

**FALL 2019** – NYAP 499A -Seminar  
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## **NY Arts Program Seminar Broadcast and Documentary Principles of Broadcast News and Documentary in Modern Media Arts**

### **Overview**

In this course of eight seminars we explore the history of broadcast news and documentary, technology's effect on the changing nature of the mediums, the roles producers and editors play in the production of television news and documentary, a case study in the VICE Media style, and an examination of the potential future of news and documentary storytelling as seen through developments of streaming and podcasting.

Through selected viewings, discussion, technical exercises and field visits, students will come away with a stronger understanding of the process and creation behind the visual medium, how news and documentaries are produced – both in the past and the present - and how to recognize trends in a changing media landscape.

### **Learning Objectives**

1. Improve and develop critical listening and interviewing skills
2. Develop vocabulary to describe news and documentary practices
3. Analyze news and documentary styles from aesthetic, historical, and cultural perspectives
4. Recognize historical trends and recurring themes in visual and audio storytelling
5. Learn to better recognize storytelling innovations in our current culture

### **Outcomes**

1. Comprehension of the history of and variance of media, from print to radio to television, digital and beyond
2. Recognition of fundamental roles within media organizations
3. Understanding of basic organization of a documentary or news team
4. Understanding basic underlying ethics and best practices in journalism and documentary
5. Expansion of aesthetic taste, and the ability to debate the quality of work with reasonable, logical means.

Office Hours: Tuesday, 6 to 8 pm\*

\*when seminar sessions are occurring, office hours will be after our class

### **Assessments**

Will be based on the following:

Attendance and punctuality

Meaningful participation in seminars and individual meetings

Evidence of exploration of media outside one's current media consumption habits and patterns

Quality of critical thinking

Final presentation of independent projects

**NYAP Seminars have a non-traditional structure. Course credit and assessment are dependent on:**

Seminar attendance (eight two-hour sessions)  
One-on-one meetings (four minimum)  
Outside program event attendance

### **Grading for NYAP**

Internship (3.25 credits)  
Grade is based on your evaluation and faculty contact with your sponsor

Seminar (1)  
Grade is based on attendance, participation, and work ethic for seminar assignments

Journal and Independent Study (0.25 credits)  
Grade is based on the quality and frequency of journal entries, and the breadth and quality of your final project

### **Reading**

Students will be assigned reading according to his or her independent project, and for seminar assignments, where applicable.

### **Journal**

Students will be asked to attend documentaries, films and other news and media-related events in New York City and keep a journal of their thoughts. This journal is a record of intellectual and creative experiences and discoveries. Please have fun with it, but also take it seriously. This is to tell you what you think about an event you have attended and you – if you keep this journal and revisit it – may find it of personal and intellectual value in it in later years.

### **Independent Project**

Based on the foundations of your journal entries, you will pursue a focused, supervised, open-ended independent project. Weekly progress will be expected and personal and professional goals identified.

### **Important Notes**

Please be proactive in your pursuit of your interests within media. Ask colleagues if they want to go to a documentary screening or a public discussion with a journalist or media professional or even to get feedback on your work. Attendance to seminars is mandatory and please be on time.

iPhone use in class is a no-go, so please use your journal to take notes. Meaningful participation in our seminar discussions is a key factor in final grading.

Lastly, I'm very forgiving and I'm here to help you explore your interests. But ... you need to tell me with as much advance as you can if you are having any issues so we can deal with them as promptly as possible.

### **Communication**

My preferred method of communication is through email, so please check your email regularly.

Text or phone is also okay, but it should be secondary to emailing as I can't always pick up the phone at work. But do not hesitate to call me if you have a pressing question. I will respond as quickly as possible. All changes to internship schedule must be cleared with myself and NYAP.

## Schedule

### Session      Time      What and Where

**Attending all sessions and program events is mandatory**

*Green is for required Events*

*Red is for required paper work and reviews*

Date 9/10	6-8 pm	Seminar #1
		In Class: Students interview one another and file a brief report
		Discussion: The Art of the Interview, show examples of three powerful interviews in news and documentary and explore techniques, approaches, in interviewing.
		Assignment: Watch or listen to at least three interviews and journal on this and be ready to discuss the following week.
Date 9/16	6:30-8:30	Program Event: Kristen Nutile, Filmmaker
Date 9/16	N/A	Learning Goals are distributed electronically
Date 9/17	6-8 pm	Seminar #2
		In Class: New York Times science reporter, Jon Gertner, discusses his latest book, "The Ice At The End of the World," on the history of Greenland and climate change.
		Discussion: How to conduct interviews, what to look for, what to consider before interviewing ... anyone.
		Assignment: Read three online or print pieces on climate issues in different publications. Identify themes of coverage and come to class ready to discuss these themes the following week.
Date 9/30		Learning Goals Forms Due electronically
Date 10/1	6-8 pm	Seminar #3
		In Class: We'll do a quick survey of the role of the press in the US, showing how news evolved from a print, handing out pamphlets, etc., to days of a dozen daily newspapers operating in major cities, through the rise of network news. Visual aids include filmic accounts of media and news coverage from networks and early CNN.
		Discussion: We'll explore how changes in technology – and the gathering speed of coverage – have influenced news coverage.

Assignment: Watch two network news broadcasts that week and write a journal page on your observations, comparing and contrasting the approaches. Critique how you see these broadcasts today, what makes sense to you, what does not, what would you want more of, less of?

**Learning goals forms due. (submit digitally)**

Date 10/7      6:30-8:30      Program Event: Daniel Alexander Jones, Experimental Theatre and Performance

Date 10/8      6-8 pm Seminar #4

In Class: We'll continue to discuss US news media history, beginning with the decline of network and the rise of cable in the form of CNN, and ask, how this 24 hour news model changed our culture? What are examples? We'll follow the rise of cable through to streaming services and disruption of media, particularly within the news.

Seminar #4 (continued)

Discussion: We'll continue discussion on the changes in technology influencing news coverage, particularly in broadcast and digital space.

Assignment: Identify two new media organizations –could be VICE, VOX, Axios, BuzzFeed, Skimm, etc. – and follow each through the week. Critique how, as a young person, you see these news organizations, what you like and admire, what you question, what you think about their reporting and approach.

Date 10/14      Faculty Midterm Review week (sign up for individual session)  
Journals Due

Date 10/15      6:30-8:30      Alum Art Exhibition Opening, Brenna Hatcher

Date 10/15      6-8 pm      Seminar #5

In class: What does a news and documentary producer do? We'll break down the producer's job - including research, identifying stories, reporting, overseeing production, scripting, editing. In terms of an example where careful scripting lead to larger issues, we'll use this idea to expand on the topic and discuss the landmark Ford Pinto case.

Discussion: Ethics of documentary and news. What ethical issues do makers and their teams run up against in their daily interactions?

Assignment: Think of one example of an ethical question in media and bring it in to discuss for the next seminar.

Date 10/21      Director Midterm Review week (sign up for individual session)

Date 10/22      6-8 pm      Seminar #6

In Class: Former HBO documentary programmer Greg Rehm discusses HBO documentary aesthetics and the role of a programmer in documentary film today. Greg shows several examples of films he admires in their approach and why.

Discussion: Q & A with Greg regarding what he and HBO, and other programmers, look for in a documentary film.

Assignment: Come up with one documentary idea. How you would approach it and why you might want to work on such a project? This will be the start of your independent project – create, either in practice or on paper or a bit of both, a documentary of your choosing. The subject is up to you. It can be on music, a profile of an artist, on fashion, on social issues, justice issues, environmental issues, politics, even on your musings on your internship itself. Anything you choose is great as long as you are passionate about it.

Date 10/28

Program Event: Marc Andrew Robinson, Visual Artist

Date 11/5 6-8 pm

Seminar #7

In Class: VICE Media video style. We'll watch a VICE documentary and discuss the style, approach, how it differs - and is the same - from previous newsmagazine and broadcasting approaches. VICE's Carina Mia Wong will be present to discuss her work in cinematography and production.

Discussion: What are some of the ways that VICE did and did not change the news paradigm among younger audiences.

Assignment: Watch at least two VICE on HBO documentaries and critique the story, production style and correspondent.

Date 11/12 6-8 pm

Seminar #8

Discussion of Independent Projects with each person presenting their projects in first draft form to the class.

Date 11/16

Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration

Date 11/25

**Final student self-evaluations, independent projects and journals are due**

Date 12/1

**Week for final reviews with Students. Appointment schedule TBA**

Date 12/7 6:30-8:30

Student Exhibition/Presentation Reception

Date 12/13

**FINAL INTERNSHIP DAY, PROGRAM ENDS**