



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 like Howard Stern practice free speech, but to what end?

Used thoughtlessly, your powers as citizens can also be dangerous. With the full knowledge of U.S. citizens, Japanese American citizens were moved 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.

Citizens did that. Not some imaginary THEM... it was US.

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

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 a news media revolution of historic importance, brought on by the technologies of these two inventors. Who are they? Gutenberg and Zuckerberg.

So where can you get reliable, actionable information?

From the news media. Ugh you say. Booring...Really? Let's see what's been in the news.



Animation: Each click brings up next story

(Lecturer: Don't spill the beans. You're coming back to each story to connect it to the course themes. Just do a newscast.)

A lot has happened in the month and a half since fall term ended.

9-11 RESPONDERS: On Dec. 23, a Republican filibuster aimed at blocking \$4 billion for the healthcare needs of 9/11 responders, was broken. And comedian Jon Stewart's Daily Show is widely credited for shaming Congress into passing the bill before breaking for the holidays.

SNOW: On Dec. 26, a two-foot snowstorm shut down Manhattan, Brooklyn and Queens. MTA buses and the LIRR, stranded thousands of New Yorkers. Street clearing was mysteriously slow. Side-streets in Brooklyn and Queens still haven't seen a city plow. More snow fell January 11, 12, 26...

WIKILEAKS: Well into January, Bank of America's internal investigators dug for data, bracing to reply to Wikileaks director Julian Assange's threat to reveal an "Ecosystem of Corruption." Vice President Joe Biden called Assange a "High-tech terrorist". iTunes later dropped the Wikileaks App.

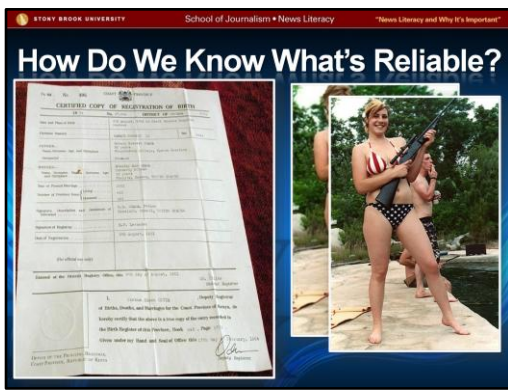
CUOMO: Jan. 1, Andrew Cuomo was sworn in as NY's 56th governor, pledging to cap homeowners' property taxes and cut spending, which means bad things for my salary and your tuition...

TUCSON: On Jan 8, twenty people were shot by a single gunman who opened fire at an open-air meeting called by Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords in Tucson, Arizona. Giffords was shot through the head and lived, but six died, including a U.S. District Judge, a member of Giffords' congressional staff and a nine-year-old girl. A 22-year-old Tucson man, Jared Lee Loughner, was arrested at the scene.

CHARLIE SHEEN: On January 27, famous addict and TV actor Charlie Sheen was taken out of his home on a stretcher and taken to Cedars-Sinai Hospital in Los Angeles for treatment of severe abdominal pain related to a recurrent hiatal hernia.

Two young women, later identified as porn actresses, exited the house at the same time. Sheen makes \$2 million per week starring in "Two and a half men."

JEANINE RESCIGNO: On January 26, family and friends gathered to mourn Jeanine Rescigno, a Stony Brook senior who was killed Jan. 23 when her car rear-ended an SUV on William Floyd Parkway in Shirley. A journalism major, she was working her way through school as a bartender at Molly's Irish Pub in Brookhaven.



(Animation: Click to bring up Sarah, click again for real photo.)

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

BIRTH CERTIFICATE

ASK: What is this? Can you trust it?

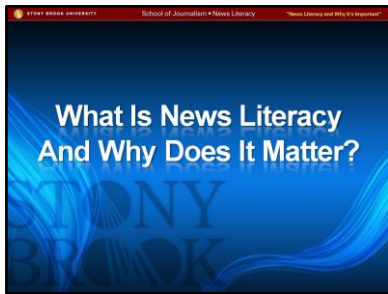
Explain forged birth certificate indicating that Obama was not born in the U.S. (and therefore cannot be President.)

Explain that hundreds of thousands of Americans apparently believe this to be true.

News consumers can be easily deceived by images.

ASK: can you trust this? (Image of Palin. Then Click to reveal the original photo)

Explain how this image of an armed Sarah Palin clad in a Bikini was widely distributed during the last election campaign

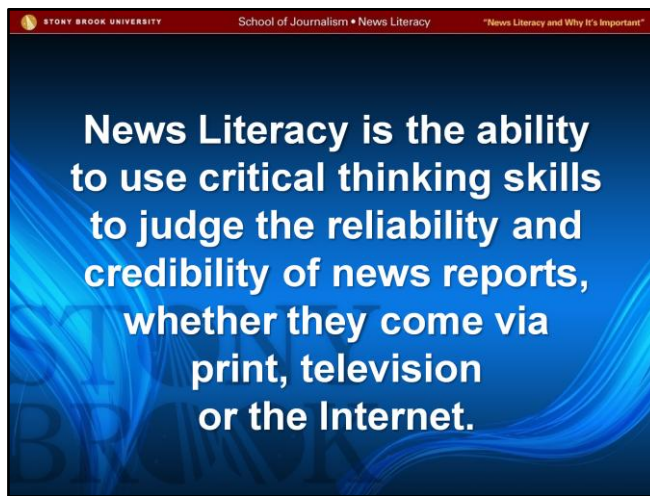


ASK: How many believe the information they are receiving from the news media is credible?

(Can have some discussion as to why or why not.)

Those two examples, Obama's birth certificate and Palin in a flag bikini, are pretty obvious, but they illustrate the challenge we face as we search for reliable information...which is why News Literacy is an essential skill for citizens of the Digital Age.

A simple way to focus your work this semester is that you should always be thinking about this question: How do you know you're getting the truth from the news media?



For purposes of this course, here's what 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.

Good place to mention the course was invented here, is being exported to 20 other campuses and because so many 'Brookers take it, News literacy is becoming a defining skill of Stony Brook Graduates.

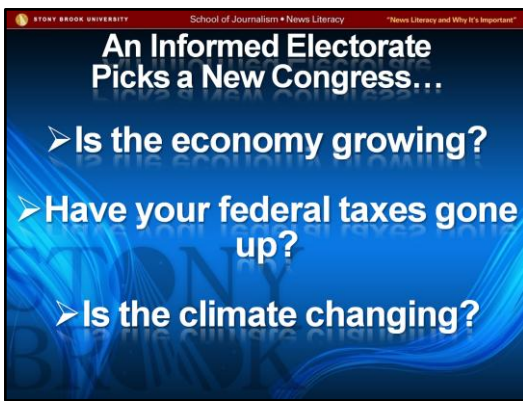
(Rah, Rah!)



DEFINITION OF RELIABILITY FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS COURSE...**Reliable information is *actionable* information.**

It allows news consumers to make a decision, take action or make a judgment. That litany will be used over and over this semester: make a decision, take action, judge something or someone (policies or politicians)

(Remind students slides will be posted on blackboard)



ASK:

-Are we in a recession?

-Have your federal taxes gone up or down since 2009?

-What do the majority of scientists conclude...Is the climate changing, or is there a significant split among scientists?

MISINFORMATION STUDY: Americans chose a new Congress last fall and in 37 states picked new governors. But researchers at the University of Maryland quizzed voters in a pre-election survey and discovered voters were flat wrong on key issues.

55% thought the economy was getting worse, when in fact the recession ended in Q3 of 2009.

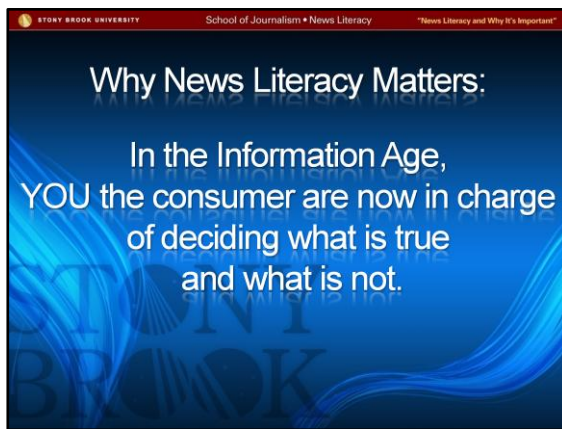
86% did not know their federal taxes have gone down since 2009.

45 % think climate change is not occurring or that scientists are evenly divided, when in fact the National Academy of Sciences has concluded the climate is changing.

A majority believed other falsehoods, that Obama initiated the bank bailout, that foreign donors financed the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's 2010 election crusade to elect Republicans

Only 10% knew their own federal taxes had gone down since 2009. Why does that matter and what does it tell us about life in the information age?

THAT is almost the entire point of this course...



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.

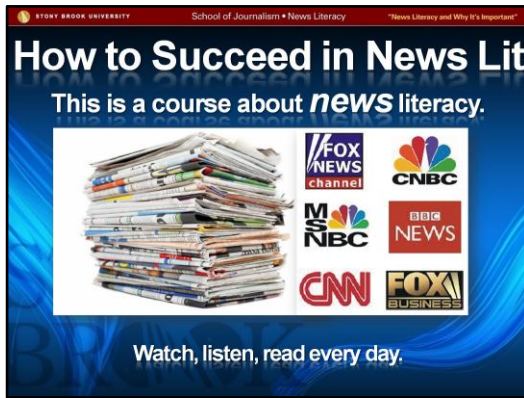
How can I make that audacious claim?

Here's what students tell us about News Literacy. They:

- Learn how to distinguish between legitimate news and other kinds of information
- Learn how to judge the reliability and credibility of news reports
- Understand the mission of the press
- Understand how news decisions are made
- Learn how to be a smart news consumer in the Internet Age and not be manipulated and deceived
- Understand the responsibilities of a news consumer

This is why you're taking the class...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...

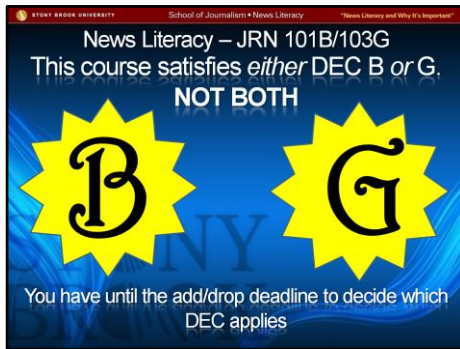


You can't take a computer sci course without using your computer.

You can't take an English course without reading.

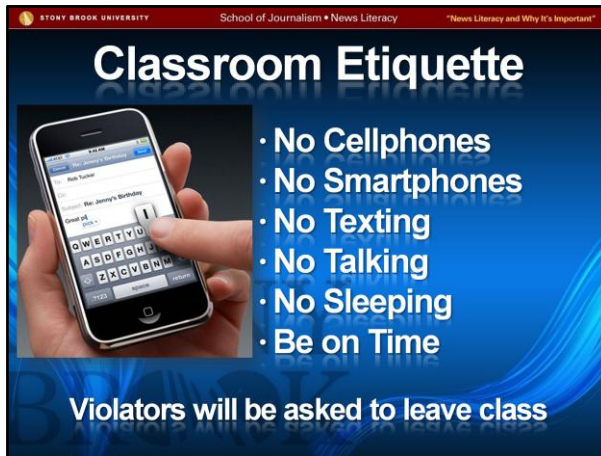
This is a course about news. You are required to keep up with current events.

THIS IS A GOOD TIME FOR THE LECTURER TO INTRODUCE SELF AND ALL ADJUNCTS AND NEWS FELLOWS



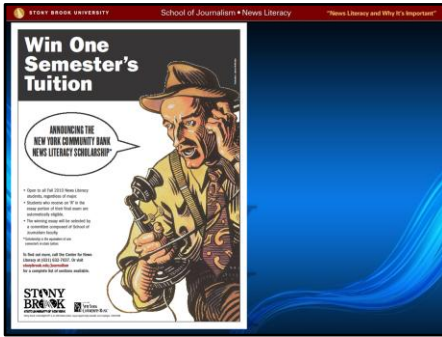
Reminders about credit for this course.

Spring 2011 the add drop deadline is Feb. 11



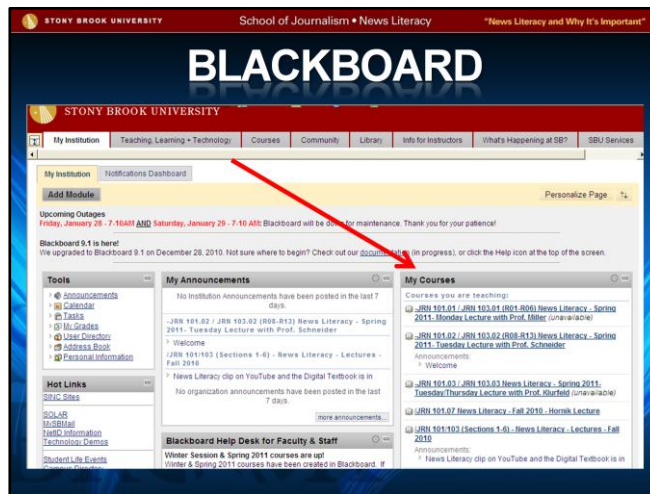
A quick review of attendance policies and etiquette (no texting, enter quietly, etc)

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



You'll start work in the next month on the final essay that you'll submit the last week of the course.

Every student who gets an 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.



If you're new to Blackboard, here's a reminder.

This is roughly what your Blackboard homepage looks like.

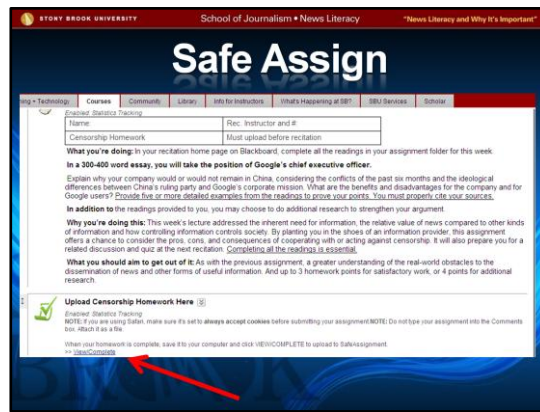
In your list of courses, you'll find this course.

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.

Get comfortable moving back and forth between the Lecture pages and the Recitation pages.

If you're having trouble navigating, there are excellent FAQ pages and tutorials online to help you get better at it.

And if there's a persistent problem with Blackboard, alert Dean Miller at the Center for News Literacy.



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).

(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.

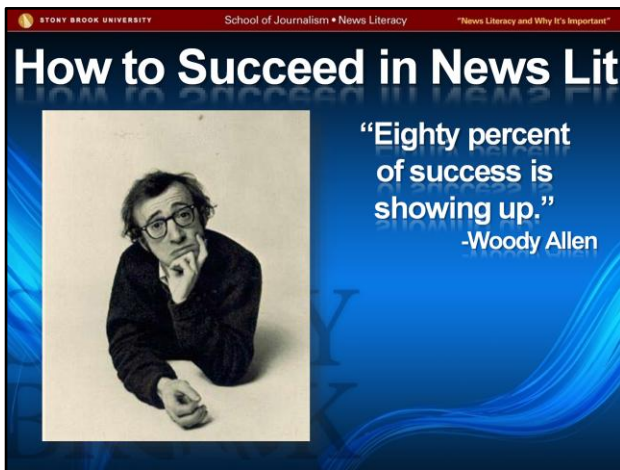
Safe Assign records the time you submit, which is important because late submissions cost you points.

Most professors will also ask you to print out your paper and submit it in person.

Students have 40 pages per day of copying through SINC sites.

Remember if you have an early recitation that you'll have to print the night before.

Email is not an alternative.

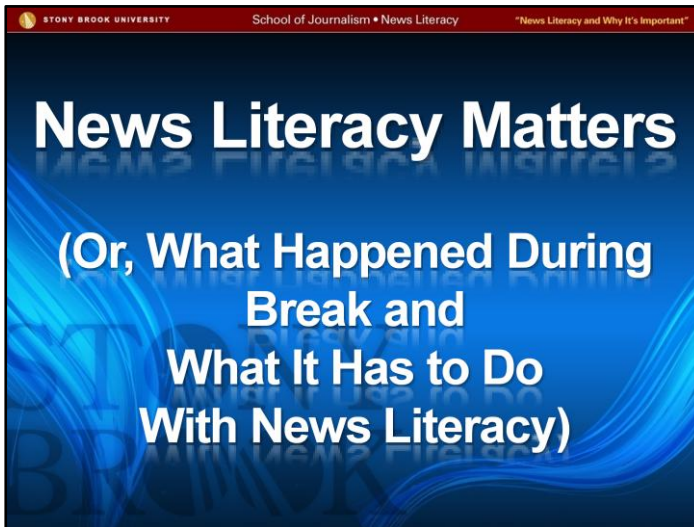


This is a course you can't do in the last week

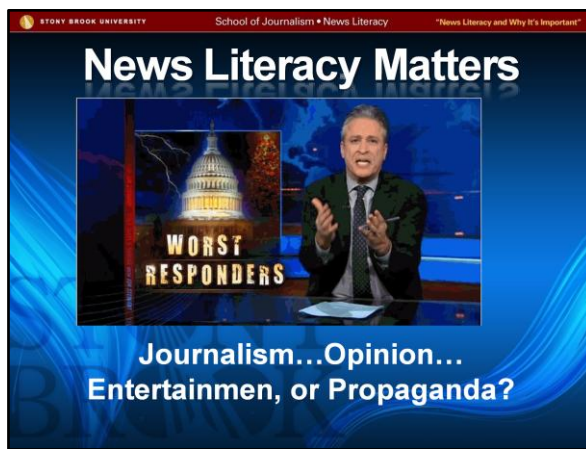
The assignments aren't isolated, they each build on the other, as do the lectures and late submissions are penalized.

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.

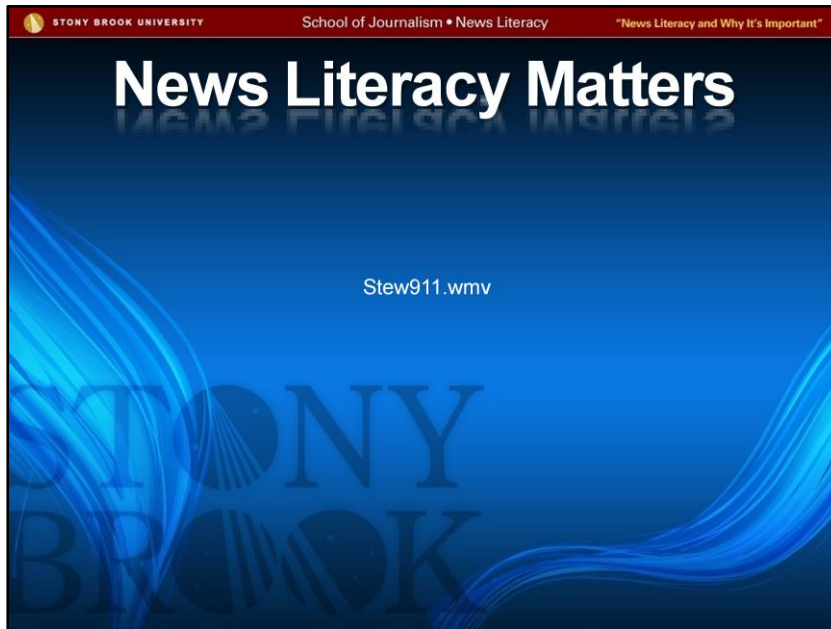


(LECTURERS: THE POINT OF THESE SLIDES IS TO ILLUSTRATE HOW RECENT NEWS STORIES RAISE THE VERY QUESTIONS AT THE HEART OF THIS COURSE.. THEY REVISIT THE STORIES FROM SLIDE 2, WHICH IS WHY YOU KEPT SOME INFORMATION BACK UNTIL NOW)

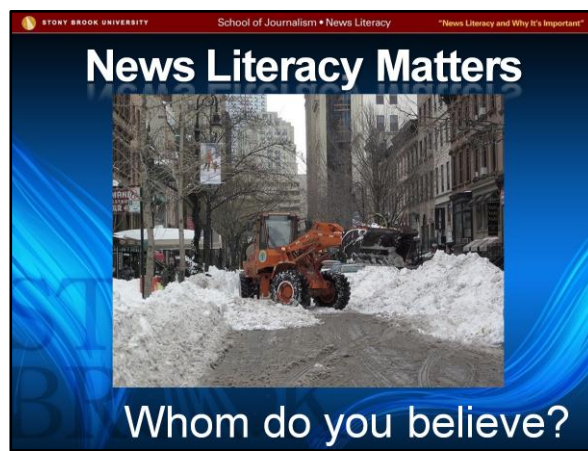


(Before lecture, the News Fellow in charge of Power Point links the correct video to this slide. You'll see that image when the slide opens and it should run either upon opening or after 1 click)

9-11 RESPONDERS: A Republican filibuster aimed at blocking federal funds for the healthcare needs of 9/11 responders, was ended by...comedian Jon Stewart, who is widely credited for raising hell on his show about the filibuster and shaming Congress into making good on promises to take care of medics, firefighters, police and others who rushed to the scene of the World Trade Center attacks. So...what does that make the Daily Show? Is it Journalism? We'll talk about that. Opinion vs. News.



(Before lecture, the News Fellow in charge of Power Point links the correct video to this slide. You'll see that image when the slide opens and it should run either upon opening or after 1 click)



The sanitation union warned in October that cuts would leave the department unable to handle a big snowstorm.

After being buried under an avalanche of complaints from constituents, political critics and even allies, Hizzoner finally admitted the storm was not well-handled.

Was the slow response due to poor planning or a union slowdown?

Is this storm evidence of global climate change or evidence there is no such thing?

HOW CAN YOU SORT OUT CONFLICTING CLAIMS LIKE THIS?

THIS COURSE GIVES YOU THE TOOLS TO JUDGE THE CREDIBILITY OF INFORMATION SOURCES AND THE PROPER WEIGHT OF EVIDENCE.

Sources: http://gothamist.com/2011/01/26/blizzard_slowdown_investigations_sl.php
http://www.nydailynews.com/ny_local/2010/12/29/2010-12-29_mayor_bloomberg_apologizes_for_snow_screwups_during_blizzard_of_2010_defends_san.htm
[#ixzz1CCcC8nB3](#)



(ANIMATION: CLICK TO BRING UP PHOTO, CLICK TO BRING UP THE NEWS LITERACY QUESTION)

So, Wikileaks posts hundreds of thousands of documents to the Web? Is that even legal? Is that free speech? Is that Journalism?

And what about the news organizations that picked up the documents and published them? Are they breaking the law? Are they traitors or heroes?

We'll spend most of week four studying the history of leaks and how our constitution does and does not protect leakers.



(ANIMATION: CLICK TO BRING UP PHOTO, CLICK TO BRING UP THE NEWS LITERACY QUESTION)

WIKILEAKS: WikiLeaks the Afghan War Diary, a compendium of over 91,000 reports covering the war in Afghanistan from 2004 to 2010, written by soldiers and intelligence officers, and mainly describing lethal military actions involving the United States military, also include intelligence information, reports of meetings with political figures, and related details.

WikiLeaks, founded 2006, says: “We believe that transparency in government activities leads to reduced corruption, better government and stronger democracies,” the organization’s Web site says. “All governments can benefit from increased scrutiny by the world community, as well as their own people. We believe this scrutiny requires information.”

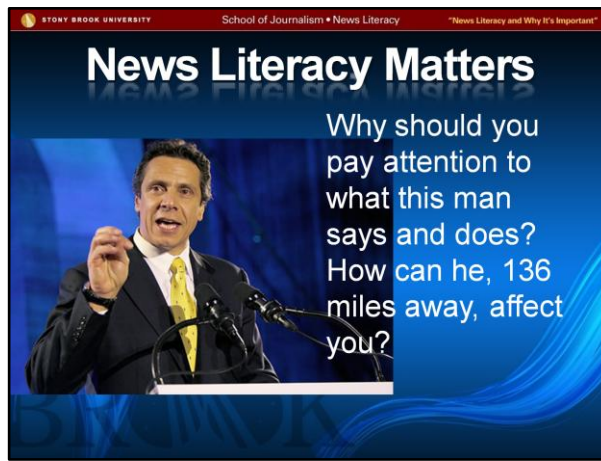
Should news organizations publish these documents?

THE FIRST AMENDMENT DECLARES CONGRESS SHALL MAKE NO LAW LIMITING YOUR FREEDOM TO PUBLISH INFORMATION AND OPINIONS. ARE THERE ANY LIMITS ON THOSE RIGHTS? WE TACKLE THAT QUESTION IN THIS COURSE AND TEACH YOU THE CASE LAW SURROUNDING THAT ISSUE.

News Literacy Matters

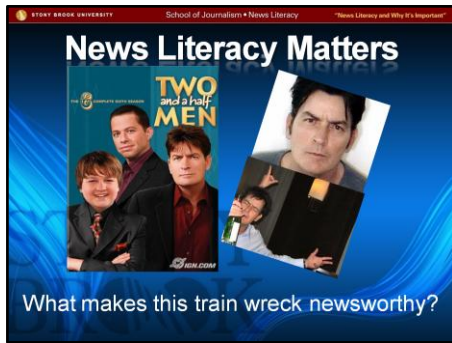
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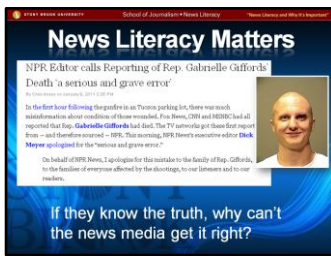
(ANIMATION: CLICK TO BRING UP PHOTO, CLICK TO BRING UP THE NEWS LITERACY QUESTION)

Andrew Mark Cuomo became the 56th governor of New York on Saturday, promising to immediately take on the state's huge financial problems and to fight to limit taxes on homeowners across the state.



Is there any element of public service to this, or is it pure entertainment?

THIS COURSE GETS AT QUESTIONS ABOUT WHETHER JOURNALISM'S OBLIGATION IS TO MAKE MONEY BY ATTRACTING A BIG AUDIENCE OR TO SERVE THE PUBLIC INTEREST, EVEN IF IT'S NOT PROFITABLE.



In the first hours after the shooting of Congressman Gabrielle Gifford, she was declared dead by CNN, NPR, Reuters, NYT.com... then alive. Then NPR apologized

In the days following, the shooter was egged on by the crosshairs on Sarah Palin's map of political enemies...or he wasn't. He was a tea party activist and then he was not.

...How can the news media get things so wrong so often?

Here's what we now know...

Loughner legally bought the gun and ammunition he was arrested with.

Thirteen people were wounded in the attack; a fourteenth person was injured at the scene, but was determined not to have been shot. Gabrielle Giffords and two other members of her staff were among the surviving gunshot victims

Six people were killed in the attack:

Christina-Taylor Green, 9, of Tucson, the only one of the six to make it to a hospital before dying. Born on September 11, 2001, she wanted to be a pro baseball player, just like her grandfather.

Dorothy "Dot" Morris, 76, a retired secretary whose husband was wounded in the shooting.

John Roll, 63, chief judge of the U.S. District Court for Arizona.

Phyllis Schneck, 79, homemaker from Tucson.

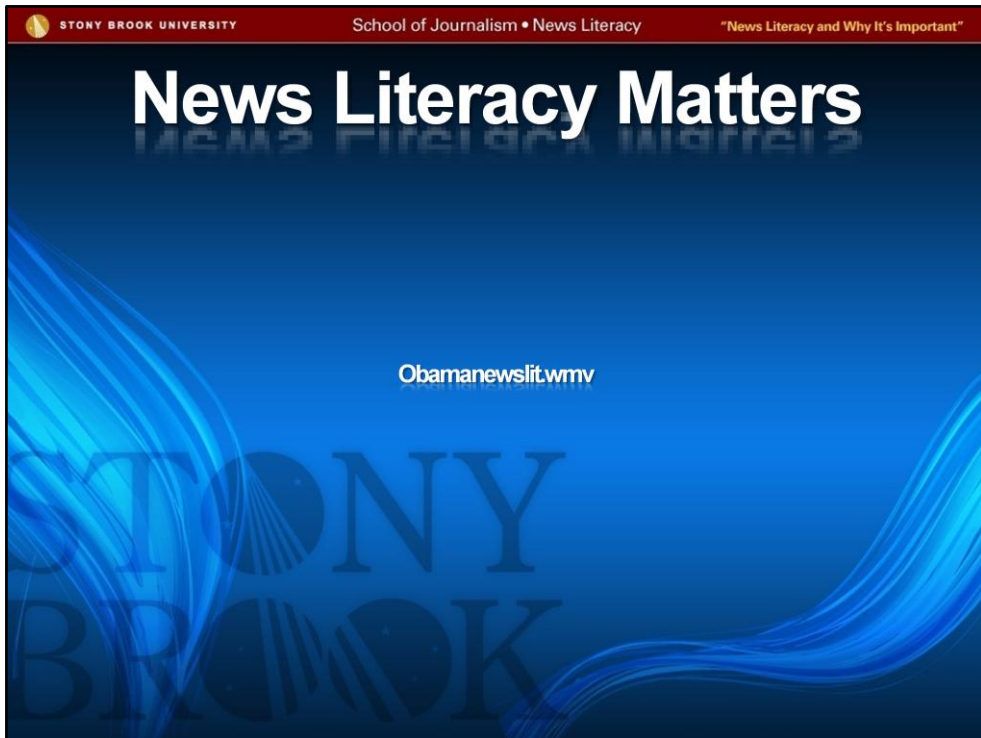
Dorwan Stoddard, 76, retired construction worker, from a gunshot wound to the head; his wife Mavy was wounded.

Gabriel "Gabe" Zimmerman, 30, community outreach director for Giffords, and a member of Giffords' staff since 2006.

News Literacy In High Places



In an environment where reliable information can be hard to find, you'll now hear government leaders urging citizens to learn the lessons of this course. Here's the President of the United States speaking at the University of Michigan commencement in Spring 2010.



News Fellow link here: [Click to launch](#)



THE REVOLUTION(S) IN COMMUNICATIONS:

--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.

You are living through the 2nd 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 500 million people.

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



Leif Erickson discovered America around the year 1000...

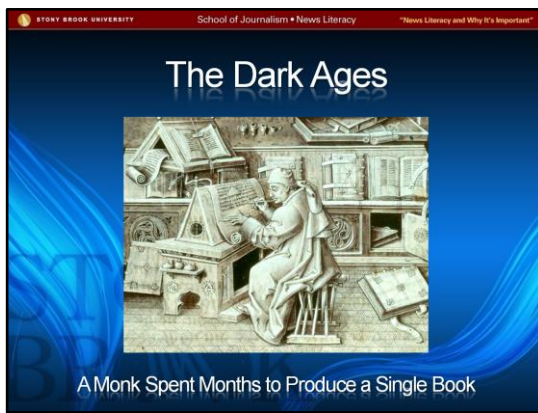
Christopher Columbus wandered in a half-millennium later.

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 braggadoccio.



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.



In 1455, silversmith Johann Gutenberg in 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... Gutenberg printed 180 bibles his first year.

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

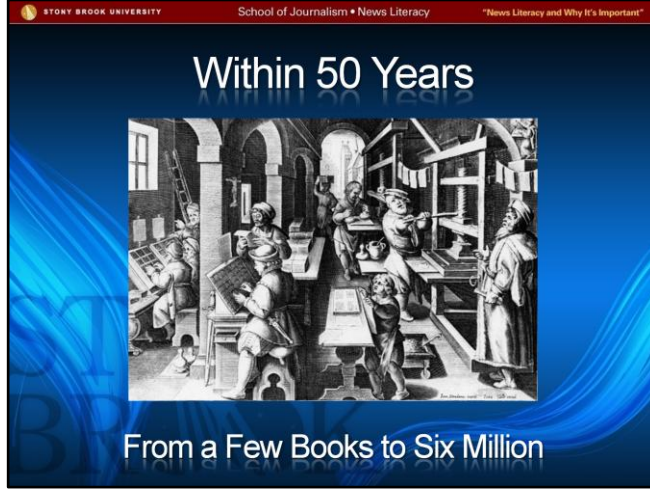
The First Mass-Produced Book



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.

(About 22 are still in existence and when they sell, fetch more than \$5 million each.)



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.

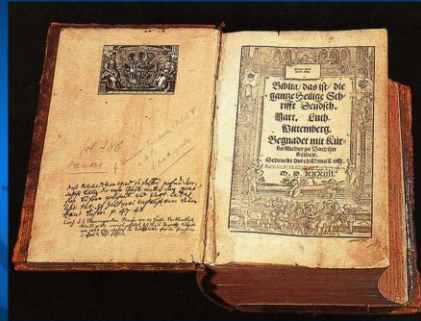
50 years later, there were 10 million books in circulation.

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

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

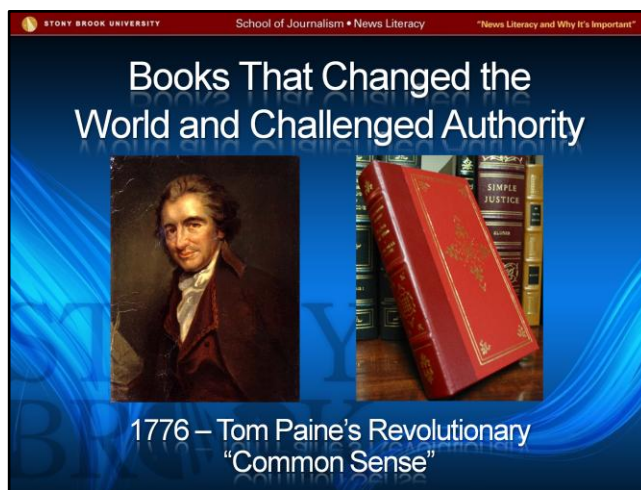


1534 – Martin Luther and His Bible

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 church.



(Tom Paine - common sense)

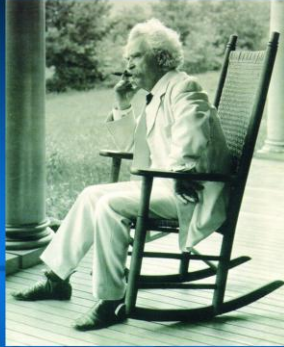
So, the real revolution was not technological.

Ultimately, access to new ideas and to scientific and other books allowed people to learn new skills but also 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

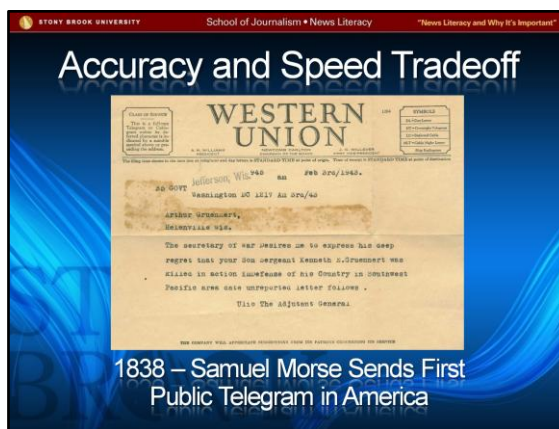


Almost 2,000 Soldiers Died 15 Days
After the End of the War of 1812

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

Treaty of Ghent ends 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.



SLIDE: INFORMATION SPEEDS UP – as do 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.

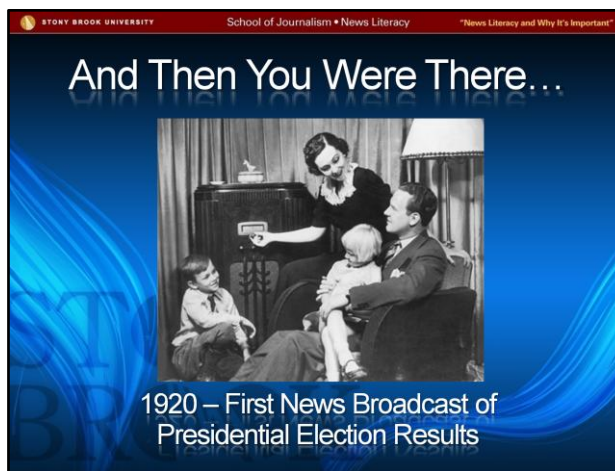
But the temptation to race new information into print also meant false information got published before it could be verified.

150 years ago, people's complaints about Telegrams were identical to complaints you hear about Twitter.

"The public mind throughout the interior is kept in a constant state of excitement ... (Telegrams) are short and spicy and can easily be inserted in the country newspapers. In the city journals they can be contradicted by the next day..." – President James Buchanan, December 1860

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 . "I hate newspapermen. They come into camp and pick up their camp rumors and print them as facts. I regard them as spies, which, in truth, they are. If I killed them all there would be news from Hell before breakfast."



Now the pace of change accelerates

SLIDE: AND THEN YOU WERE THERE (Radio)

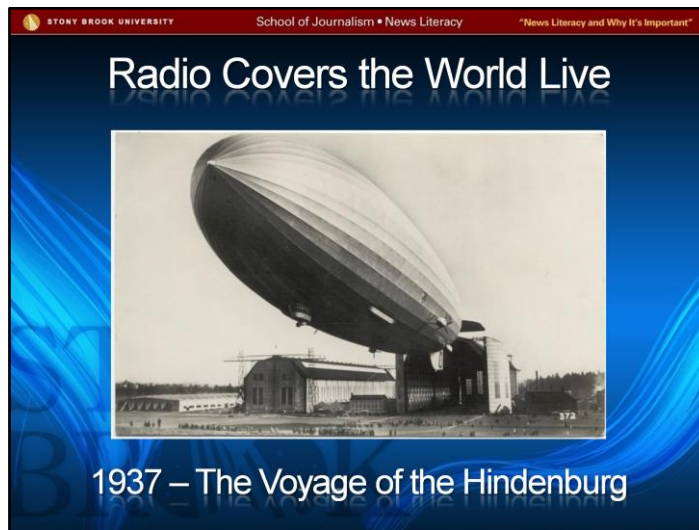
Developed by Tesla, Fessenden and Marconi, radio broadcast made it possible by 1920 to hear live broadcasts of the result of the presidential elections for the first time.

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.



SLIDE: RADIO COVERS THE WORLD LIVE

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)



Before lecture, the News Fellow in charge of Power Point links the correct video to this slide. You'll see that image when the slide opens and it should run either upon opening or after 1 click)

**Hindenberg radio cast...followed by
Hindenberg film reel**



SLIDE: AND THEN THERE WAS TELEVISION

By 1941, New Yorkers saw the first television broadcast.

A nearly anonymous team working in a studio above Grand Central Terminal experimented with the new medium long before Edward R. Murrow and the Murrow Boys made television news famous in the 1950s.

(AN ASIDE: TV technology was first theorized in 1920 in a tiny Idaho town, by a 14-year-old boy named Philo Farnsworth, who stared at the furrows in a potato field and imagined a way to transmit images via radio waves... the idea was so amazing that when Farnsworth sketched it out on a blackboard for his Chemistry teacher, the teacher copied it down line by line... which proved to be the key piece of evidence when Farnsworth took RCA to court for stealing his patent...and won.)

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For Comparison, Consider This...



It Took Five Months for Word of Columbus' Arrival to Reach Europe

FOR COMPARISON, CONSIDER THIS

It took five months for the news of Columbus' voyage to reach Europe, 4,000 miles away



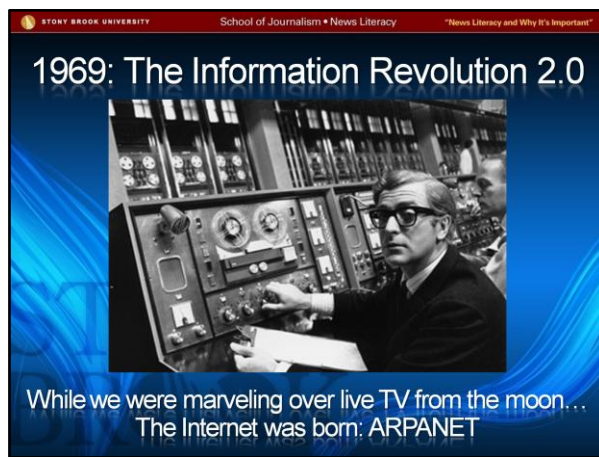
AND THIS

On July 21, 1969 when Apollo 11 landed on the moon (239,000 miles from earth) we marveled at the technology that allowed an estimated 500 million people worldwide to watch Neil Armstrong step onto the Moon's surface. At that time, it was the largest-ever audience for a live broadcast.



Before lecture, the News Fellow in charge of Power Point links the correct video to this slide. You'll see that image when the slide opens and it should run either upon opening or after 1 click)

Click to run the Lunar landing clip



INFORMATION REVOLUTION 2.0 – ARPANET

Here's the irony about 1969.

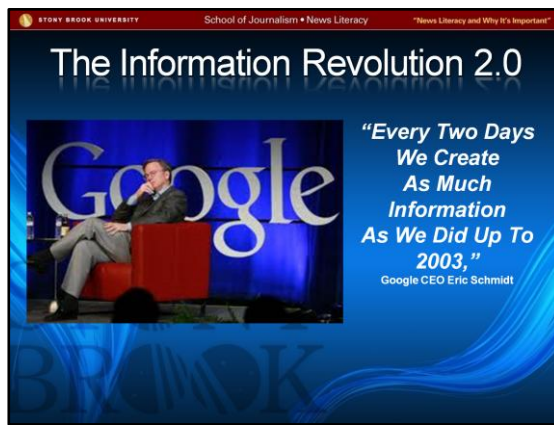
While we were celebrating live TV from the moon and the engineering of giant rockets for interplanetary flight, the Internet was forming.

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

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.

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.

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



You grew up in this reality, so numbers like this may not surprise you.



But the speed at which words, pictures and video can now be delivered and the degree to which individuals can blast information to the world has 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 YouTube. No Twitter

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



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

These Four challenges are at the heart of your work this semester.

For starters, How do we find the truth when every day is an information tsunami?

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.

It's not that we read them all, but between TV, radio and printed materials on screens and on paper, we're exposed to 100,000 words per day. Keep in mind the average American reads at 240 words per minute. How might that impact you?

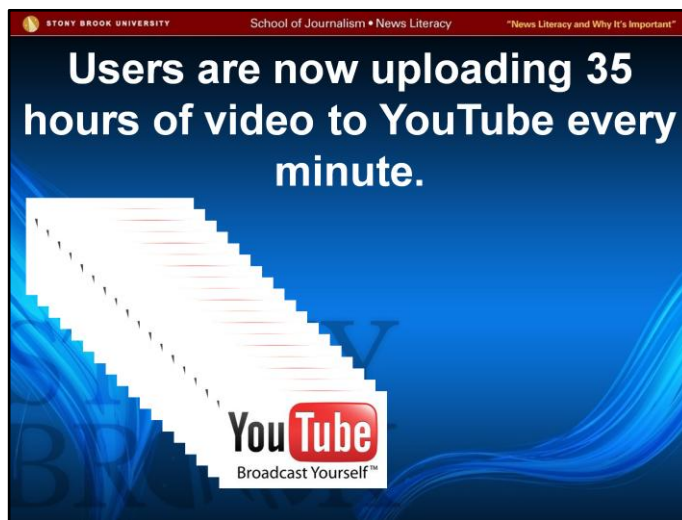


-A University of Michigan team (Neuman, et al) studied the media supply to American households via print, radio, tv and the Internet and found sharp rises in both supply and demand. By 2000...a decade ago!...total media supply had hit 20,000 minutes of content per day. And while appetites for that information rose with the supply, they rose more slowly. Which means we're increasingly overloaded. (Here's a link to that study http://www.wrneuman.com/Flow_of_Information.pdf)

-So how DO people react to all that abundance of information?

In 2007, the Associated Press hired Context, a research firm, to study global news consumption. What they concluded in their final report was that while young people crave in-depth news, they are unable or unwilling to find it. *"Participants (in the study) appeared debilitated by information overload and unsatisfying news experiences...Ultimately news fatigue brought many of the participants to a learned helplessness response. The more overwhelmed or unsatisfied they were, the less effort they were willing to put in."*

So much for finding the reliable information with which to make decisions, take action or make judgments. Many citizens just tune out. What kind of voters will they be?



On Wednesday, March 17, 2010, YouTube announced that users were now uploading 24 hours of video to YouTube every minute. That means for every minute of your day, you could find 1,440 minutes of video on YouTube alone. Six months later it had risen to 35 hours per minute.

In this course, we offer alternatives to passive helplessness. It's work, but we'll help you take charge of the information you consume.



Back to the question begged by Jon Stewart's "reporting" and commentary on the 9/11 Responders Healthcare funding...

What IS he? Journalist? Journalism Critic? Editorialist? Entertainer?

The explosion of cable and cheap bandwidth and low-cost production equipment has brought thousands of new players into the Journalism neighborhood, many of them unschooled or uninterested in the ethics and practices of professional journalism.



Here's a scene from the video of Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein's hanging. Who shot it and what was his motivation?...

Now the most ubiquitous communication device, the number of cell phones in use in the U.S. has risen from 34 million a decade ago to more than 200 million.

Some Third World nations are ahead of us, because of infrastructure savings they captured by setting up cell systems instead of hard wire systems.

That technology has this effect on journalism:

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?



SLIDE: CHALLENGES FOR THE NEWS CONSUMER

(Jon Stewart still, followed by a slide with Daily Show video)

When Americans were asked in 2008 to name the journalist they most admired, Jon Stewart, host of The Daily Show on Comedy Central tied in the rankings with network anchormen Brian Williams, Tom Brokaw, Dan Rather and cable host Anderson Cooper.

Ask: What does Stewart do that might cause people to consider him a journalist?

Is this reliable information? Let's watch

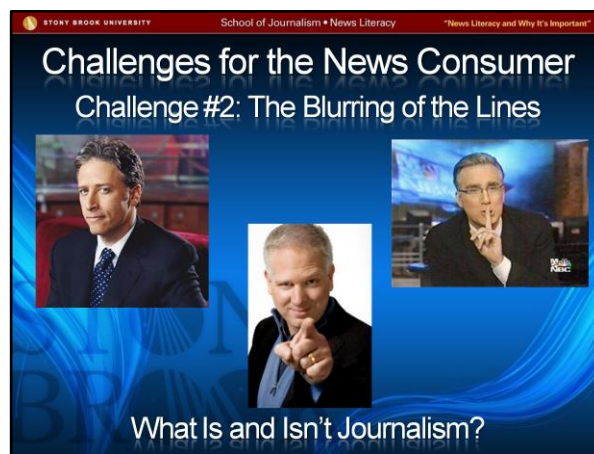
(Click to next slide for video)



Before lecture, the News Fellow in charge of Power Point links the correct video to this slide. You'll see that image when the slide opens and it should run either upon opening or after 1 click)

John Stewart rant in which he mocks the attempts to stop the leak 5,000 feet underwater at the oil well uncapped by the Deepwater Horizon rig explosion.

Ask again: Is this news?



Just because it looks like news or is videotaped or written in the style of news...is it news?

One of the phenomena we study in this course is this: lots of people want the label “Journalist” but refuse to wear the yoke that professional journalists have traditionally submitted to: information must be verified, the journalist must take responsibility for what she or he produces; and the journalist can’t be paid by or a member of an organization with political or commercial interests in the story.

In News Literacy, we help you develop ways to detect when someone is crowding the line between journalism and other kinds of information.



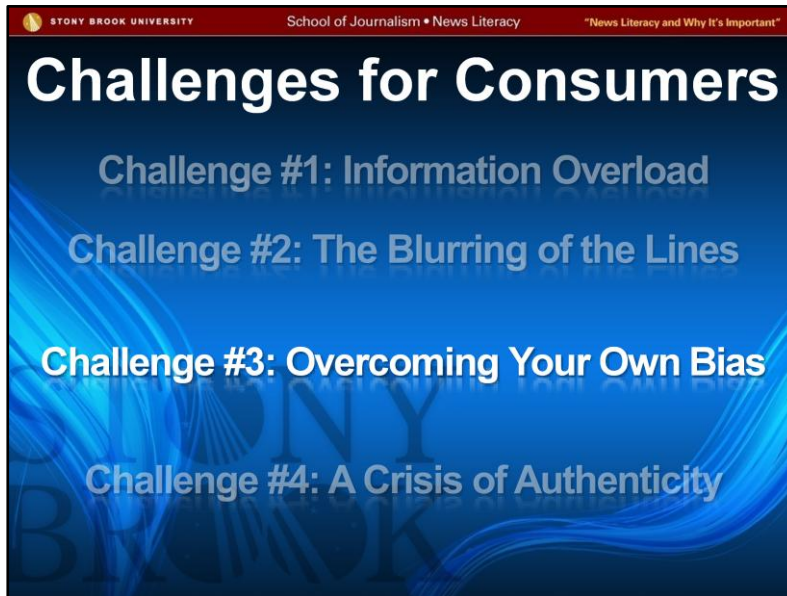
The mark of an educated person is the ability to distinguish between things that look similar but are not.

So, for the purpose of this class, here is an important distinction...

Today is the last time you say "The Media" when you mean "The News Media."

(Let them know they'll be responsible for this on tests.)

A lot of students miss easy points on this distinction.



Study after study shows that even when we're given the facts, we often hear only what we want to hear. Worse, we tend to pursue information that confirms our belief.

As college students, you are immune to that effect, right?



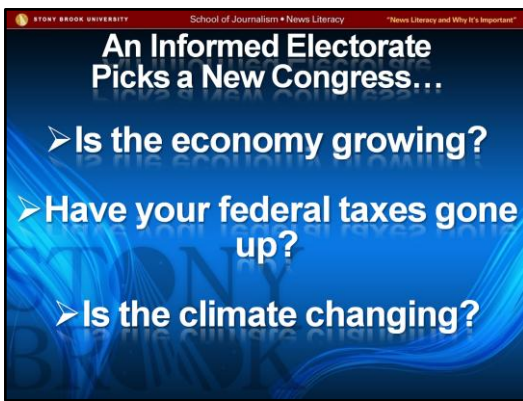
In our search for reliable information, we are often fighting our evolutionary inheritance.

The brain works quickly by sorting information according to patterns. That kept us alive on the Serengeti, in the jungles of Asia and in the forests of Europe and North America...But assumption is dangerous when we leap to comforting but false conclusions.

We'll talk a lot in this course about the theory of **Cognitive Dissonance**: That is the intense discomfort we feel when holding two contradictory ideas simultaneously. I.E. a belief in animal rights and a taste for commercially raised chicken meat.

Cognitive Dissonance theory predicts that people are driven to reduce that dissonance by changing their attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors, or by justifying their attitudes, beliefs and behaviors... sometimes even misremembering where information comes from or blocking out facts they find inconvenient.

In some ways, your own brain is sometimes the enemy of your search for reliable information. We'll teach you how to recognize the influence of cognitive dissonance on your perceptions and explore the difference between media bias and your own bias.



ASK:

Think about this quiz at the start of class.

If you got answers wrong, had you been given wrong information?

Or, did your political beliefs interfere with your ability to hear or remember the truth?

Which President spent \$700 Billions bailing out banks
Bush or Obama? (Bush)

During the 2010 congressional election, the Chamber of Commerce ran an orchestrated campaign to attack the Obama administration and to elect Republicans to the U.S. House. A loophole let the Chamber spend without disclosing who paid for the crusade...And we now know that was foreign money, correct? (wrong)

Why does that matter and what does it tell us about life in the information age?

THAT is almost the entire point of this course...

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White House says Obama is Christian, prays daily AP Associated Press updated 6/19/2013 3:04:00 PM ET
Remarks come after poll finds nearly 1 in 5 believe president is a Muslim



Cognitive Dissonance:
Nearly one in five people, or 18 percent, said they think Obama is Muslim. That was up from 11 percent who said so in March 2009.

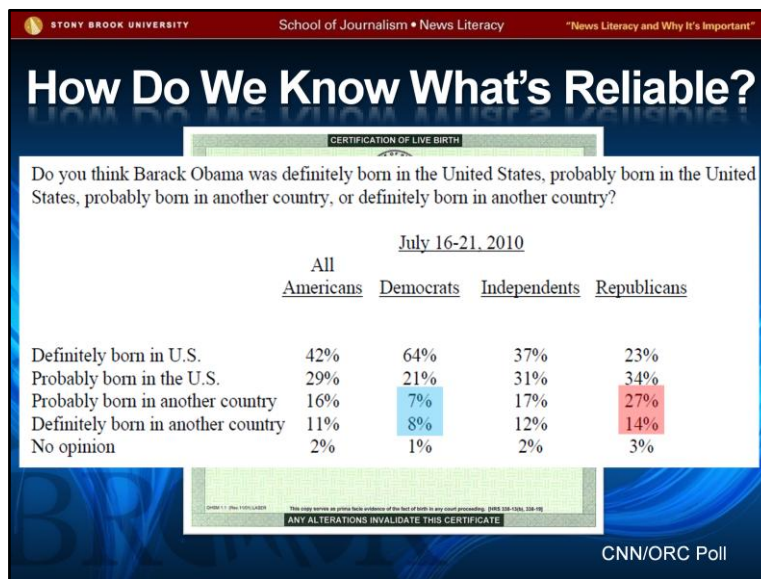
Here's a classic example of cognitive dissonance.

Obama is a Christian. Married in a Christian Church. Belongs to a Christian Congregation. Was attacked during the campaign for belonging to the church of a controversial Christian pastor.

But as he became more unpopular, more people started to believe the partisan mischief makers who assert he is a Muslim and (in their view) a jihadist enemy of the U.S.

This is an example of Confirmation Bias , a defense mechanism against cognitive dissonance: We only seek out information that confirms our beliefs and we deny the credibility of evidence that disputes what we believe or think we already know.

(If you're pre-med, a great book on this is Jerome Groopman's "How Doctors Think". If you are in physical sciences, Carl Sagan's essay "The Fine Art of Baloney Detection")



ANIMATION: FIRST CLICK BRINGS UP THE CHART. 2ND 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 by CNN found an interesting characteristic of the growing number of people who think Obama is foreign-born.

But what you believe about this seems to be closely tied to which party you believe in.

41% of Republicans believe Obama to be foreign born
15% of Democrats believe Obama to be foreign born



The digital tsunami washes all kinds of information over us daily.

Included in it are partisan spin, publicity for products and people, propaganda and advertising posing as news.

New digital tools permit unscrupulous players to unmake the truth or make up believable lies and broadcast them widely, as Mark Twain noted of the printing press.

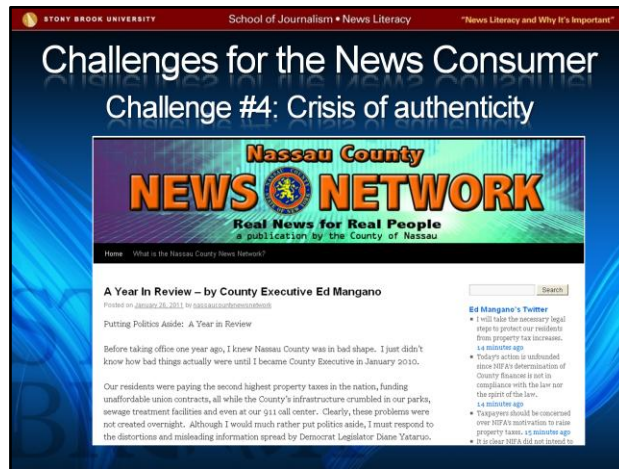
Some of the key work of your semester in News Literacy will be to learn how to sort the real from the fake.



When this 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 looked closely, every single recipe calls for the use of one or more products from Kraft foods. Are you willing to risk being hoodwinked? Or do you want to learn to see when you are the “fish” in the great poker game of life...

<http://www.kraftfoods.com/foodandfamily/#/home>



This looks like a news website and it even has a paid reporter.

But who is paying the reporter?

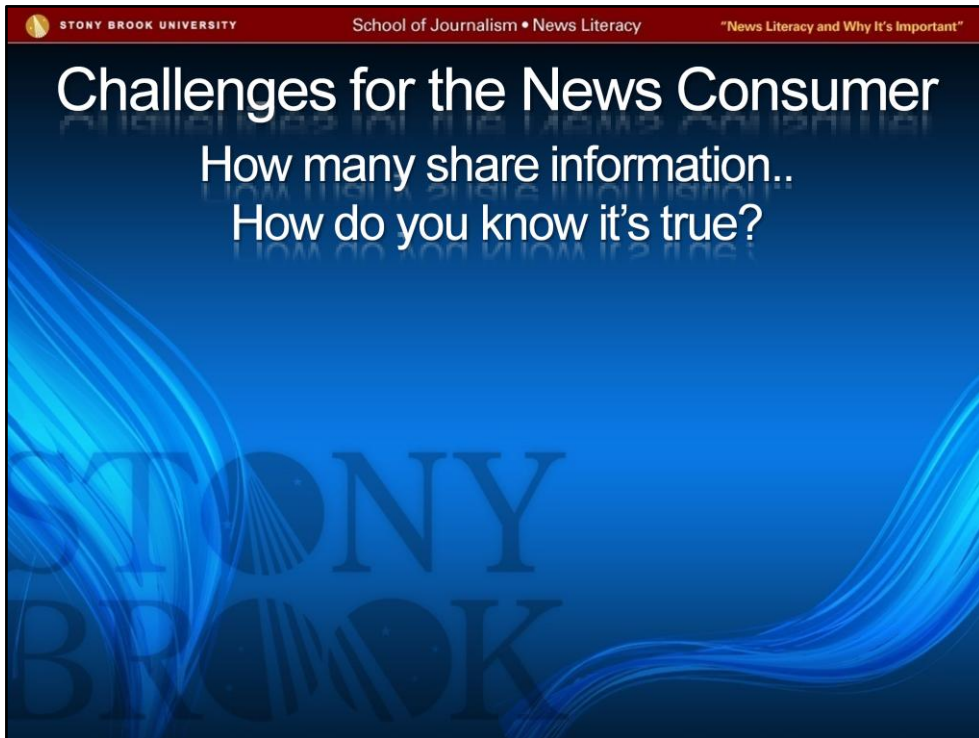
Nassau County Executive Edward Mangano, that's who.

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

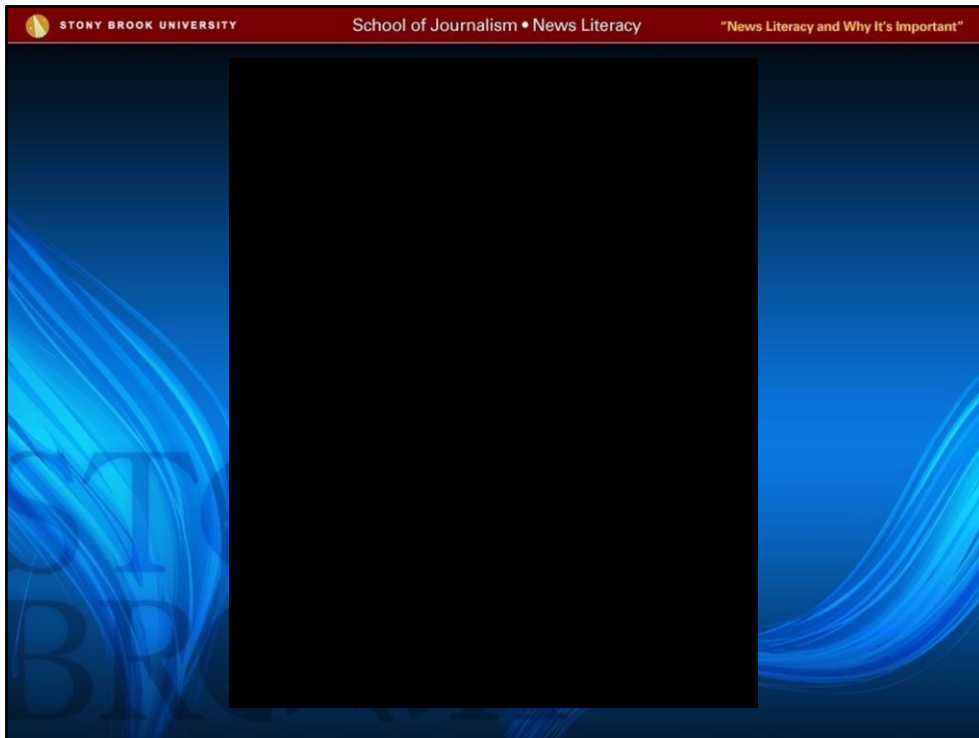
So...in a course that immerses you in news, what do you think your first assignment will be?

<http://nassaucountynetwork.wordpress.com/>

(Click to launch the TwilightZone/Blackout Zone video)



This is why you're taking the class...



Before lecture, the News Fellow in charge of Power Point links the correct video to this slide. You'll see that image when the slide opens and it should run either upon opening or after 1 click)

NEWS LITERACY BLACKOUT ZONE VIDEO RUNS HERE

Assignment: News Blackout

1) 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 "My Assignments" on the Blackboard page for this course. There, you'll find the News Blackout assignment.

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"My Assignments" on Blackboard :

1. Several short readings for discussion in class



Speaking of a free press quotes

Press accuracy

Participatory Consumer

Social news