

COM430('04)/SOC470('08): Mass Media and Society

Fall Term: Thursday and Friday 10:30-11:45

Instructor: Takashi Koyama Email: ktakashi@aiu.ac.jp

Course Goals

To understand how news is edited and disseminated, how media affects public opinion, the government and society as a whole. Also to study the problems of the media such as news accuracy, objectivity and its collusive tendencies. Students will also find out that democracy or free speech does not rest on solid foundation.

Course Description

The students will learn about “Mass Media and Society” by reading “Liberty and the News” (Walter Lippmann) in class as well as actually reading news articles in Japanese and Western newspapers and magazines. The students will understand how ideas, myths and prejudice distort news and affect public opinion. They will also study the serious problems the media face today.

Classroom Activities

At the beginning of each class I will explain about the important news of the week. I will analyze them and explain its background. After that I will lecture on each topic. We will extensively use past newspaper and magazine articles as well as books to further our understanding. Students will be expected to engage frequently in discussions and debates.

Prerequisites

None

Evaluation

Final exams, attendance and two response papers

Course Materials

“Liberty and the News” (Walter Lippman) and other reading materials will be provided in class.

Class Schedule

1. International Situation of the World
2. Media's Role in Society
3. How Newspaper is Organized
4. How Newspapers Gather News
5. Crisis of Democracy and Journalism --Not to Instruct but to Report
6. Toleration of Alternative Beliefs -- Phantom Public and Pseudo-Environment
7. Propaganda – The Most Destructive Form of Untruth
8. No Higher Law Than Facts
9. Substance of Democratic Government Unsecured
10. Free Speech Does Not Rest on Solid Foundation
11. Suppressing Our Thoughts
12. Vast Editing Apparatus With No Rules of Evidence
13. War Correspondent
14. Ignorant Editors
15. Nothing But Propaganda from Troubled Areas of the World
16. Without Facts You Are Victim of Agitation
17. War and Revolution – Destroyer of Realistic Thinking
18. Uninformed Congress –Decision Made by Public Opinion and the Executive
19. No Liberty Without Standards of Evidence
20. Unity of Method
21. Turning Newspaper Enterprise to a Disciplined Profession.
22. Health of Society Depends Upon the Quality of Information
23. See What the World Really Is
24. Need for Disinterested Reporting
25. Fight for Truth than for Our Theories
26. We Shall Advance When We Have Learned to Seek the Truth
27. How to Analyze News
28. Liberal Democracy
29. Unregulated Private Enterprise
30. Limits of Media

