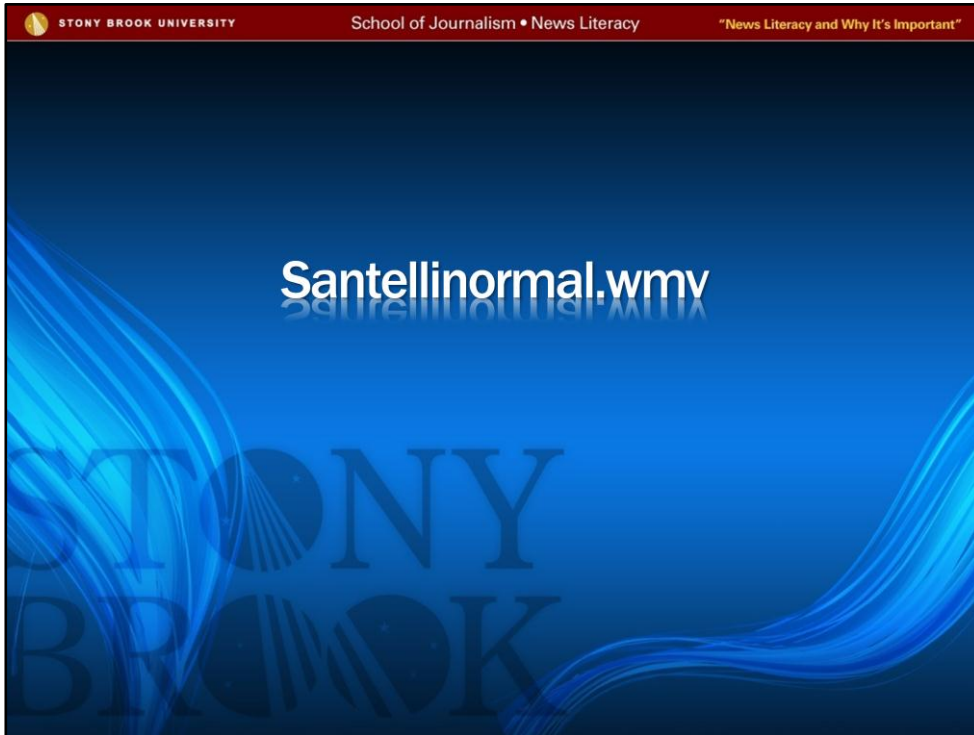




This is Rick Santelli.

His job is to report for CNBC from the floor of the Chicago Board of Trade, where he covers interest rates, foreign exchange, and the Federal Reserve.

(LECTURER: NEXT SLIDE LAUNCHES SANTORELLI #1, A STRAIGHT-UP NEWS REPORT) As an investor, you want accurate reporting to help you decide whether to buy or sell. As a citizen, you want a clear picture of how government policies are affecting the economy. That’s his job.



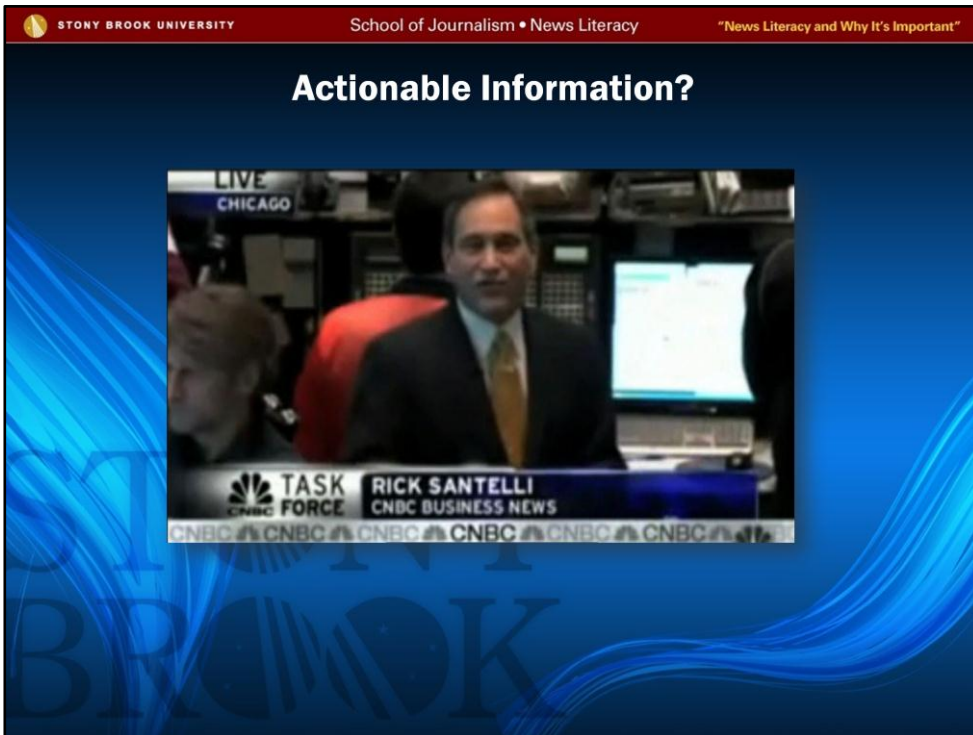
NEWS FELLOW: LINK (INSERT) VIDEO TO THIS SLIDE AND SELECT “START AUTOMATICALLY”

(Lecturer: After it runs)

He has verified his information by reporting straight from the floor of the exchange.

He is a journalist working for CNBC

He signs on and off with his name:
V.I.A.



(LECTURER: NEXT SLIDE LAUNCHES SANTELLI #2, HIS NOW-FAMOUS RANT)
Here is that same reporter, Rick Santelli, live on CNBC on Feb. 19, 2009 as the stimulus bill was going into effect and the U.S. government was in the process of bailing out banks, some homeowners and Chrysler and GM.



NEWS FELLOW: LINK (INSERT) VIDEO TO THIS SLIDE AND SELECT "START AUTOMATICALLY"

(Lecturer: After it runs)

He listens to an expert invited onto the show to comment and give an expert opinion...then suddenly Santelli is giving his opinion instead of keeping it to himself.

He'll go down in history for this rant, which is often cited as a founding document of the Tea Party movement: A protest against government spending, among other things.

But this was a huge violation of his role as a journalist.

He's no longer reporting from the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, he is taking public stands on the policies he is supposed to independently report about.

News Consumers are given the CNBC, graphics, but with no "Commentator" label or intro or sign off.

What happened to VIA?

It doesn't matter whether we agree or disagree. The point is he is having it both ways, blurring the lines that help News Consumers keep track of whether they are getting facts or opinions.

So if this isn't journalism, is it evidence-based Opinion Journalism?

Or is it something else entirely?

Emotion-based, belief-based...

Do you think it is reliable information?

Do you think it is useful?

(If yes...why is an opinion useful)



NO ANIMATION

What IS this Opinion stuff doing in the Journalism neighborhood?

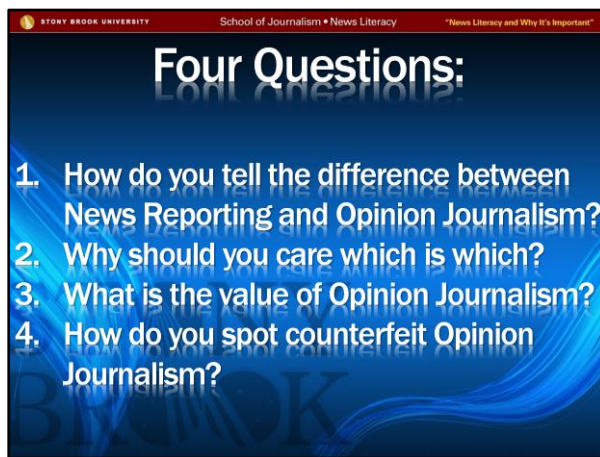
Within the Journalism neighborhood, and still defined by V. I. and A... opinion journalism thrived for generations as a useful destination for news consumers.

Opinion Journalism, though it expresses an opinion, relies on facts are still subjected to the process of Verification. It is Independent in that it is not paid for by a special interest group...and Accountable in that the writer or news outlet signs it and takes responsibility for its accuracy.

We'll talk about this later, but it can be helpful to you when you need to make a decision based on the facts.

But this can be very confusing for a news consumer because of the recent development of counterfeit opinion journalism.

If you don't watch closely and think critically, you can stumble out of the enclave of evidence based opinion and into the dodgy neighborhood of emotion-based opinion.



ANIMATION: TEXT BULLETS FADE IN ONE BY ONE, BUT QUICKLY

This is the roadmap for today's work.


First we'll talk about how to know when you've wandered into the Opinion turf of the Journalism Neighborhood.

And we'll think about the value of an evidence based opinion, vs. an emotion or belief-based opinion.

To the extent we could, we tried to select examples of conservative commentary to minimize the distracting arguments about which political ideology is more logical. Instead, we're trying to demonstrate the spectrum of trustworthiness is applicable even within just one of America's two main political movements. Plus, since students tend to be more liberal, we're laying groundwork for a future lecture about our discomfort with new ideas.

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Warning: Test Ahead



10-question short-answer test on Lectures 1-6 will be administered in your next recitation.

ANIMATION: IMAGE FADES IN

Emphasize to students that detailed answers make the difference. If you can't cite specifics from news reports, readings, lectures, you lose points.

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Question examples

A coworker says a hurricane is headed for Long Island and you turn on the TV to get a forecast. First, you see a story about school closings. Next, you see a story about Lindsey Lohan's mother joining an all-girl punk band. Last you see a story about a local church collecting food for foreign workers stranded in Libya by the unrest there. What three types of information needed by humans do these stories supply. Explain.

In News Literacy you learned that governments are at times in conflict with the press. Napoleon's remark: "Four hostile newspapers are more to be feared than a thousand bayonets," illustrates what concept from the course? What is an example of a modern government seems to agree with Napoleon.

Reflect on the kidnapping or death of a journalist you read about or heard about during lecture. What course concepts are illustrated by that incident. Be specific

Although NAME OF COUNTRY has embraced technology and freed up business to compete globally, censorship is still the norm for Internet users there. Using examples from the course, describe the kind of material that is censored there, what actions are taken to censor information and how that demonstrates the government's fear of a free press. (10 pts)

The habit of a smart news consumer is to "Know Your Neighborhood." Explain what this phrase means and why it is so important.

What three characteristics should you look for in any information you receive that will let you know whether it is journalism or something else?

ANIMATION: IMAGE FADES IN

Emphasize to students that detailed answers make the difference. If you can't cite specifics from news reports, readings, lectures, you lose points.

STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY School of Journalism • News Literacy "News Literacy and Why It's Important"

Lectures 1-6:

1. Week of 5/21 to 2/4		3. Week of 2/14 to 2/19	
MONDAY lecture		WEDNESDAY recitation	
1/11	1/12	2/14	2/15
L1: Why News Literacy Matters: From Johann to Jon An introduction and overview of the course, highlighted by multi-media show of coming attractions, including examples of timely print and broadcast stories that illustrate why news literacy matters to students – and society. We define "the news media," and put the course in the context of the accelerating communications revolution. Students leave this class with an understanding of the course's goals and the core definition of News Literacy: the ability to judge the credibility and reliability of news reports – and why that matters to them.	W1: What the Public Thinks of the News Media and Why: Students discuss their "news landscape" experiences as well as the results of the student media survey. Class focuses on where and how students get their news, with discussion of which news sources the students will use during the semester. How do students view the news media? How does it compare with the general public's view? What's the source of the public's current "news"? Is a "justified" view a news consumer to do?	L3: Know Your Neighborhood – What Makes Journalism Different: What makes journalism different from other kinds of information? The first rule for a smart news consumer is this: "Always know what information neighborhood" you're in. This lecture explores the differences between news, propaganda, publicity, advertising, entertainment and law information? Students begin work on an information Grid that defines these neighborhoods." In the journalism neighborhood, a news consumer should always find three key values: verification, independence and accountability. But the lines on the grid are blurring, often by design. And it's easy to be deceived as to what journalism is and who is a journalist. The class watches "Video News Releases, War 'Coverage'" on YouTube and Jon Stewart.	R1: The Blurring of the Lines: Students compare and review the "Taxonomy of Information Grid. Students debate whether Jon Stewart is a journalist and whether a consumer can find reliable news reports on YouTube.
2. Week 2/7 to 2/11		4. Week of 2/21 to 2/26	
2/7	2/8	2/21	2/22
L2: The Power of Information: We explore the universal need to receive and share information and the function news has played in every recorded society, "to alert, to connect and to direct." We examine the role technology has played in amplifying information – from smoke signals to television – and how this also has enabled the sender to control the news. This leads to a broader discussion of how information is power and why there is a global battle for information control. Students leave this class with a clear understanding of why there is a need for a free flow of information and why some people are willing to kill (and journalists are willing to die) in the battle to control information.	R2: The Battle Over Information: The class examines China and Iran as timely examples in the news of the struggle for information control. What is the conflict in China really about? Are executions with Google or Yahoo light in appearing to operate within China's designated rules? How successful are Iranian authorities in suppressing information? What is the role of new technologies spreading the word about Iran's disputed election? Why do governments try to control news? What is the difference between news and propaganda? Does the United States government try to control news? What does the law say about propaganda in the United States? The class ends with an introduction to other categories of information beyond news and propaganda.	L4: The Mission of the American Press: This class looks at the philosophical and practical underpinnings of a free press in America and the ongoing tension in a democracy between the press and the government. We examine the First Amendment and what freedom of the press really means, looking at landmark Supreme Court cases (Near vs. Minnesota, Pentagon Papers and others). We examine the role of press in wartime, issues of censorship and press responsibility and the role of the press as a "watchdog."	R3: The New York Times and National Security: Case study: Did the New York Times act responsibly or commit treason in disclosing Operation Bullwinkle? Students debate which principle takes precedence: national security or the public's right to know. They conduct a report card of the Times' reports.
5. Week of 2/28 to 3/4		6. Week of 3/7 to 3/11	
2/28	2/29	3/7	3/8
L6: What is News and Who Decides? What makes some information "news"? This class examines news drives, news values and how the news process works. What is the decision-making process that determines whether a story gets published or broadcast? Who decides? How do editors balance the interesting and the important? What is "news pay," or presentation, and why does it matter? Voters proportionally? What is "sensationalism"? Are news decisions driven by the profit motive or social responsibility or some combination of the two? Students examine the question of whether there is too much bad news.	R4: You Be the Editor: Students decide what to put on the front page of the "SB World." After an examination of the types of issues editors must deal with every day, students break into small news meetings and plan the front page of a campus newspaper.	L8: Opinion: The License to Kill: What is the difference between news and opinion within the	R6: Task 1 and Opinion review: Test covers all materials to date.

ANIMATION: IMAGE FADES IN

Emphasize to students that detailed answers make the difference. If you can't cite specifics from news reports, readings, lectures, you lose points.



ANIMATION: IMAGE FADES IN

SLIDE: YOU ARE THE EDITOR(S)
EXAMPLES OF STUDENTS' SB WORLD
COVERS

ASK: WHICH OF THE FOUR FACTORS THAT DRIVE NEWS
DO YOU SEE AT PLAY HERE?

- UNIVERSAL DRIVERS
- EDITORIAL JUDGMENT
- AUDIENCE
- COMPETITION & PROFITS



ANIMATION: IMAGE FADES IN

SLIDE: YOU ARE THE EDITOR(S) EXAMPLES OF STUDENTS' SB WORLD COVERS

ASK: WHICH OF THE FOUR FACTORS THAT DRIVE NEWS
DO YOU SEE AT PLAY HERE?

- UNIVERSAL DRIVERS
- EDITORIAL JUDGMENT
- AUDIENCE
- COMPETITION & PROFITS



ANIMATION: IMAGE FADES IN

SLIDE: YOU ARE THE EDITOR(S)
EXAMPLES OF STUDENTS' SB WORLD
COVERS

ASK: WHICH OF THE FOUR FACTORS THAT DRIVE NEWS
DO YOU SEE AT PLAY HERE?

- UNIVERSAL DRIVERS
- EDITORIAL JUDGMENT
- AUDIENCE
- COMPETITION & PROFITS



ANIMATION, MAIN BODY TEXT FLIES IN. “EXCELLENT HEADLINE...” FLIES IN NEXT.

Remind students their slides only win credit when they clearly connect the story to a course concept or demonstrate alert attention to current events that students should be aware of



The Washington Post

NEWS | LOCAL | POLITICS | SPORTS | OPINIONS | BUSINESS | ARTS & LIVING | GOING OUT GUIDE | JOBS | CARS | REAL ESTATE | SHOPPING

Supreme Court rules First Amendment protects church's right to picket funerals



"Speech is powerful. It can ...inflict great pain. We cannot react to that pain by punishing the speaker. As a Nation we have chosen a different course - to protect even hurtful speech on public issues to ensure

that we do not stifle public debate. ...inseparable from the and in no instance is this at of the press."

ANIMATION: Click brings up Madison and quote. Next click brings up SCOTUS decision on Phelps family's funeral picketing.



ANIMATION: IMAGE FADES IN

The Opinion Journalist is given permission to go beyond gathering factual information . An Opinion Journalist's job is to select key facts and assemble an argument...to brandish an opinion.

This license is so dangerous and rare that we compare Opinion Journalists to the mythical "Double O" spies that are James Bond's colleagues in Her Majesty's Secret Service.

Think of this...

- ✓ The 00 agents are a tiny subset of Her Majesty's Secret Service.
- ✓ They are chosen from the cream of the British military.
- ✓ They are supervised from the highest levels of government.
- ✓ And they hold the unique license to do the unthinkable: kill without asking official permission.

(Lecturer: [CLICK TO THE VIDEO](#))



NEWS FELLOW: LINK (INSERT) VIDEO TO THIS SLIDE AND SELECT “START AUTOMATICALLY”

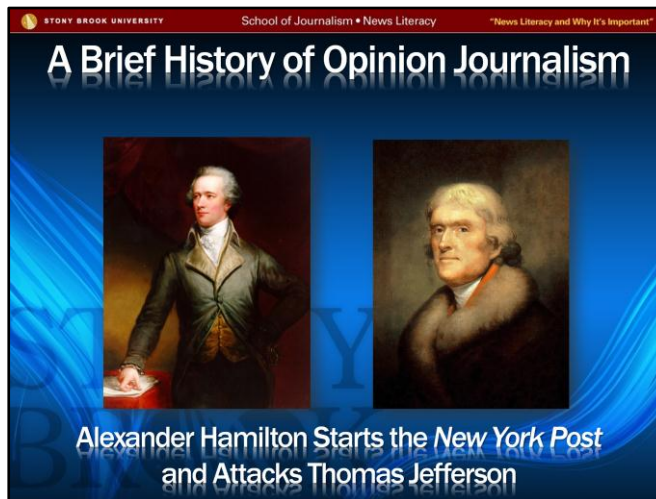
LECTURER: THESE NOTES ARE FOR AFTER VIDEO ENDS)
(USING EXACT PARALLEL WORDING/GESTURES WILL DRIVE HOME THE COMPARISON)

In responsible news organizations, a select few journalists are permitted to do the unthinkable: Arrange and select the facts and evidence in order to support one side or the other.

Like the Double Oh's (00s)...

- ✓ Less than 1% of professional journalists are given that license to express opinions.
- ✓ They are usually chosen from the cream of the corps of reporters.
- ✓ They are supervised from the highest levels of their news organization.
- ✓ While they are loyal to journalism's mission, to inform, they do the unthinkable- mix in their opinion.

The theory is this: the whole purpose of journalism is to give you the information you need to make a decision, take action or make a judgment. So, once you have a grip on the facts, opinion journalists expose you to arguments and analysis you may not have come up with on your own. They help you to rehearse your decision...or rehearse your defense of it.

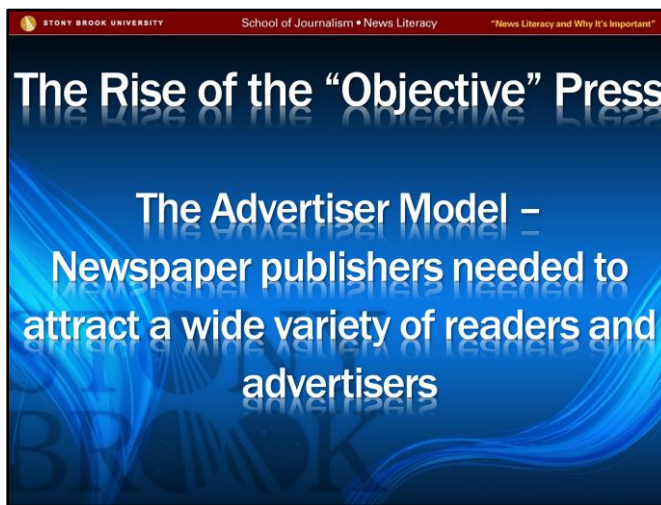


ANIMATION: IMAGES AND TEXT FADE IN SUCCESSIVELY

The U.S. press didn't always have such a fussy idea about Opinion Journalism vs. News Reporting.

The New York Post was started in 1801 as platform from which the Federalist Party proclaimed its views, including attacks on Thomas Jefferson.

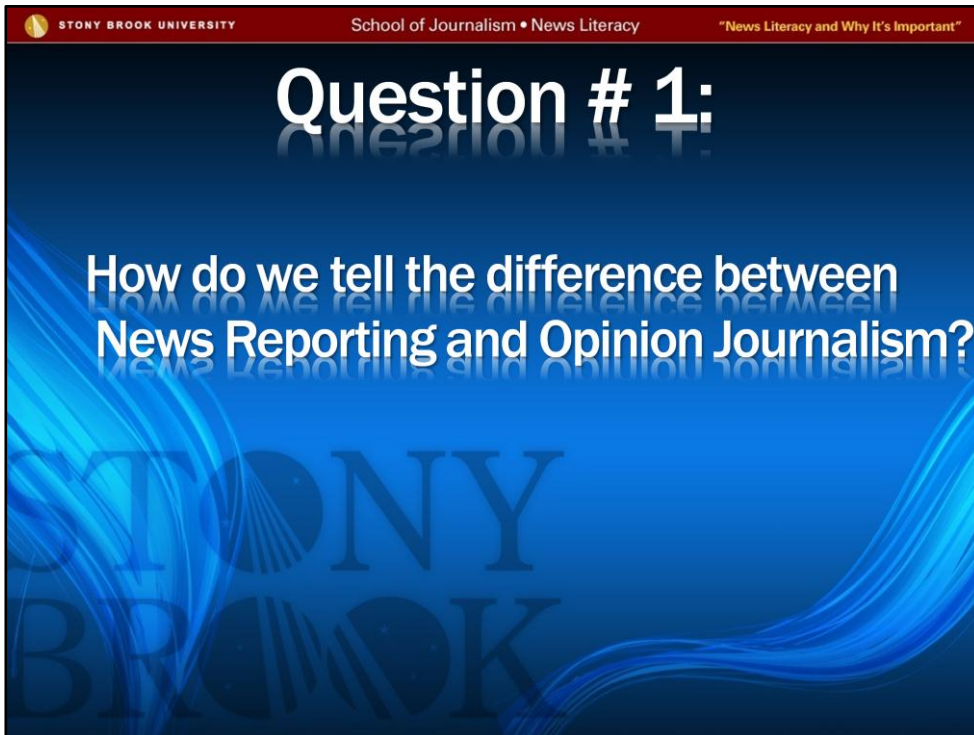
And that was not the exception. The early U.S. press was filled with opinion and partisan attacks and newspapers were often subsidized by political parties. (see Background: Jefferson vs. Hamilton and birth of the NY POST).



ANIMATION: TEXT FADES IN

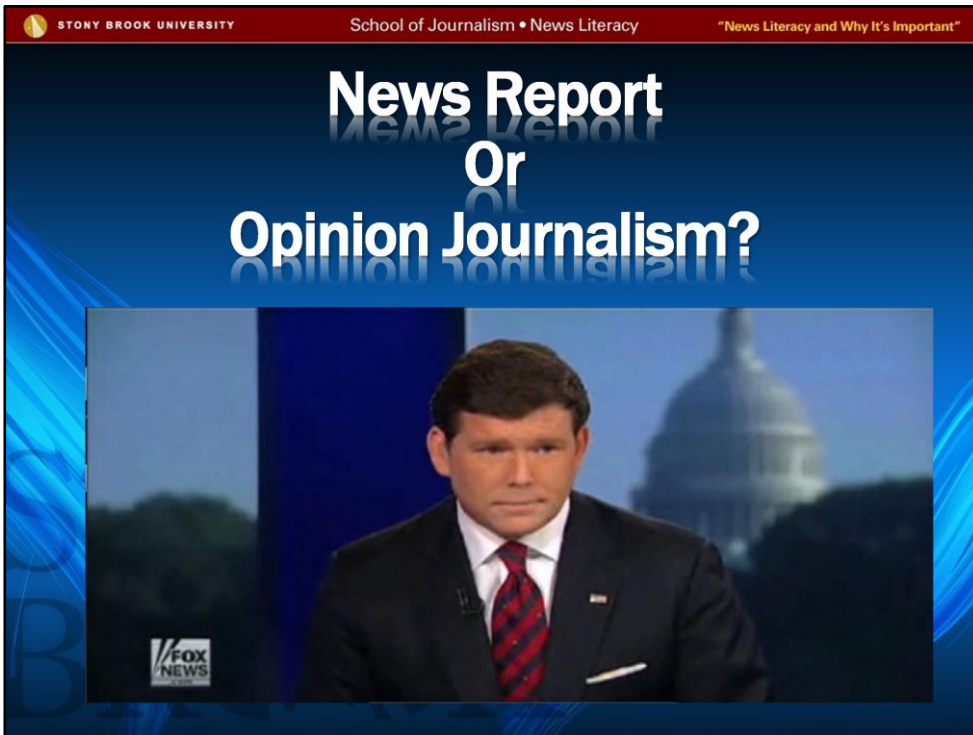
The U.S. press didn't adopt the idea of Objectivity for noble reasons.

We'll talk more about this later in the semester, but in short...a young medical student named Benjamin Day figured out that if you produced a paper without a point of view, more people would read it...and advertisers would pay to get their announcements in front of that audience. That gave rise to the idea of neutral reporting on the news pages, Opinions on a clearly marked opinions page.



ANIMATION: TEXT FADES IN

Your ears are your most important sense in this neighborhood. In the same way that accents can define specific neighborhoods of the city, you can hear the difference when you pass from the News neighborhood to the Opinion Journalism neighborhood.
Listen carefully for clues.



ANIMATION: IMAGE FADES IN. NEXT CLICK WILL LAUNCH STRAIGHT NEWS PIECE

There's this...

(Lecturer: Click to launch the straight news report from Fox on Don't Ask, Don't Tell debate)



NEWS FELLOW: LINK (INSERT) VIDEO TO THIS SLIDE AND SELECT "START AUTOMATICALLY"

(After Fox report runs)
And then there's This...



ANIMATION: TEXT fades in

(Lecturer Read aloud from a National Journal editorial on Congress being pushed by the courts into repeal of Don't Ask Don't Tell.)

HED: "Don't Ask Don't Tell Blackmail"

"Of all the possible reasons to repeal Don't Ask, Don't Tell, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates offered the worst on Tuesday. According to Gates, Congress must act before a judge acts for it. As the Pentagon released its long-anticipated report blessing a repeal, Gates warned that there is a "very real possibility that this change would be imposed immediately by judicial fiat." If that "disruptive and damaging scenario" occurred, it would be "most hazardous to military morale, readiness, and battlefield performance."

ASK: WHAT DID YOU HEAR?

AS IMPORTANT, WHAT DID YOU NOT HEAR IN THE FIRST PIECE?

(Depending on answers, this can be an excellent place to clarify that a piece containing opinions of experts or players is not the same as opinion journalism)



ANIMATION: IMAGE FADES IN

People are sometimes critical of the neutrality of a news report because it quotes opinions given by experts or witnesses....

I'm not making this up. People call Editors and Producers and say...

"Are you in Charge?!"

Yes

"Aren't you supposed to keep Opinions out of the news!?"

Yes


"Well that report on the election was full of opinions!"

"Uh, if you look at that again, those were the opinions of the people we interviewed...Not our opinions. The opinions of people involved in the situation."

Just to start on the correct foot...Today, we're not talking about the opinions of witnesses or expert sources. Those opinions are quoted in both Journalism and Opinion Journalism and are Beside The Point.



Definition of News

Main Entry: **news** 

Pronunciation: \ 'nūz, 'nyūz \

Function: *noun plural but singular in construction*

Usage: *often attributive*

Date: 15th century

News is information about a subject of some public interest that is shared and subject to the journalistic process of verification by an independent organization that is accountable.

ANIMATION: IMAGE FADES IN FOLLOWED BY TEXT

News is INFORMATION about a subject of SOME PUBLIC INTEREST that is SHARED and subject to the journalistic PROCESS OF VERIFICATION.

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Definition of Opinion

Main Entry: **opin-ion** 🗣️
Pronunciation: \ə-'pin-yən\
Function: *noun*
Etymology: Middle English, from Anglo-French, from Latin *opinion-*, *opinio*, from *opinari*
Date: 14th century

Opinion is a view, a judgment, or an appraisal formed in the mind about a particular matter.

ANIMATION: IMAGE FADES IN FOLLOWED BY TEXT

Opinion is a **VIEW**, a **JUDGMENT** or an **APPRAISAL** about a particular matter.
Ask: what's the important difference?



ANIMATION: TEXT FADES IN

POINT: When you're an active news consumer, you're ready to judge the work of opinion journalists. But if you don't bother to follow the news, how will you know if they're using facts or fiction to make their points? So we encourage you to start with straight news reporting before you seek opinions that will tend to push you toward making a conclusion.

A lot of people are confused about the difference, so here are some navigational tips:

1. Listen to the language
2. Look for clear labeling



ANIMATION: TEXT FADES IN, TWO GROUPINGS.

If you pay attention to the language used, you'll note characteristics in the Opinion Journalism neighborhood. It's like the difference between a Boston accent and a New York accent.

Once you know the accent, you can tell where a person is coming from.

ASK: SOMEONE GIVE ME AN EXAMPLE OF

EXAGGERATION YOU'D HEAR IN AN OPINION

ASK: WHAT IS FIRST PERSON, GIVE ME AN EXAMPLE

ASK: SOMEONE PROVIDE AN EXAMPLE OF EMOTIONAL
OR DRAMATIC DESCRIPTIONS



(From the New York Times news pages)

Lecturer Read Aloud

“At exactly 5:18 p.m. Friday, the pro-democracy demonstrators, mostly young men, came to a fork in the road. Turn right, and they would head to a hospital that has cared for protesters. Turn left, and into Pearl Square, the symbolic center of the nation, where the army was waiting.

The crowd paused, just briefly, to let out a cheer, and turned left. Within minutes they were screaming, “Live fire, live fire,” as the military began shooting — from a high-rise building, from a helicopter and from the road in front of the demonstrators. King Hama bin Isa al-Khalifa’s government had warned them: march and you will be shot. The opposition had warned the king that it would never give up.”

Ask: What do you hear?

What do you NOT hear?

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Opinion Journalism Landmarks: Language

The New York Times
The Opinion Pages
WORLD U.S. NY REGION BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY SCIENCE HEALTH SPORTS OPINION
ARTS

Here in Bahrain on Saturday, I felt almost physically ill as I watched a column of pro-democracy marchers approach the Pearl Roundabout, the spiritual center of their movement. One day earlier, troops had opened fire on marchers there, with live ammunition and without any warning. So I flinched and braced myself to watch them die.

(Lecturer Read Aloud from Nicholas Kristof's 2/20 column)

"Here in Bahrain on Saturday, I felt almost physically ill as I watched a column of pro-democracy marchers approach the Pearl Roundabout, the spiritual center of their movement. One day earlier, troops had opened fire on marchers there, with live ammunition and without any warning. So I flinched and braced myself to watch them die. "

Ask: What do you hear?

What do you NOT hear?

How does that change the credibility of the information?



ANIMATION: Boss Tweed fades to new Handelsman example
There's a visual vocabulary that provides landmarks, too.
While there are strict rules governing the manipulation of news photos and drawings, Irony, Parody and Satire are the stock-in-trade of Opinion Journalism, and that includes the art on the page.

It surprises us every year when we show the work of newspaper cartoonists and learn that many of you have seen very few...and enjoy them very much.

By long tradition, dating back most notably to upper-class New York's attempts to weaken the political control of Boss Tweed's Tammany Hall political organization of immigrants, cartoon caricatures have been part of American Opinion Journalism: the visual equivalents of Exaggeration. Strong Language. Emphatic one-sidedness.

Here's a recent cartoon by Pulitzer-Prize-Winning Newsday cartoonist Walt Handelsman. He uses exaggerated language AND exaggerated drawings AND music to make very opinionated points about the news.



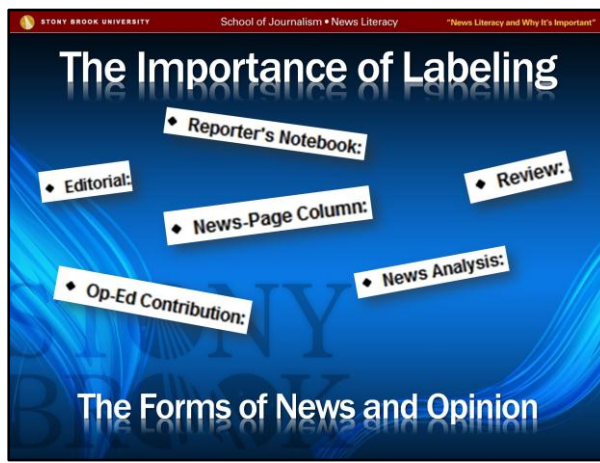
ANIMATION: IMAGE FADES IN

Handelsman has pioneered a new medium for
Opinion cartooning: animation.
Here's an example.



NEWS FELLOW: LINK (INSERT) VIDEO TO THIS SLIDE AND SELECT "START AUTOMATICALLY"

Click to launch Handelsman cartoon



Animation: labels appear one-by-one automatically.

Evidence-based, factually accurate Opinion Journalism makes it very confusing for a news consumer.

There are statistics and quotes from experts and all the evidence that makes a news story reliable. But then the writer or commentator spouts off an opinion, or leaves out a fact or two in order to emphasize one facet of the argument.

It can seem like News Reporting.

BUT if they are committed to informing news consumers, news outlets are scrupulous about labeling.

These are a few common labels.

(Lecturer can explain each)

ASK: WHY WOULD AN OUTLET NOT LABEL CLEARLY?

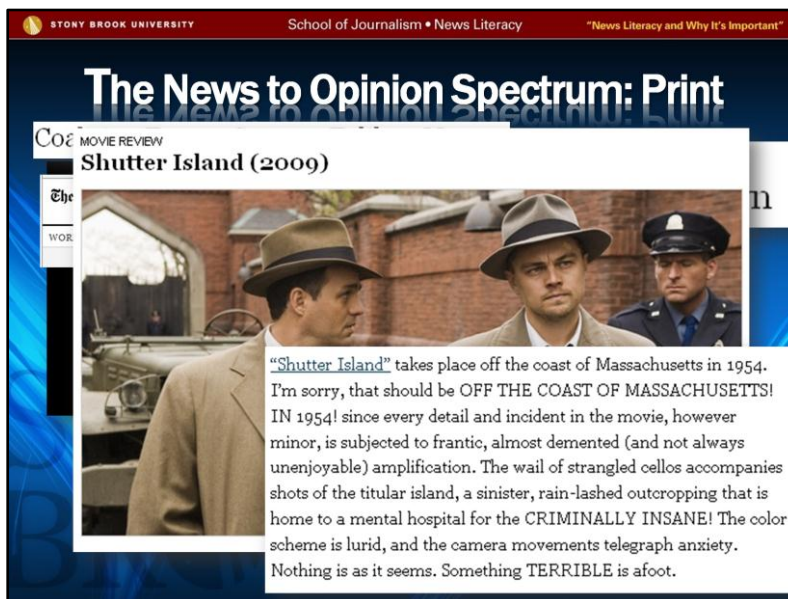


Just a quick example on television.

When the show is named after the host and has a flashy logo, does that mean it's opinion?

What about AC 360, Anderson Cooper's show on CNN?

ASK: Again, why wouldn't an outlet label clearly? Whatever form of news you prefer, you'll get more out of it if you are alert to the wide spectrum of News and Opinion that is offered to you.



ANIMATION: FIRST IMAGE FADES IN, SUBSEQUENT IMAGES FADE IN ON CLICKS. LAST IMAGE IS TEXT OF MOVIE REVIEW

SLIDE: NEWS TO OPINION SPECTRUM

SEQUENCE:

1. NYT reporter Dexter Filkins coverage of the assault on Marjah, a Taliban base in Afghanistan
2. Same reporter writes what is called “News Analysis” which includes heavily reported conclusions
3. Thomas Friedman’s Column: One person’s take on the news
4. Reviews, written by experts (in the arts in this case) who write a very personal opinion of the merits of a work of art.



ANIMATION: IMAGE MONTAGE FADES IN AS ONE IMAGE

In its earlier years, the biggest names in television news were reporters like Walter Cronkite who were careful to guard their neutrality and became some of the most trusted people in public life.

Struggling for market share, cable news discovered that its shows gained loyal followers when TV anchors showed their political preferences. Plus, opinion is a lot cheaper to produce than actual reporting. Now Fox, MSNBC and in some cases even CNN define their anchors as political players.

Fox's official spokesman says "Everyone knows" the hours when Fox is news vs. when Fox is opinion.

Ask: What are Fox's news time-slots (9-4, 6-8)

Cable's audience share is fractional, but growing, particularly among your age cohort.

Listening to language is key in this neighborhood, since, since the labelling is either non-existent or buried among flashy graphics.



NEWS FELLOW: LINK (INSERT VIDEO TO THIS SLIDE AND SELECT "START AUTOMATICALLY")

(This clip series is as follows:

CBS straight report with some analysis

CNN: Gergen's analytical opinion

CNN: George Will's researched mockery

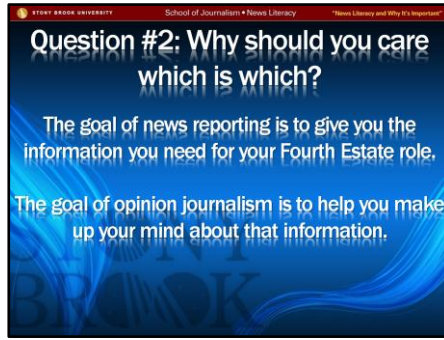
FOX: O'Reilly's research-lite assertions, with emotional appeals and playing to the audience. (And business anchor talking about non-business news, plus GOP functionary.)



Animation: Each click brings up the next page

News on the web continues to evolve rapidly and in all directions at once, so these are very broad observations of the news-to-opinion spectrum on the Web:

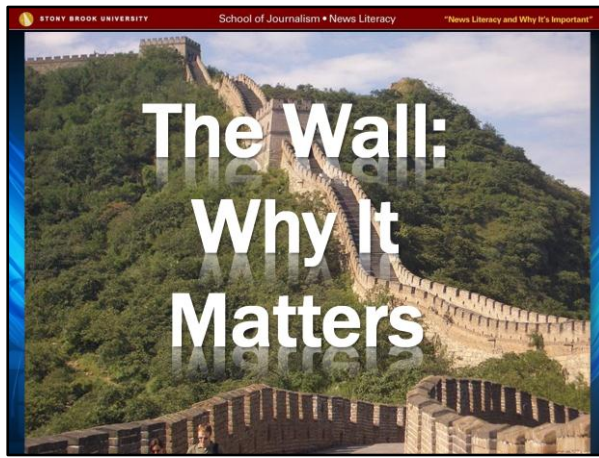
- CNN labels sections of its site by topic, but it's not clear from the home page where you go for straight news vs. opinion journalism.
- Newsday has set aside tabs for Columns and for Blogs, typically an all-opinion-all-the-time medium.
- Gawker is a site devoted to opinions about current events, so perhaps the goofy name is all the label you need.
- The Huffington Post selects news from other sites, links to it and surrounds those links with opinion bloggers. Again, news consumers get little help from labels.
- We finish with an ideal case, The Times' home page, heavily labeled.



Who cares which is which?

To carry out your Fourth Estate role, which is to rein in the tyrannical tendencies of the Executive, Legislative and Judicial branches, you need to know what's going on.

Opinion journalism is, by definition, one-sided. I may be misled if I only hear one side of the situation. That's why you care which is which.



ANIMATION: TEXT FADES IN, FOLLOWED BY IMAGE

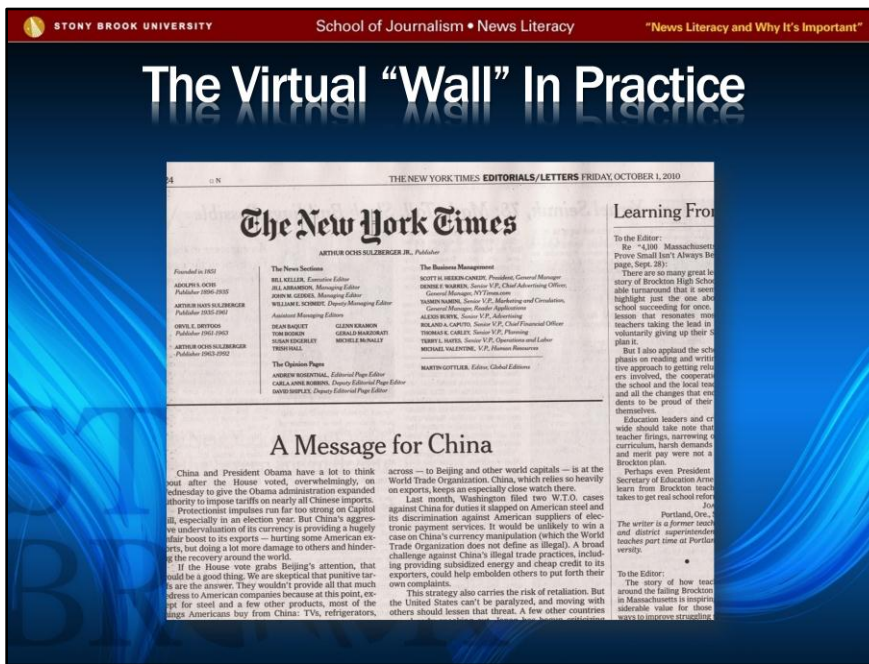
Thus was born the VIRTUAL WALL between opinion journalism and news reporting...which is also physically marked in a newspaper.

ASK: Why is the “Wall” important for News Consumers?

(Before you are knowledgeable, you can be easily swayed. Even if not, when you’re seeking facts, you want to start on the news side of the wall.

ASK: Why is the “Wall” important for News Outlets?

(Protects the credibility and independence of the news reports)



ANIMATION: IMAGE FADES IN:

ON THE PAGE...Most newspapers maintain a strict separation between the news section and the opinion section; and often the staff are in separate rooms or even on different floors.

ASK: WHY WOULD THE SECTIONS, STAFFS, ETC...BE SEPARATED?

The "Wall" is supposed to help news consumers and protect news organization from the appearance of a bias in news coverage.



If you have a solid hold on the facts, from reading News, a very pointed opinion piece can offer you new ways to analyze those facts.

It can either challenge your view or provide you with reinforcements to your view.

When educating myself about the SUNY budget cuts proposed by Governor Cuomo, I want reliable, comprehensive information as the basis to responsibly make a decision, take action or make a judgment.

But when I move from research mode into decision making mode...I want to strengthen my confidence by listening to or reading someone who has studied the matter, made up their mind, and who marshals the facts in a logical way to support a conclusion.

If I disagree, I know what I'm up against. If I agree, I'm armed for battle.



Great changes are made by leaders only when they convene well-informed and thinking followers. Not blind followers. Goal-oriented doers.

The whole point of staying up on the news is so that you can find reliable information...not just to collect bits of factual trivia, but to make the most of your roles in life by being that person who makes wise decisions, and takes action or makes judgments they don't have to apologize for.

You leave college both to lead powerfully and to follow powerfully. As effective leaders and followers, you must learn the facts for yourself before you form an opinion.

But the world is full of people who want you to accept their opinion as fact...They want to lead without being questioned. It's that Power of Information idea from Lecture #2...



Before cable, the biggest names in television news were reporters like Walter Cronkite who were careful to guard their neutrality and became, as anchors of the evening news, some of the most trusted people in public life.

Struggling for market share, cable news discovered that its shows gained intensely loyal audiences when anchors and even reporters dropped their neutrality and validated the audience's political preferences. Cable still has a fraction of network news' audience, but it's a much younger audience, which advertisers prefer.

Plus, opinion is a lot cheaper to produce than actual reporting from the field.

These factors spawned Fox, MSNBC and in some cases even CNN, which have come to define news show anchors as political players and the emphasis is on affirming the audience's beliefs, not fact-collection and logical conclusions.

This is what we call counterfeit opinion journalism.



(LECTURER CLICKS TO LAUNCH) Unlike opinion journalism, which emphasizes evidence-based conclusions, these shows are a cluster of assumptions in search of validation.

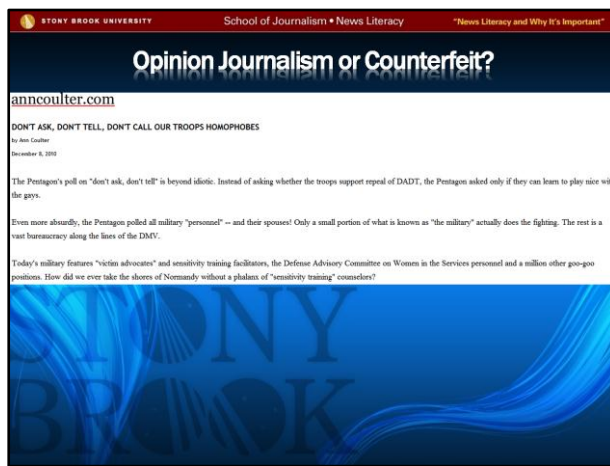
Belief and Emotion trumps evidence in this sphere.

The key differences for news consumers are these: opinion journalism draws conclusions from a fact-based inquiry with a first allegiance to a broadly defined news consumer and a willingness to disagree with significant portions of that audience.

Counterfeit opinion journalism is the result of a search for ways to validate a specific audience's political agenda and tends to emphasize beliefs and emotions over evidence and facts. It is protected exercise of free press rights in the best traditions of the Founders. But it's purposes are more like entertainment than journalism.

The grand-daddy of this format is Rush Limbaugh, whose show is all about current events.

It is often cited by consumers as their main source of news ...in much the same way that many young Americans say they get their news from the Jon Stewart show, another show that is about news without going out and collecting news.



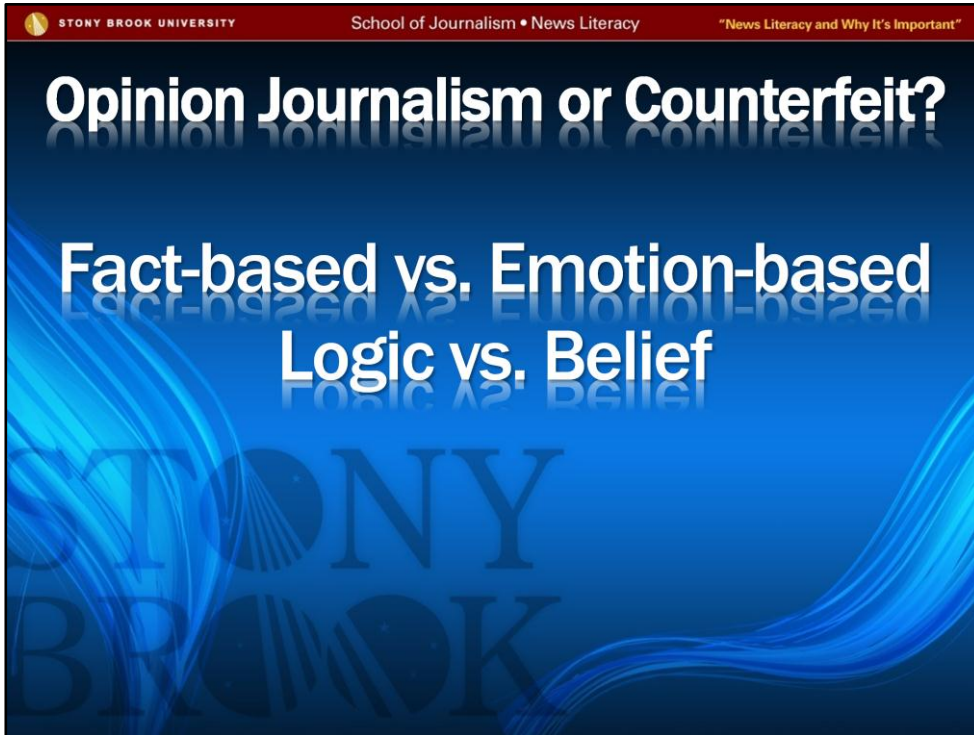
(Lecturer reads from Ann Coulter's column about gays in the military.

"The Pentagon's poll on "don't ask, don't tell" is beyond idiotic. Instead of asking whether the troops support repeal of DADT, the Pentagon asked only if they can learn to play nice with the gays. Even more absurdly, the Pentagon polled all military "personnel" -- and their spouses! Only a small portion of what is known as "the military" actually does the fighting. The rest is a vast bureaucracy along the lines of the DMV.

Today's military features "victim advocates" and sensitivity training facilitators, the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services personnel and a million other goo-goo positions. How did we ever take the shores of Normandy without a phalanx of "sensitivity training" counselors? ...

Who cares if the Pentagon's sexual harassment task force supports gays in the military? The combat units don't, and they're the ones who do the job. The rest of us shouldn't get to vote on gays in the military any more than we get to vote on the choreography of "Chicago."

Without picking sides in any political debate, we'd like to point out that not all opinions are created equal. This column is about news and current events. But instead of emphasizing fact-collection and logical argumentation, it rests on name-calling and affirmation of the audience's beliefs. The goal is to entertain a very specific audience, not challenge it.



POINT: REVISIT THE IDEA THAT NOT ALL OPINION IS CREATED EQUAL

We argue that in your search for reliable information, it helps to understand not all opinions are created equal and that the key difference is this: opinion journalism is the result of a fact-based inquiry, while plain Opinion disregards facts to reach a predetermined conclusion.

When you read an opinion that does not follow the facts as you have learned them from following the news, you might take note of that. Do you trust a persons conclusions if they misstate the facts?



ANIMATION: 2nd Click starts a series of auto-animations
Who cares if Opinions are logical?

You do.

There is a strong correlation between ice cream sales and drowning incidents.

When sales go up, drownings go up. (CLICK NOW)

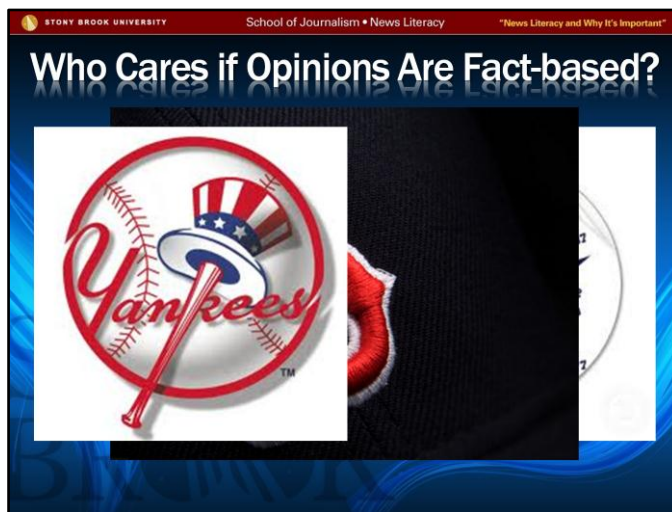
Clearly, we should ban this dangerous substance.

Neither is likely the cause of the other. Instead a third factor is likely increasing ice cream sales and drownings: summer.

That's simple and silly, but when you learn more about rhetoric, the art of framing an argument, you'll notice that same mistake in lots of arguments: correlation is not the same thing as causation.

In fact, people who study the rhetoric of propaganda and advertising find common patterns of flawed logic that sound good, but won't stand up to critical thinking.

They're called Fallacies and if you learn to spot them, you'll be a lot less likely to get hoodwinked into something stupid like outlawing ice cream...or rounding up Japanese Americans into detention camps...or declaring New York has the right to outlaw a mosque in downtown Manhattan.



ANIMATION: Slide opens with Red Sox logo

On click: Yankee Pennant Graphic usurps it

Who cares if opinions are fact-based? You do.
Facts are stubborn things.

Even when it comes to something as trivial as
baseball, facts matter.

If I'm a citizen of the Red Sox Nation, I can say the
Red Sox are the best...But The Yankees have won
more than twice as many World Series as any
other team: 27.

Make what you will of these facts.

An opinion that involves even baseball clubs
must face facts. Anyone who fiddles with the
facts to suit their argument, is not trying to help
you understand, they're trying to hoodwink you.

STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY School of Journalism • News Literacy "News Literacy and Why It's Important"

Moynihan's Maxim

"Everyone is entitled to their own opinions, but they are not entitled to their own facts."



Daniel Patrick Moynihan (deceased)
Ambassador
Four-term U.S. Senator from New York

POINT: Here's an easy way to remember that idea. We call it Moynihan's Maxim, because he is always credited with saying it, (although our team of PhD-candidate grad students have discovered this cannot be verified)



NEWS FELLOW: LINK (INSERT) VIDEO TO THIS SLIDE AND SELECT "START AUTOMATICALLY"

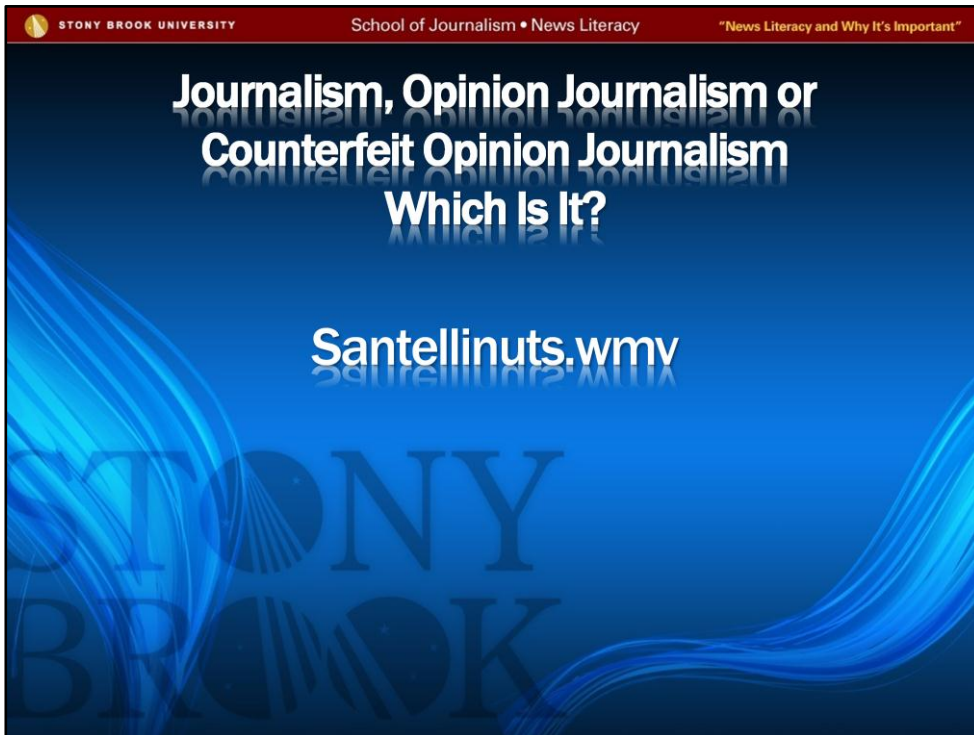
With these new ideas in mind, let's circle back to the clips we started with.

Listen and decide, what are you hearing?

Is it Journalism?

Opinion Journalism?

Counterfeit Opinion Journalism?



NEWS FELLOW: LINK (INSERT) VIDEO TO THIS SLIDE AND SELECT "START AUTOMATICALLY"

How about this one.

Is it Journalism?

Opinion Journalism?

Counterfeit Opinion Journalism?

Going back to our opening

question...Would it be responsible to take action based on this information?

STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY School of Journalism • News Literacy "News Literacy and Why It's Important"

News vs. Opinion: A Summary

To tell the difference between news and opinion,
analyze language & labeling

Start with news: Know the news before you
seek opinions about the news

Moynihan's maxim: *"You're entitled to your own
opinion, but you're not entitled to your own facts."*

Alternate views can sharpen your thinking

ANIMATION: TEXT FADES IN, ONE BULLET POINT AT A TIME

In Summary...

Hammer the lesson about fact-based vs. non-fact-based opinion.
(The value of opinion material sets the table for the bias lecture)

STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY School of Journalism • News Literacy "News Literacy and Why It's Important"

Assignments:

6. Student Assignments for the week of 3/7 to 3/11

Build Content Create Assessment Add Interactive Tool Assign Textbook

News vs. Opinion News

Inside this folder you will find:

1. Two readings, web links are provided
2. Homework directions
3. SafeAssignment link where you will upload your work
4. Must be uploaded prior to recitation meeting

Reminder: Test #1 in recitation. The test covers all course material from lectures 1 to 6.

Complete the readings inside this folder prior to L7: Balance, Fairness and Bias




Assignments:

STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY School of Journalism • News Literacy "News Literacy and Why It's Important"

Assignments:

Complete the readings inside this folder prior to L7: Balance, Fairness and Bias

Build Content Create Assessment Add Interactive Tool Assign Textbook

-  **The Public Bias Against the Press** Click the hyperlink and read the article by Roy Peter Clark.
-  **Your Brain Lies to You** Open the folder and read the article.
-  **Undecideds More Decided Than They Think** Open the folder and read the article.

Assignments:

Common Errors in Critical Thinking

<p>Denying the antecedent</p> <p>If it is illegal, no one will publish it. It is not illegal. Therefore someone will publish it.</p> <p><i>What other reasons might explain why no one has published it?</i></p>	<p>Affirming the consequent</p> <p>If it is illegal, no one will publish it. No one has published it. Therefore it must be illegal.</p> <p><i>What other reasons might explain why no one has published it?</i></p>	<p>Quoting out of context</p> <p>According to President Obama's own words, his proposal will significantly "raise taxes" for small businesses.</p> <p><i>Why is only a very small part of what President Obama said quoted?</i></p>	<p>Begging the question</p> <p>If publishing secrets wasn't illegal, then they would not be prohibited. That is why we cannot publish secrets.</p> <p><i>Why is publishing secrets prohibited and illegal to begin with?</i></p>
Logical Fallacies		Misconceptions	
<p>Existential fallacy</p> <p>All conspiracies are hard to verify. Therefore some news stories that are hard to verify are conspiracies.</p> <p><i>What other reasons might make it difficult to verify a news story?</i></p>	<p>The "fallacy" fallacy</p> <p>We shouldn't publish it if it is illegal. It is not illegal. Therefore we should publish it.</p> <p><i>Why is disproving a faulty argument not a reason to do something?</i></p>	<p>Straw-man argument</p> <p>We must limit the press during war, otherwise we will be totally exposed to attack from our enemies.</p> <p><i>How does this exaggerated position relate to the argument at hand?</i></p>	<p>Slippery slope</p> <p>If it is okay to censor some news, then inevitably governments will wind up censoring all news.</p> <p><i>Why does a first small step inevitably lead to a significant consequence?</i></p>
<p>Sleeper effect</p> <p>I remember hearing last month that the Democrats will raise taxes. (I forgot that I heard that in a TV ad.)</p> <p><i>Why are people more likely to recall the message and forget the source?</i></p>	<p>Cognitive dissonance</p> <p>I think Democrats help the poor. Democrats voted to end welfare. Welfare must be bad for the poor.</p> <p><i>Why is it difficult for us to hold two contradictory beliefs simultaneously?</i></p>	<p>Appeal to authority</p> <p>We cannot publish secret documents. Ten experts agree it is illegal. Therefore it must be illegal.</p> <p><i>Why should we trust the advice of "experts" without further scrutiny?</i></p>	<p>Bandwagon fallacy</p> <p>No other newspapers published it. Therefore we conclude that it must not be worth publishing.</p> <p><i>Why should popularity be a good reason to do or not do something?</i></p>
Cognitive Biases		Red Herrings	
<p>Framing</p> <p>I am not in favor of tax increases. But the idea of a 'temporary refund adjustment' makes a lot of sense.</p> <p><i>Why do we draw different conclusions based on how something is presented?</i></p>	<p>Confirmation bias</p> <p>I am certain that Republicans would make America safer than Democrats. I found an article that supports this.</p> <p><i>Why do we have a tendency to seek out that which confirms our beliefs?</i></p>	<p>Guilt by association</p> <p>We should not trust tax proposals if they are supported by Republicans. A lot of Republicans are rich.</p> <p><i>Why should a person's memberships affect the merits of their argument?</i></p>	<p>Ad hominem</p> <p>No one should support the tax plan proposed by the governor. After all, he is accused of tax fraud.</p> <p><i>Why should a personal attack negate the arguments for the proposal?</i></p>

Very optional slide

Along with the radical ideas about free speech and your freedom to fire up your press and publish information you think is important, you have another inheritance...

Generations of scholarship are at your disposal if you'll take a Rhetoric or Logic class and learn to catch scoundrels who try to persuade you with these familiar, but bogus arguments:

- Straw man argument
- Slippery Slope
- Bandwagon Fallacy
- Ad Hominem