



## How Do You Know If You're Getting Reliable News?

ASK: WHO ARE THESE GUYS ? (Moveable type inventor Gutenberg and Facebook founder Zuckerberg)

(Introduce self and your TAs and Adjuncts)

Because you are citizens of a democracy that heavily relies on the work of the news media, Stony Brook University has pioneered this course in News Literacy.

We train students to find reliable information they need to take full command of the incredible powers that were reserved to every citizen under our constitution: the power to think for ourselves and to speak for ourselves as a means to govern ourselves.

Used frivolously, these powers are easy to dismiss. Radio shock jocks exercise free speech, but to what end?

Used thoughtlessly, your powers as citizens can also be dangerous. Reacting to scared expressions by U.S. citizens, our government moved Japanese Americans out of their homes and into detention camps during World War II. With the support of voters and Congress, African Americans were routinely denied equal treatment. Using our power to think and speak for ourselves, citizens did that. It wasn't some abstract THEM... it was US.

Used skillfully, our powers - to assemble peacefully, speak forcefully and govern ourselves - those powers often make America the gold standard for justice and freedom and a haven for the world's freest and finest minds.

But the constitution's framers assumed citizens were worthy of these powers when they were well-informed.

Information, reliable information that you can act upon... is the foundation, the mortar, the window, the protective insulation and the sheltering roof of self-governance.

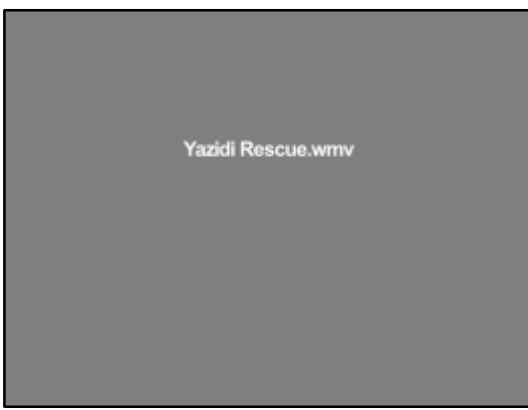
But as we meet here today, the world is flailing its way through in information revolution of historic importance, brought on by the technologies of these two inventors.

ASK: Who are they? Gutenberg and Zuckerberg.

So where can you get reliable, actionable information?

That's the whole point of this semester. Finding reliable information.

So.....What's Up?



Our goal in building these lectures is to make every week a ripped-from-the-headlines episode in which we apply the best critical thinking techniques to the citizen's daily work of staying well-informed.

This semester, you should always be thinking about this question: What can I conclude from this news report? How do I know I'm getting the truth?

That's the purpose of the News Literacy class.

## What's New?



**Animation: Click for each story to appear. Allows you to set own pace in a quick review of recent news**

*(lecturer: do not dwell. These need to move fast. You're giving headlines, a kind of "What News Did You Follow". Script provides a little background, but you'll circle back to these stories later to illuminate big course questions.)*

Didn't we get OUT of combat operations in Iraq this year?

On 8 August 2014, the United States conducted airstrikes, to stop the advancement of ISIL: Two F-18s dropped laser-guided bombs on mobile artillery units in Northern Iraq. Strikes continued in subsequent days both around Sinjar and near Erbil . Humanitarian aid was also airdropped for the civilians trapped in the mountains

Wait...another Malaysian Airlines jet went down? Malaysian Air lost a jet March 8 shortly after takeoff from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing.

Then on July 17, another, carrying 298 people, was shot down over Ukraine, apparently by pro-Russian rebels in Ukraine. Russia is blamed for arming the rebels, but the civil war on the ground has made it difficult to gather evidence.

Comedian and actor Robin Williams, 63, was found dead August 11 in his home in Paradise Cay, California of an apparent suicide.

Sharp focus on the police in Ferguson, MO, after the the shooting of Michael Brown, an unarmed teenager, on August 9, just two days before he was to start at a technical college. Protests led to clashes with heavily armed and armored police. The State Police took over from the local police, who withheld the name of the shooter, a 28-year-old police officer.



emotional distress, mental anguish, humiliation and embarrassment. ... Defendants knew or reasonably should have known that broadcasting an individual's vagina and anus on national cable television would cause substantial and severe emotional distress."

## What Is News Literacy And Why Does It Matter?

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## Why News Literacy Matters:

In the Information Age,  
YOU the consumer are now in  
charge of determining what is  
reliable  
and what is not.

You thought you took this course to satisfy a DEC requirement.

That will happen.

But by taking this course, you can also become a leader among your peers, known for not passing along faulty information.

We are all followers, too, in our lives. By taking this course, you can become the kind of engaged, intelligent follower at the heart of every historic movement, pushing leaders to do what's smart and what's right.

How can I make that audacious claim?

## Evaluated by Independent Experts

News Literacy students, compared to peers who did not take it:

1. Maintained a more diverse news diet than their peers.
2. Demonstrated superior political knowledge, even a year later
3. Were more likely to register and to vote
4. Were more likely to spot flaws in news reports.

Their peers caught up...a year later.

Source:  
Survey of 1,002 Stony Brook students by  
Dr. Christopher Weber, Louisiana State University

*(Lecturer: These three slides are more than you want. I offer them for colleagues who ask that we acquaint students with the data about student outcomes.)*

Because we emphasize facts over belief, it's only fair that we tell you how we can claim this course will change your life.

We test student outcomes.

And here's what we find: You'll finish this course with a leg up on your peers.



## Reviews by Your Peers

*“This is a life skill that every citizen should have. .. so long as consumers of news remain passive and ignorant in the face of the media, they will remain powerless.”*

*“...Teaches you the basic skills you need to be a news consumer which we all need to be citizens. I really learned a lot”*

*“The information is all useful...You learn real life skills.”*

*“...Learning what’s going on in the world, and how to fish out all the crud being fed to us...”*

SOURCE:  
Comments Sections  
Online Student Evaluations, S2012

Here are the kind of comments students post about this course.

News Literacy is the ability to use critical thinking skills to judge the reliability and credibility of news reports, whether they come via print, television or the Internet.

So...what exactly IS News Literacy?

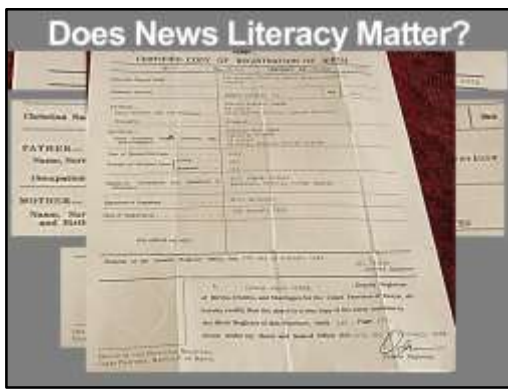
From time to time, you'll see a familiar word or phrase and hear me say "For the purposes of this course, here's our definition." Pay attention to that because we use some familiar words to describe ideas specific to this course and on tests, you need to use them as we use them. It's a kind of shared vocabulary.

So here's the first time:

For the purposes of this course, News Literacy is the ability to use critical thinking skills to judge the reliability and credibility of news reports, whether they come via print, television, radio or internet.

This course is part of a national movement that has spread from Stony Brook to 58 college campuses nationwide, across the seas to Bhutan, Hong Kong, Australia, Israel, Kuwait and beyond.

Because so many Stony Brookers take it, we like to say News literacy is becoming a defining skill of Stony Brook Seawolves: No one pulls the wool over our eyes.



**ANIMATION: CLICK ONCE, FULL SIZE BIRTH CERTIFICATE FADES AND THE ZOOMED-IN PORTIONS APPEAR**

ASK: How many believe the information they are receiving from the news media is credible?

So if reliable information is the foundation of self-governance, who decides what is reliable?

ASK: What is this? Can you trust it?

Explain forged birth certificate indicating that Obama was not born in the U.S. (and therefore would not be eligible to be President.)

Explain that hundreds of thousands of Americans apparently believe this to be true, despite the release of his long-form Hawaii birth certificate.

News consumers can be easily deceived by images.

How Do We Know What's Reliable?



**ANIMATION: CLICK BRINGS UP THE NAMELESS GIRL  
ONTO WHOSE BODY PALIN'S FACE WAS  
PHOTOSHOPPED**

ASK: Who is this?

At the time this photo circulated, Sarah Palin was Governor of Alaska, but she had just been selected as the Republican Party's nominee for Vice President of the United States.

ASK: Who is this?

Un-known party girl, toting a pellet gun, whose body was photo-shopped onto Palin's head.

Explain how this image, and several others of her in miniskirts and lingerie, were widely distributed during the 2008 campaign in order to diminish her in the eyes of voters.

Who decides what's reliable? Who decides what you see?

Reliable information is  
actionable.

It allows news consumers to  
make a decision, take action  
or share responsibly with  
others.

FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS COURSE... Reliable information is actionable information. It allows news consumers to make a decision or judgment, take action, or share responsibly. That phrase will be used over and over this semester: make a decision or judgment, take action, or share responsibly.”

This is why Stony Brook launched the News Literacy movement.

For the first time in history, technology has overrun the trustworthy gatekeepers of information.

The responsibility for determining what is true and what is not now rests with you...

You Have to Decide...



Qaeda-Linked Militants in Iraq Secure Nearly Full Control of Fallujah

Qaeda-Linked Mil

Should We Start Another Pre-Emptive War?

## ANIMATION: CLICK 1=NYT HEADLINE ON FALLUJAH, CLICK1= EMPHASIS ON DATE

When CNN broadcast Secretary of State Colin Powell 's Feb. 2003 testimony at the U.N. , a solid majority of Americans were convinced we needed to stop Saddam Hussein from using poison gas and biological weapons on Iraqi citizens. It turned out there were no bioweapons. No WMD.

But 4,000 US soldiers died and more than 140,000 Iraqis died in a 10-year war.

Told we would be welcomed by a thankful nation, we were instead under fire for the duration of military operations in Iraq.

Why did we get it so wrong?

In this course, we'll talk about how to test evidence and how to weigh sources of information so that you can decide what to think, rather than hoping beliefs will get you through.

And we'll show you new tools to use when something sounds too bad...or too good...to be true.

You'll need these skills right away.

This month, American soldiers are in combat again in Iraq.

Fallujah, a city we bled for, has fallen to al Qaeda forces. Mosul

is in the hands of ISIS. Where do we find reliable information?

# You Have to Decide

Cheerleader.wmv

NEWS FELLOW: INSERT ABOVE-CAPTIONED SLIDE AND SET TO START ON CLICK.

Would this influence your decision on whether to get vaccinated for the H1N1 flu?

Why or Why not?





**ANIMATIONS: 5 clicks bring up progression of McCarthy's anti-vaccine story**

Childhood diseases like Polio and Whooping Cough, which killed and crippled millions, were once wiped out in America and much of the developed world by widespread use of preventive vaccination programs. Public health programs make sure everyone gets vaccinated so the disease can't get started in the population.

**CLICK 1 = PEOPLE MAGAZINE COVER** Enter Jenny McCarthy, Playboy Bunny, actress and mother of an autistic child. Armed with knowledge she says she gathered at "Google University" she became the leading face of the anti-vaccine movement.

**CLICK 2 = MCCARTHY MARCHING WITH "TOO MANY TOO YOUNG" T-SHIRT.**

Counter to the overwhelming findings of qualified science in peer reviewed journals, McCarthy claims vaccines are dangerous to children. She appears on magazine covers, TV talk shows, radio and on the web, using her celebrity to spread her claims that she knows better than medical researchers.

**CLICK 3= NPR MAP OF OUTBREAK**

By 2010, fearful parents, trusting a Playboy bunny more than the researchers and public health experts at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, were choosing not to have their children inoculated. The US public health program, once the envy of the developing world, now has to fight outbreaks of diseases we controlled through science four decades ago.

**CLICK 4= PRO-VACCINE BLOWBACK**

Now there are websites devoted to attacks on Jenny McCarthy, naming her as the cause of the Whooping Cough outbreak and calculating the number of preventable illnesses and deaths attributable to vaccine conspiracy theorists. IS THAT FAIR? IS THE EVIDENCE SUFFICIENT?

**CLICK 5= MCCARTHY HAWKING E-CIGARETTES.**

Meanwhile, the "Google University" scholar has decided E-cigs are safe and is now on TV, hawking "Blu".

So...How will you decide whether to get your kids vaccinated?

# Why News Literacy Matters



## It Could Save Your Life!

ASK: Who is this?

It's Sam Stanley, the President of Stony Brook University. Better memorize that face, freshmen.

Stanley, who studies immunology and virology, used his Inauguration as a chance to be publicly vaccinated to make the point that there is zero quality science to support the claims of celebrity activists that vaccination causes autism or other health defects.

Here's a chilling fact about the decision of students that year to trust former Playboy bunny Jenny McCarthy more than the medical establishment...In mid August of this year (2013), the US Centers for Disease Control published its data on the hundreds of thousands of people killed worldwide by H1N1 flu.

This was a rare pandemic: instead of killing mostly the elderly, the H1N1 outbreak killed mostly younger people.

So...we're not exaggerating when we say News Literacy could save your life.

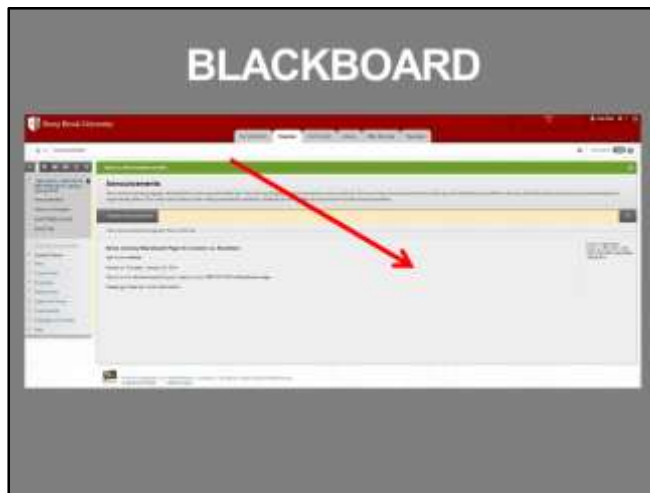


In each lecture, we pause to review announcements and to help you make your way through the course.  
That's what this slide signals: Housekeeping Time



A quick review of attendance policies and etiquette (no texting, enter quietly, etc)

(Laptop policy is at the Lecturer's discretion, which is why it is not on the slide)



If you're new to Blackboard, it is the web service from which your courses are run. This is where you go for assignments, to submit homework and to check your grades. It is also your source of information about the course.

Blackboard keeps track of how often you check in, so if you're complaining about not knowing something was due and Blackboard shows you've never been to the website...you may not get a sympathetic response.

This is roughly what your Blackboard homepage looks like.

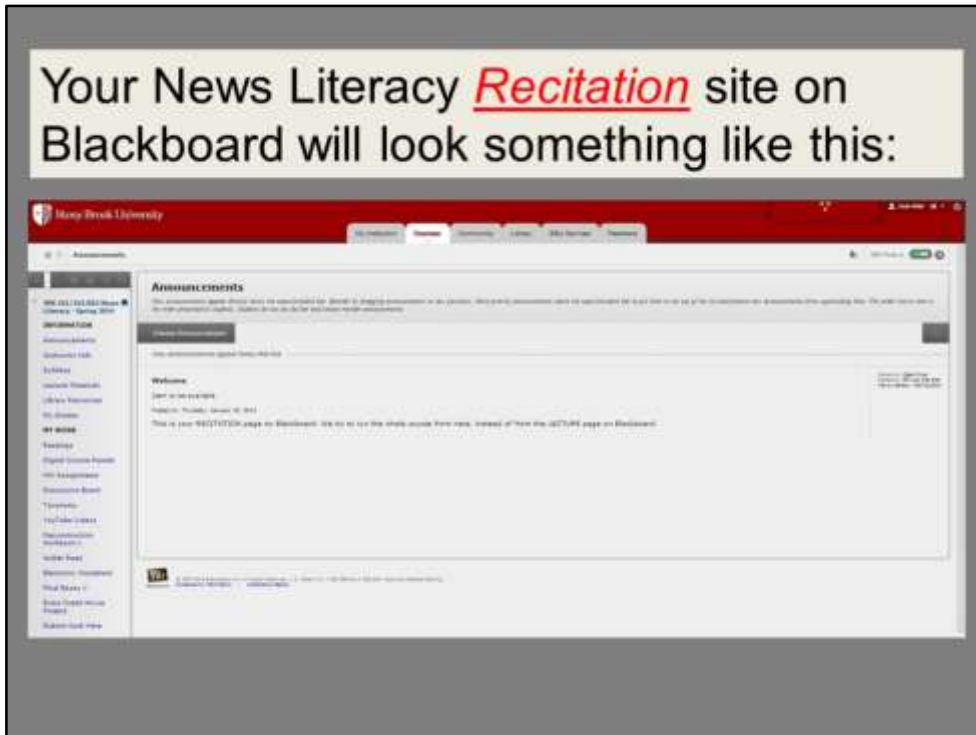
In your list of courses, you'll find this course.

When you click on that, you're in the news literacy pages, where you'll find your grades, your assignments, a glossary of terms and other course information.

If you're having trouble navigating, there is a student help-line, an excellent set of onlineFAQ pages and tutorials and classmates with mad skills.

Learn your way around Blackboard. This course runs on it.

Your News Literacy Recitation site on Blackboard will look something like this:





## TWO CLICKS

**SAFE ASSIGN:** You'll submit papers through Safe Assign, which will help you get better at citing your sources (using the MLA rules, just like you did on the SAT).

It also checks your work against all the News Literacy assignments submitted both this semester and for the last four semesters and alerts your instructor if you are copying anyone else's work. In the syllabus, you'll notice, that's an F for the semester.

(Click for next image of Safe Assign's main page) Hit this little green icon and safe assign opens.

See the red box? That's where you upload your paper.

Safe Assign records the time you submit, which is important because late submissions cost you points.

Email is not an alternative.



When you can't figure out how to make Blackboard (or any other software) do your bidding: Go to Lynda.com for excellent video tutorials.



**Mark Your Calendar Today**  
**Final Exam:**  
**December 15 at 8 a.m.**

**Test 1:**  
**In Your Recitation**  
**Week of October 6**

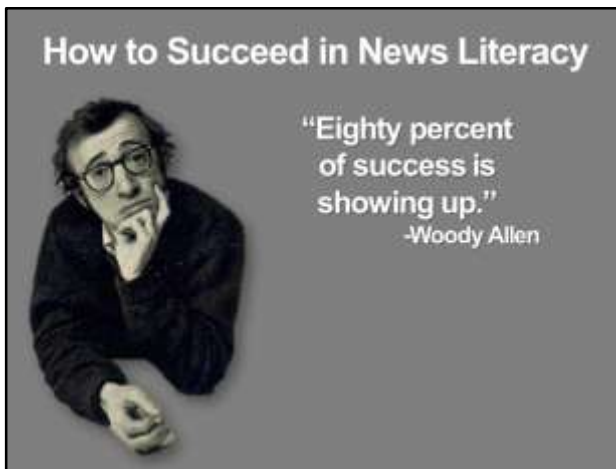
**Test 2:**  
**In Your Recitation**  
**Week of November 17**



You can't take a computer sci course without using a computer.

You can't take an English course without reading.

This is a course about news. If you don't keep up with current events, you'll have a hard time passing the quizzes, the tests and your homework will suffer.



This is a course you can't do in the last week.

Late submissions are penalized, as are absences from class.

And the assignments aren't isolated. They build on one another, as do the lectures.

**Pay Attention to This Sentence:** It's not uncommon for a student to do well on the tests and still get a poor grade for the semester.

That's because attendance counts

and the homework is 40 percent of your grade.

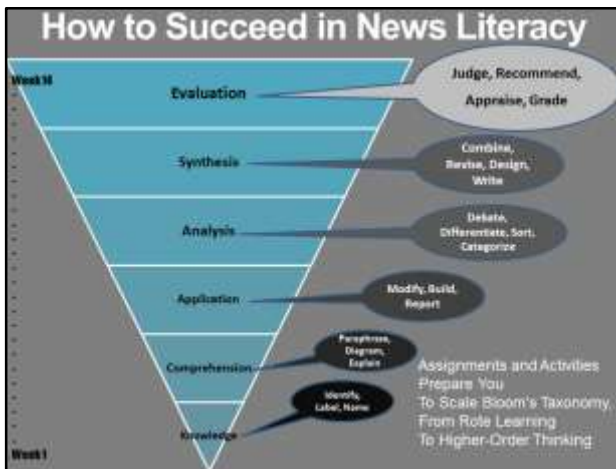


At the final exam, I'm stunned how many News Literacy students do not know the name of their recitation instructor or lecturer.

You are in a large class at a dehumanizing diploma factory that will prepare you for life at a cubicle farm where you'll be reduced to a soul-less ID code and iris scan...or is that "Portal 2"? (a popular video game)

I am not Wheatley...I am your professor and we'll both get more out of this semester if we learn each other's names. There are more of you, but I will try to master names as time goes on and I expect you to use my name and yours when you ask questions, or answer them.

For starters, let's take a minute and introduce ourselves to the person on our left and our right.



**ANIMATION: EACH CLICK ADDS AN OVAL CALLOUT, THE VERBS THAT GO WITH EACH KIND OF THINKING ON BLOOM'S TAXONOMY**

There will be times, this semester, when you will gripe about the plodding nature of the homework or activities.

There is a method to this madness.

You walk before you run.

We start, at week 1, with the mere accumulation of knowledge. We end, week 14, with what we call “Deconstruction” which is a methodical evaluation of the reliability of a piece of information. That’s an archetypal progression from lower-order cognition to higher-order thinking.

Success, in News Literacy, is built on important verbs.

**(START CLICKING)**

When you accumulate knowledge, you can identify, label and name.

Comprehension you demonstrate through diagrams, explanations and re-statement of ideas in your own works.

Applying News Literacy concepts, you will modify them.

And so on...As we move through this course, your work will take you up and down Bloom’s Taxonomy, conditioning you for the final exam, when you’ll use all of these skills.



Every student who gets an A (not A-, A) on their essay is automatically entered in a competition judged by an independent panel of experts. The author of the winning essay wins a semester's free in-state tuition, courtesy of New York Citizens Bank.

(Photos highlight recent winners.)



How Do You Know If You're  
Getting Reliable News?

Okay, back to the lecture.

Those stories from this summer beg the big questions we'll cover in this course.

What kinds of questions?



# What is News and Who Decides?



**ANIMATION: ONE CLICK LAUNCHES ALL SIX IMAGES AUTOMATICALLY.**  
**CONCEPT: What is News and Who Decides?**

The climate seems to have gone nuts. Tuition keeps rising and rising. And this is the news?

Why doesn't the news media focus on things that matter to me? Net Neutrality slipped right under the radar. The historic nuclear deal with Iran dropped off our collective radar screen.

Why is there so much fluff and trivia?  
Is it the audience's fault, or the News Media's fault?

We'll talk about this.



**Animation: Each click brings up each item, in this order:  
Snowden, Peter King, NSA admits, Poll**

*(Lecturer: this series of five slides is built for speed. You will ask rhetorical questions, but won't have time for class discussion of them.)*

*The point is to introduce some of the concepts illustrated by recent events, and to pique their interest with provocative questions.)*

**CONCEPT: What is the Mission of the American Press**

**Is Edward Snowden a Whistleblower or a Traitor?**

Does the First Amendment protect what he did?

How about journalists who publish the material he has leaked?

How much freedom is enough, how much is too much?

We'll talk about this.



**Animation: Slide opens with Photos of Gaza Conflict. Each of four clicks brings up Opinion excerpts.**

*(Lecturer: this series of slides is built for speed. You will ask rhetorical questions, but won't have time for class discussion of them.)*

*The point is to introduce some of the concepts illustrated by recent events, and to pique their interest with provocative questions.)*

**CONCEPT: What is the Mission of the American Press**

A lot of opinions get expressed in the news.

Some of these opinions are the product of research and debate by the Editorial Page staff of the New York Times.

Some are comments posted by New York Times readers.

Are all opinions created equal?

Does Opinion help or hinder your search for actionable information?

How do you know when you're getting facts are bent to suit an opinion or opinions are being bent by the facts.

We'll talk about this.

Who Decided Bad News is News?

Bad news montage.wmv

**News Fellow: Please link the above-mentioned video to this slide for full-screen play**

*(Lecturer: this series of slides is built for speed. You will ask rhetorical questions, but won't have time for class discussion of them.*

*The point is to introduce some of the concepts illustrated by recent events, and to pique their interest with provocative questions.)*

**CONCEPT: What is News and Who Decides?**

Really?

This is the news?

Why is there so much bad news?

We'll talk about this.



*(Lecturer: this series of slides is built for speed. You will ask rhetorical questions, but won't have time for class discussion of them.)*

*The point is to introduce some of the concepts illustrated by recent events, and to pique their interest with provocative questions.)*

*CONCEPT: In the age of Social Media, we are all Publishers and Broadcasters, with the attendant obligations AND powers*

In the hours after the Boston Marathon bombing, it was pretty exciting to see Internetizens banding together in the ManHunt for the bombers. On Reddit, where they really understand the power of crowd-sourcing, distributed computing and the other wonders of the Web, power users vacuumed up every photo they could find on Facebook™, Twitter™, and Instagram™ and shared them to their friends and followers to scrutinize and analyze. Then, by combining vague police statements and photos, they found in all those crowds of people at the marathon, the bad guys. The New York Post, following along with Reddit, grabbed the photo and plastered it on the front page. It was a demonstration of the great power of social media has to help informed citizens take care of problems without the government's help...

Only it was the wrong pair of young men. 16-year-old Salaheddin Barhoum and 24-year old Yassine Zaimi are totally innocent.

The two runners from Massachusetts have filed a lawsuit, suing the Post for libel, negligent infliction of emotional distress, and invasion of privacy. They may get some money, but will they ever get their reputations back?

Reddit is exempt from libel actions?

Ooops777, one of the leaders of the Reddit manhunt, said he needed to post a request that Reddit users not re-post things that haven't been proven...

So, what is social media...reliable and free of corporate and government control...or reckless and dangerously uncontrollable?

We'll talk about this, too.



## “Think Twice”

### A Silent Minute to Absorb the Material

ANIMATION: Click once to start the fade-out, fade-in, which takes one minute

*(Lecturer: At Stony Brook, we've become interested in the effects of silence in the classroom.*

*At summer workshops in 2013, we began breaking up intensive lecture or discussion sessions with a minute of silence. It made participants uncomfortable the first time, but over the course of a few days they became quite enthusiastic about pausing every so often to let ideas sink in or to simply reflect. We find it works well to ask a question and then call for a minute of silence.*

*This slide is built to fade to black and then come back, all in one minute.)*

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/educationnews/8841649/Silence-is-golden-how-keeping-quiet-in-the-classroom-can-boost-results.html>

<http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/dec09/vol67/num04/Silence-Is-Golden.aspx>



## THE REVOLUTION(S) IN COMMUNICATIONS:

You are living through the 2<sup>nd</sup> Information Revolution in 450 years. Here are two people we chose to represent those revolutions.

Gutenberg was an entrepreneur who changed the world by making books easy to make and cheap to buy.

He tried to cash in on the growth of the the Catholic Church and, ironically, helped launch the Protestant Reformation.

Zuckerberg is a techie who changed the world by making self-expression into the top social and entertainment activity of 1.1 Billion people.

He started out just trying to pick up college girls and, ironically, created one of the great fortunes of our time.

All of what we have noted so far plays out against this backdrop: It has never been more challenging to be a news consumer.

Because of the revolutions spawned by these two men, Gutenberg and Zuckerberg, there is more information available to common folks than ever before and almost anyone can publish and distribute to the world.





## **Animation: Leif's ship sails in on the Click**

Leif Erickson discovered America around the year 1000...

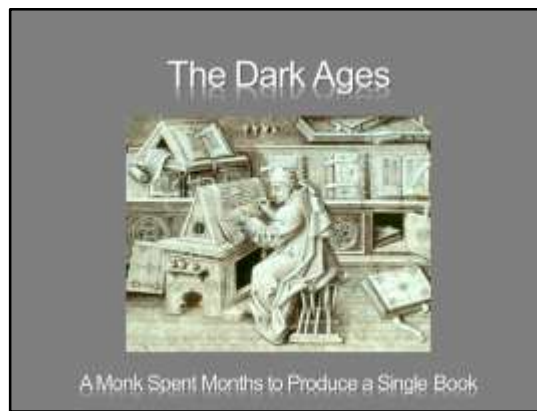
Christopher Columbus wandered in a half-millennium later.

Why did Columbus get the credit?

His discovery came just 23 years after invention and popularization of the press. He could spread the word and did.

His book was reprinted across Europe.

Erickson didn't get credit until archaeologists confirmed legends previously dismissed as drunken bragadoccio.



How significant was Gutenberg's invention?

It took a scribe, typically a monk, a year to create a bible, using a quill and ink-pot.



**ANIMATION: CLICK AND THE COPYIST MONK SLIDES ASIDE TO MAKE WAY FOR THE PRESS** In the early 1450s, silversmith Johann Gutenberg started casting standardized mass-produced, moveable letters, or type, which could be easily rearranged for re-use. He adapted a wine press with a screw gear to firmly press paper down on the inked letters, and exponentially sped up the process... By 1455 he had started printing his first bibles.

Gutenberg printed about 180 bibles his first year.

With experience, a printer could soon produce **50 books per week**.

# The First Mass-Produced Book



The Gutenberg Bible

Printed religious text, like Gutenberg's 200-odd bibles (In latin. 42 lines per page) put the "word of God" into the hands of the laity and were shipped all over Europe.

Forty-eight full or nearly-full copies, survive.

They are considered the most valuable books in the world, though none have been sold since 1978, when The last sale of a complete Gutenberg Bible took place in 1978. Non-expert magazines have estimated a complete two-volume copy would fetch \$25–35 million if sold today.

Within 50 Years



From a Few Books to 10 Million

At the time the press was invented, Oxford University, the seat of all knowledge in the English-speaking world was already 200 years old. Yet it had just 122 books in its library.

50 years later, there were 10 million books in circulation.

Cheap books meant education spread beyond the Church and the Nobility and down to the masses.

The press is credited with creating a middle class of merchants and tradespeople who taught themselves new skills and sold services and wares, sometimes even getting rich as the landed aristocracy.

100 years after Gutenberg, one-time reports of a current event, called “news books” appeared, reporting on the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius, for instance.

By 1604, the first newspaper appeared in Antwerp, Belgium: the Nieuwe Tijdingen (“New Tidings”)

## Books That Changed the World and Challenged Authority

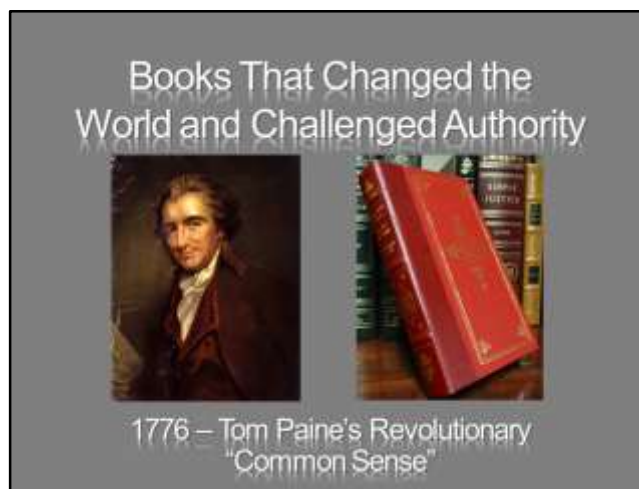


1534 – Martin Luther and His Bible

### SLIDE: BOOKS THAT CHANGED THE WORLD (MARTIN LUTHER AND HIS GERMAN BIBLE)

Martin Luther translated the bible out of the scholar's language, Latin, into the commoner's language: German.

Luther's "Protestant Reformation", challenged the authority of the Catholic Church to sell indulgences – forgiveness of sins – and shook the foundations of the all-powerful Roman Catholic Church.



(Tom Paine - common sense)

So, the real revolution was not technological, but intellectual or at least social.

Ultimately, access to new ideas and to scientific and other books allowed people to learn new skills and to challenge authority on its own terms.

Thomas Paine's "Common Sense", which argued a continent the size of North America should not be ruled by a tiny island, was a best-seller of the American Revolution.

Colonists bought an estimated 10,000 copies.

Cheaply printed, easily bought, Paine's book built support for the American uprising against British rule.

## Mark Twain on the Printing Press



“It found truth astir on earth and gave it wings;  
but untruth was also abroad, and it was supplied  
with a double pair of wings.”

BUT the printed word and mass-produced books also introduced the concept of mass deceptions.

As newspaper reporter Mark Twain put it:

“The whole world admits unhesitatingly; and there can be no doubt about this, that Gutenberg’s invention is incomparably the greatest event in the history of the world. BUT “untruth was also abroad and it was supplied with a double pair of wings”.



## 1815 – The Battle of New Orleans



Almost 2,000 Soldiers Died 15 Days  
After the End of the War of 1812

Printing was fast, but distribution was still slow: by ship or horse.

The Treaty of Ghent ended the war of 1812 between the U.S. and Great Britain on Dec. 24, 1814. But because word did not reach U.S. Troops in time, the battle of New Orleans was fought 15 days after the war ended and 2,000 soldiers were killed.

But all that would change... 370 years after Gutenberg with the invention of the telegraph and Morse code.

## The Trade-off: Accuracy vs. Speed



1838 – Samuel Morse Sends First Public Telegram in America

INFORMATION SPEEDS UP and increases tradeoffs between speed and accuracy

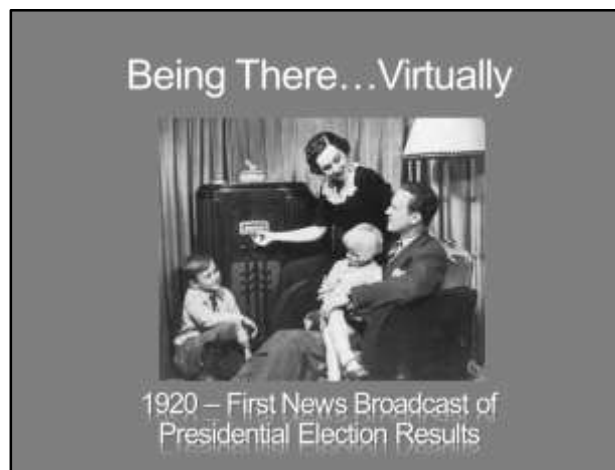
The telegraph, which shot tiny electric signals across the country on rickety wires, made it possible to distribute news great distances the moment it happened, in time for publication in the next edition of the newspaper. This would revolutionize war reporting during the civil war, with lists of each day's casualties, etc.

But the temptation to race new information into print also meant false information got published before it could be verified.

150 years ago, people's complaints about Telegrams were identical to complaints you hear about Twitter: too short to be accurate, often inflammatory, idiotic....

And because journalists could now report live from the battlefield, they did. And military commanders' complaints sound remarkably similar.

"I think I understand what military fame is; to be killed on the field of battle and have your name misspelled in the newspapers," said Civil War General William Tecumseh Sherman



Now the pace of change accelerates

SLIDE: AND THEN YOU WERE THERE (Radio)

Developed by Tesla, Fessenden and Marconi, radio broadcast made it possible by 1920 to hear live broadcasts of the result of the presidential elections for the first time.

This was the first medium by which people could remotely witness events as they happened.

Just like the Internet, radio had to battle the established news business.

“The radio news item is a vibration in the air, without record, without visible responsibility, without that incentive to accuracy that comes with print,” The New York Times wrote in a 1929 editorial.

But Americans loved radio. So much so that it has occasionally been asserted that when the Depression hit, the last belonging a bankrupt family would give up was its radio.

(Note to lecturers: we hedge on the bankruptcy anecdote. It's oft-repeated, but we have found no definitive scholarship on it)



The 1937 crash of the Hindenburg, an experimental aircraft, was broadcast live on radio.

At the same time, it was filmed.

First we'll listen to the radio report and then see the change in impact as the moving picture is added. This is an after-the fact combination, but it dramatically illustrates the impact of adding moving pictures to recorded sound.

(Click to next slide to bring up the video)



Hindenburg.wmv

Please Link above-captioned video here and set to play full screen.

On the one hand, these “actualities” - recorded sounds and moving images – serve as powerful verification of the truth.

On the other hand, sound and image jack up the emotional impact.

Are you starting to notice a pattern? Every advance in these information revolutions has great promise...and great risk.



When **Apollo 11** landed on the moon on July 20, 1969, there was a television camera aboard and millions of people around the world watched it live.

It was the biggest television audience to date and geezers like me – your professor – remember our family marveling over the idea that we could watch it live.



Here's the irony about 1969.

While we were celebrating live TV from the moon and the engineering of giant rockets for interplanetary flight, the Internet was already forming.

ARPANET- created in 1969 - was set up as a means to share data and computing resources.

UCLA hosted the first node on ARPANET, the second was at a defense contractor called BBN, the third at Stanford Research Institute. In October the first host-to-host message, an email, was sent from UCLA to Stanford. By the end of the year, the University of Utah and UC Santa Barbara were added to ARPANET, giving the network four host computers and the beginnings of the Internet

It wasn't obvious this was the next big thing. AT&T was invited to be a part of the ARPANET project but declined, believing that "packet switching " technology would never work.

.Like the press, telegrams, radio, and TV...it would take a while to catch on, but when it did, it changed everything...again.



One goal of this course is to help you see your smartphone as an extension of Gutenberg's press.

Just as movable type rocked the Catholic Church's hold on Europe and Britain's hold on America, social media have changed politics in your lifetime.

It's hard to imagine, but at the end of George W. Bush's first term there was: No Facebook. No You Tube. No Twitter

Barack Obama, a rookie Senator with no personal fortune used social media to rake in a huge amount of money to defeat multimillionaire John McCain in 2008.

In 2012, Mitt Romney's campaign bungled its social media program, leaving field volunteers with little or no information to use in getting out the vote on election day, while Obama's now-famous "Narwhal" system connected voters and volunteers and cranked up turnout of young people and voters of color who elected Obama by a wide margin.

How else have these technologies changed your life as a citizen and the functioning of your government and political system?



# Hashtagtivism.mp4

**VIDEO NAMED ABOVE IS IN RESOURCES FOLDER . LINK HERE.**

Think of Martin Luther challenging the mighty Roman Catholic Church with his mass-printed leaflets.

And Thomas Paine shaking the British Empire with his mass produced book of "Common Sense."

How different is that from the power Hashtag activists have had over the authorities in Ferguson, Missouri?

## Challenges for Consumers

Challenge #1: Information Overload

Challenge #2: The Blurring of the Lines

Challenge #3: Overcoming Your Own Bias

This proliferation of information sources has made it challenging to be a news consumer.

Three problems are at the heart of your work this semester.

For starters,

-How do we find the truth when every day is an information tsunami?

-New business models have proven there is great profit in producing a form of journalism that abandons standards of neutrality, relying on opinion rather than fact. Plus, digital technology makes it possible for anyone to publish worldwide. The result is that a great deal of advertising, publicity, spin and even propaganda is thrown at you every day, dressed up to look like neutral journalism. How can you tell the difference when people blur the lines on purpose?

-Finally, and this may be this course's most important lesson, New research by social scientists and neuro scientists documents how hard it is for us to hear, see and remember the truth if it challenges our beliefs. How will you overcome your own bias to learn the truth?



Here are the dimensions of the Tsunami:

-The average American sees and hears 100,000 words per day outside work, according to the Global Information Industry Center at U.S.C.

And a new study of social media users, published by LikeHack.com,(cq) an online magazine, looks at social media users and finds the average user gets more than 250 links per day on various platforms.

You grew up in this reality, so numbers like this may not surprise you. But how might tidal wave of information impact you?

Research indicates information overload can make people feel anxious and powerless. Teresa Amabile of Harvard Business School has spent more than a decade studying the work habits of 238 people. She finds people are more creative if they are allowed to focus without interruptions.

This course arose from that question: With so much information flying around, how do we fight the temptation to just go completely passive and learn only what gets pushed on us by social media?

## Blurring the Lines



Who is a Journalist? Who isn't? Does it Matter?

There are now more cell phones than citizens in the U.S., with serious multitaskers carrying two phones. Of those, the majority are smart phones, with cameras and internet connection.

That technology has this effect on the news we see every day: Everyone feels like they can be a journalist and journalists feel like they can find photos of everything that happens.

The latter seems to be true.

When Saddam Hussein was hanged December 30, 2006, it was videotaped on a guard's cell phone. The video was leaked to electronic media and posted on the internet immediately.

Was that in itself journalism?

Worldwide, there are 2 billion cellphones in use, which means millions and millions of potential photographers of current events.

In this course, we'll talk about a thorny question: Who is a journalist?

Anyone with a cellphone camera?

## Blurred Lines and The Crisis of Authenticity



When this food magazine gets delivered to your home, you might flip through it for a recipe or two and chances are the recipes are well-illustrated, well-tested and described in a way that makes you hungry.

But if you look closely, every single recipe calls for the use of one or more products from Kraft foods.

This is a simple example of a big problem: If you don't think critically about the sources of the information you use, your information diet will be sneaky ads and marketing instead of a healthy mix of facts.



This news website has a paid reporter to collect and write up news about Nassau County.

Do you think you are getting the full story about Nassau County government from the Nassau County News Network?

But who is paying the reporter?

Nassau County Executive Edward Mangano, that's who. Is that reporter going to tell you both the good and bad about Mangano?

Web tools make everyone's "News" look like the real thing.

And online marketers are not prevented or even criticized for using fake news websites to sell products...or politicians.

*Challenge #3 Overcoming "Own Bias"*

CodeRed.wmv

*Or...Can You Handle The Truth?*

**NEWS FELLOW: PLEASE LINK ABOVE-CAPTIONED VIDEO HERE. SET TO RUN ON LECTURER'S CLICK**

The screen writers of this Tom Cruise/Jack Nicholson film, "Code Red" were looking for drama here, but they were also onto something deeper. Neuro scientists and political scientists and sociologists are documenting more and more ways in which our perceptions and memories are unreliable.

If we're not careful, we cave in to a cluster of psychological effects known as Cognitive Dissonance, which is the human animal's deep deep discomfort with new information that

contradicts longstanding beliefs...



### Challenge #3: Overcoming "Own Bias"

16% of All Voters & 30% of  
Republicans Continue to Believe  
Obama Not Born in U.S.



What is  
"Cognitive  
Dissonance?"

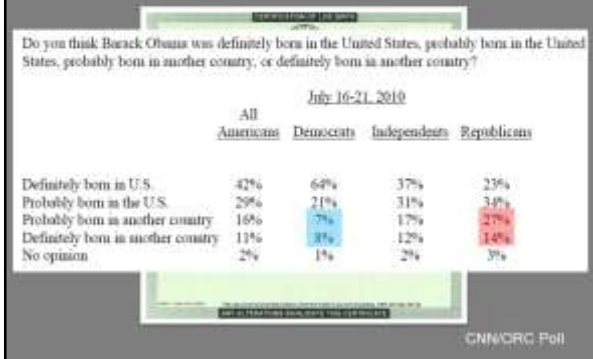
Married in a Christian Church, belongs to a Christian congregation, President Obama was attacked during the 2008 campaign for the public remarks of his controversial Christian pastor.

During the Democratic primaries, Hillary Clinton supporters circulated a rumor that Obama wasn't born in the U.S. and was therefore not eligible to serve as President.

In the general election, right-wing groups picked up the rumor in support of a conspiracy theory: that Obama, whose father followed Islam, is a closet jihadist bent on the destruction of the U.S.

Polls show people believe still this stuff. Why? One explanation we'll talk about is every human's tendency to seek out information that confirms our beliefs and to deny the credibility of evidence that disputes what we believe or think we already know.

## Are We Blinded by Our Own Bias?



ANIMATION: FIRST CLICK BRINGS UP THE CHART. 2<sup>ND</sup> CLICK, THE BIRTH CERTIFICATE

It used to be that only a small fringe of Americans, the Birthers, were arguing that Obama was not really a legal President because he was born, they said, in Kenya. And his mother, knowing he would one day run for President, arranged, from Kenya in 1962 to place his birth certificate in a Hawaii newspaper.

27% of ALL Americans now believe Obama to be foreign born. (And therefore an illegitimate President.)

A July survey in 2010 by CNN found an interesting characteristic of the growing number of people who think Obama is foreign-born.

41% of Republicans believe Obama to be foreign born

15% of Democrats believe Obama to be foreign born

So, your ability to handle the truth may depend on what you already think you know.

Unless your work in this course teaches you to slow down our human impulse to close our minds.

Which brings me back to where I started...

Because you are citizens of a democracy that heavily relies on an informed citizenry, Stony Brook University has pioneered this course in News Literacy. The course is hard, but students tell us every year it is worth it.

Because, if you do the work, we'll train you to take full command of the incredible powers that were reserved to every citizen under our constitution: the power to think for ourselves and to speak for ourselves as a means to govern ourselves.

## Course Outcomes Reminder

At the end of this lecture, students will be able to:

1. Define News Literacy and its importance
2. Explain how two information revolutions shaped history.
3. Put the current social media revolution in context, comparing it to the mass-print revolution.

Before you go, I want to remind you to study your syllabus.

Many instructors post a syllabus quiz in the 2<sup>nd</sup> recitation.

Plus, I'd like you to take note of the course outcomes we work for.

Each week, we'll show a slide like this to help you hold US accountable to you: this slide shows what we think we deliver in each lecture.



**Blackout.wmv**

**VIDEO NAMED ABOVE IS IN RESOURCES FOLDER . LINK HERE.**

NEWS LITERACY BLACKOUT ZONE VIDEO RUNS HERE

## **Assignment: News Blackout**

For 48 Hours

No Facebook (or other social media)

No News...

No Sports Scores...

No Weather...

...Even From Friends or Family

Summarize Your Reaction

Starting (each professor decides when. Howie likes to avoid the weekend) you are forbidden to consume any news of any kind for 48 hours straight.

When you're done, you'll write about it.

Go to "Assignments" on the Blackboard page for this course. There, you'll find the News Blackout assignment.

## The Weekly Quick Quiz

Write your name and Recitation Instructor name at the top

1. Who invented pre-cast, moveable type that made mass-printing possible?

2. In what year was the Internet born?

3. What comment or question do you have to clarify today's lesson or improve our work?

Hand In your Quick Quiz before you leave lecture

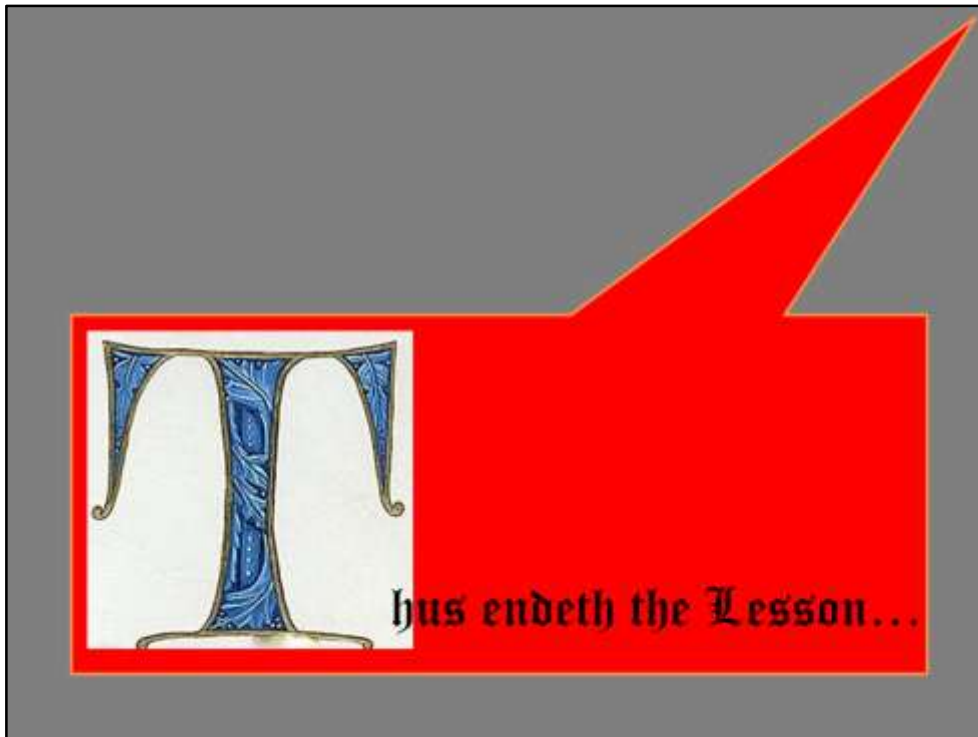
Every lecture, we'll stop and give you a quick quiz, just three questions.

This helps cement key lessons in your memory.

Plus, it helps us see if we explained things well.

And the third question is a chance for you to improve your own course.

We'll start lectures with a selection of your comments and suggestions.



Slides after this are informational for lecturers, or are optional slides you may wish to substitute into the show.

## Pivot Point

Every other row  
Pivots to the row behind  
To discuss in groups of four

We have done this informally in years past, but now provide a slide to prompt short in-class discussions among students.

At appropriate moments, the lecturer will pose a question to the room and then ask students to pivot into groups of 4, discuss the question and prepare to offer answers to the whole room.

This will be clumsy until students learn the drill, but the idea is to break up the lecture with small-group work, if only to give students a chance to shift positions.