+
83-87 B  80-82 B-  78-79 C+
73-77 C  70-72 C-  68-69 D+
63-67 D  60-62 D-  less than 60 F

Schedule:
**Tues. Jan. 22** Course Intro and Before Mass Media
**Thurs. Jan. 24** Merchants, Markets, and Medieval Media *(Petegree)*

**Tues. Jan. 29** Media in Colonial Times and Revolutionary America *(Brown; John)*

**Tues. Feb. 5** Antebellum New York and the Birth of Modern Media II
**Thurs. Feb. 7** Photography and the Civil War *(Trachtenberg)*
Tues. Feb. 12  Wires: The Telegraph, Telephone, and Electrification (*MacDougall*);  
ANALYSIS #1 DUE

Thurs. Feb. 14  Steam-Age Culture: The Circus, Wild West Show, and Sports (*Rydell*)


Thurs. Feb. 21  Banned: Censorship and Media (*Lefkowitz*)

Tues. Feb. 26  Advertising and the Birth of Consumer Society (*Strasser*)

Thurs. Feb. 28  This is a Modern World: Media, Social Movements, and the Great War (*Kitch; Caddoo*);  
SCAVENGER HUNT #1 DUE


Thurs. Mar. 7  Modern Times: Silent Film and 1920s Media (TBA)

Tues. Mar. 12  EXAM 1 (On Canvas; no class meeting)


Mar. 19 – 21  NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK

Tues. Mar. 27  Depression Culture: Mass Media and 1930s America (*Kasson*)

Thurs. Mar. 29  To See the World: *LIFE* and Photography in 20th Century America (*Doss*);  
SCAVENGER HUNT #2 DUE

Tues. Apr. 2  Why We Fight: World War II and 1940s Media (*Schatz*)

Thurs. Apr. 4  A Change is Gonna’ Come: Media and the Black Freedom Struggle (*Washburn*);  
ANALYSIS #2 DUE

Tues. Apr. 9  The Tube: TV, the Red Scare, and Postwar America (*Spigel*)

Thurs. Apr. 11  Archives Presentation and The Tube (cont.)

Tues. Apr. 16  Eve of Destruction: Cold War Media (*Von Eschen*)

Thurs. Apr. 18  At the Hop: Teens, Rock, and ‘50s Media (*Graebner*)

Tues. Apr. 23  Cosmo Girls and Beatlemaniacs: Media in ‘60s America (*Millard*)

Thurs. Apr. 25  Electrical Banana: Countercultural Media (*McMillian*);  
POPULAR HISTORY PROJECT DUE

Tues. Apr. 30  Watergate, Disco, and PEOPLE: Media in ‘70s America (TBA)
Thurs. May 2 ‘70s Subcultures: Hip Hop, Punk, and the Birth of Late 20th Century Culture (Willard)

Tues. May 7 Postmodern Times: Videos, Computers, and Videogames and ‘80s America (Friedman); ANALYSIS #3 DUE

Thurs. May 9 Smells Like America Online: ‘90s Media and the Origins of Now (TBA)

Thurs. May 16: EXAM 2 (10 AM – NOON; On Canvas; no class meeting)

Readings:


John, Richard R. “Recasting the Information Infrastructure for the Industrial Age,” in A Nation Transformed by Information, ed. Alfred D. Chandler and James W. Cortada (New York: Oxford
University Press, 2000), excerpt.


