

CED: Beyond 'Real vs. Fake': How to Decipher News Media
Spring 2024

 Portland Community College, Cascade
 CRN 25135 (Non-Credit)

 Bldg: TEB, Room 220
 11am -12:50pm Saturdays*, Apr 6 - May 11
 (*free parking)

Instructor: **Andrew Butz**, PhD (*he/him*)
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Course Description, Objectives & Outcomes

Welcome! *We hold these truths to be self-evident...* Democracy depends on a free press for independent & accurate news media. This innovative course explores diverse examples that pull back the curtain on how key parts of U.S. & global news and info media function. Is your concern free speech, new ideas & technology? Or, corporate conglomeration, misinformation & polarization? And whether you're in-person or online, do you know how to assess news media credibility? By expanding our knowledge with new resources & methods, students will apply course learning objectives and develop practical, transferable skillsets.

Is your news from old school TV, radio & newspapers? Or from Vox.com, TikTok, YouTube, and X / Twitter? Regardless, media disinformation and alleged 'fake news' make too many people wonder if the truth is even out there. In our new screen-media society -- especially in times of crisis -- everyone, from beginner to returning professional, needs to know how to tell fact from fiction, from propaganda. We'll learn empirical methods to verify the headlines, news stories, & social media -- and to decode what's real. And, to do this deep dive, we'll first revisit the roots of modern media....

NOTE: While this course is Non-Credit, to apply the learning objectives & outcomes toward PCC General Education or transfer course work, please check with a PCC academic adviser &/or PCC.edu, for credit courses related to media & society (e.g. in [SOC/Sociology](#), Communications/COMM or Journalism/J).

Learning Outcomes

Students who complete this course will be able to...

- Use critical thinking skills to explore key issues in the news and better discern the real world
- Apply methods from **social sciences & media literacy** to assess news credibility
- Grow personally & professionally by practicing transferable skills such as institutional analysis
- Contribute to their communities as engaged consumers & citizens.

Activities, Methods, & Resources

Each week, students & instructor use video, online, and text-based media to analyze & assess the news. Using multimedia, interactive presentations and discussions -- including small groups -- we'll bring news stories & outlets into the classroom. You can select your own news article and apply a rigorous assessment method (see attached Form) developed through [Instructor Butz' PhD research](#).

Resources (news media review, analysis & critique)

| Portland Broadcast: Radio, TV | Online |
|---|---|
| 91.5 FM KOPB / NPR - On the Media (4pm Saturdays) - Wait Wait, Don't Tell Me! (11am Sat./ 10am Sun.) TV Ch.10 " " / PBS - Newshour (7pm Mon. - Fri.) 90.7 FM KBOO - Counterspin (1st, 2nd, 3rd & 5th Friday, 5:30-6p) - Alternative Radio (Tuesdays 9-10am) | FAiR.org , World-Newspapers/MediaCrit ProjectCensored.org , MediaEd.org FreePress.net , Ground News Pew Research Cntr: News Media Trends Center for an Informed Public (U. of W.) |

(CONTINUES on pg 2....)

SYLLABUS (pg 2 of 2) CED: **Beyond Real...News Media**

Help with Reading, Writing or Research...

- Visit PCC [student Tutoring Centers](http://pcc.edu/tutoring/) (pcc.edu/tutoring/).

Schedule

| <u>DATE</u> | <u>TOPIC</u> | <u>ACTIVITY</u> |
|-------------|---|---|
| 4/06 | Undermining Journalism: Style over Substance (News, from 'Real' to 'HyperNormal') | 'Social' Media Mind-meld, Intro: Video & News Analysis. |
| 4/13 | "Medium ...IS the Message"? ...or <i>CONTROLS</i> the Msg. (Social learning & how media oversimplifies reality) | Bring an article you analyzed. Multimedia presentation, Video Documentary, Small Groups. |
| 4/20 | Re-structuring News Media: Tech & Corporate Profit | Bring your analyzed article. Slides, Documentary Video, Small Group Discussion, +... |
| 4/27 | Money, Power & Crisis | Bring article you analyzed. Presentation, Documentary Video, Small Groups, +... |
| 5/04 | Polarization & Democracy? | Bring your analyzed article. Slides, Documentary Video, Small Group Discussion, +... |
| 5/11 | 'Social' Media: The Matrix?...or Reviving Citizen Journalism! | Bring article you analyzed. Presentation, Documentary Video, Small Groups, +.... |

Recommended BOOKS...

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| <i>Amusing Ourselves to Death</i> (N.Postman) | <i>BraveNewWorld</i> (Huxley) + <i>1984</i> (Orwell) | <i>The Death of Truth</i> (M. Kakutani) |
| <i>Deciding What's News</i> (H. Gans) | <i>Media Monopoly</i> (B. Bagdikian) | <i>Globalization & Media</i> (J. Lule) |
| <i>Media: Society</i> (Croteau & Hoynes) | <i>Problem of the Media</i> (McChesney) | <i>Shock Doctrine</i> (Naomi Klein) |
| <i>The Age of Surveillance Capitalism</i> (Zuboff) | <i>Rich Media, Poor Democracy</i> (" ") | <i>New Media & Society</i> (Rohlinger) |

Expectations

Code of Conduct

- While [PCC Student Code of Conduct](#) (academic -- barring fabrication / dishonesty -- as well as behavioral) is mostly enforced for credit courses, responsible & respectful / neighborly conduct is requested at PCC.

[PCC - CED drop/refund policy & dates](#) (by 4/06 for this course).

Accessibility, Non-Discrimination, Mutual Respect, & Safety

- Do you need accommodations for your documented disability? Please notify instructor immediately, through [Accessible Ed & Disability Resources](#) (voice: 971.722.4341 email: AEDR@pcc.edu).
- Non-Discrimination & Title IX Policy: PCC is committed to open communication & mutual respect. At PCC, have you encountered harassment/misconduct/assault, or discrimination based on race/color, religion, age, ethnicity/national origin, veteran status, sex/sexual orientation/gender identity, or disability? If so, then please [Report it here](#). 971.722.5840 equity.inclusion@pcc.edu. PCC is a Sanctuary College (for more info - pcc.edu/resources/undocumented-students/).
- Please follow PCC's Student [Code of Conduct/ Rights & Responsibilities](#).
- Concerned for your well-being or safety at PCC? For help - [pcc.edu/resources/incident/ \(& help\)](http://pcc.edu/resources/incident/(& help)).

Syllabus flexibility

- The instructor reserves the right to revise this course syllabus due to changing conditions. If this occurs, students will be appropriately notified.