

# Now the News

## Broadcast Journalism in America

January 11 - February 15, 2013

10:50 - 12:35 AM

Guzman Lecture Hall, Dominican University of California

Alan Bell, Instructor

### Synopsis

How we *get* the news goes a long way toward explaining how we perceive the world. Starting in the late 1920s, Americans were increasingly informed by electronic media: first radio, then television, and now the hybrid we call the Internet. That change affected the kind of news covered, the depth of coverage, and the emotional involvement of the news consumer.

The story of that development is as interesting as the news itself, filled with adventure, treachery, sacrifice, ego, commitment, and of course, money ... lots and lots of money. It's a saga filled with colorful and exciting characters: Lowell Thomas, Walter Winchell, and Edward R. Murrow; Walter Cronkite, Barbara Walters, and Ted Turner; Bill O'Reilly, Rachel Maddow, and Jon Stewart.

The course will trace the evolution of broadcast journalism through lecture, copious audio and video clips, and excerpts from several documentaries. Throughout, the focus will be fixed on broadcast journalism's impact and effects on our perceptions, our government, and the social fabric.

### Schedule

#### January 11

Morse, Marconi, Bell and Puskas (Puskas?) ... First newsreel cameraman: Francis Doublier ... First wireless news report ... War fever ... Fessenden's wireless Christmas greeting ... De Forest calls it for Hughes ... More war (the Great one) ... Government regulates radio ... The March of Time (radio and film) ... The Press-Radio War

#### January 18

Radio news' first superstars: Thomas, Winchell, Kaltenborn and others ... Hindenberg crashes before our ears ... First World News Roundup ... Invasion from Mars! ... Edward R. Murrow and his boys invent broadcast journalism ... The first radio war ... The third (or fourth?) newsreel war

#### January 25

First recorded radio reports from the field ... Murrow at Buchenwald ... Television stumbles to the starting line ... John Cameron Swayze, Douglas Edwards, et al. ... Murrow and *See It Now* ... McCarthy's rise and fall ... Murrow's broadcast career ends

## **February 1**

The Cronkite era begins ... Nixon-Kennedy debates ... Assassination: TV news comes of age ... Vietnam: The first living room war ... Fairness doctrine: cigarettes and naughty words ... Olympics “Black Power” ... “One small step” ... Nixon and Watergate ... Munich Olympics ... Ted Turner and cable TV

## **February 8**

CNN, Jimmy Carter and the hostage crisis ... Miracle on ice ... Reagan, the Great Communicator (and Michael Deaver, the great media manipulator) ... The Fairness Doctrine goes down ... Upheaval at the networks ... TV news, profit center ... Beijing and Berlin: TV news holds governments at bay ... Gulf War: government-approved reporting ... The rise of “tabloid TV”

## **February 15**

9/11: TV’s Pearl Harbor ... The Internet, a government project that changed the world ... TV and “paper” news struggle ... “citizen” journalism? ... Fractionalization ... Who pays for news?

### **These documentaries are excerpted in the course**

*Dawn of the Eye: The History of TV News*—FFH Films (A production of the CBC, BBC and the History Channel)

*Walter Cronkite, Witness to History*—American Masters, PBS

*This Reporter*—American Masters, PBS

*Point of Order*—Point Films, Inc.

*Stay Tuned: TV’s Unforgettable Moments*—Garner Creative Concepts, Inc

*Nerds 2.0.1 A Brief History of the Internet*—Oregon Public Broadcasting for PBS

### **For further reading:**

**Now the News** by Edward Bliss

Yes, I shamelessly stole his title. Solid history of broadcast news from early radio through the ‘80s.

**Edward R. Murrow and the Birth of Broadcast Journalism** by Bob Edwards

Short, quite readable overview of Murrow’s career and influence.

**The Murrow Boys: Pioneers on the Front Lines of Broadcast Journalism** by Lynne Olson and Stanley W. Cloud

Delightful history of the men who defined the image of the foreign correspondent.

**News on the Internet** by David Tewksbury and Jason Rittenberg

Much of what went into the last hour of this course came from this book. Not exactly a page-turner, but puts the current interconnected world into perspective.