

College Guild
PO Box 6448, Brunswick ME 04011

JOURNALISM CLUB

Unit 2 of 6

Mediums of Journalism

People get their news from many different places. They read print newspapers and magazines. They watch television broadcasts. They listen to public radio and podcasts. They browse the internet. In this Unit, we'll see how different mediums of journalism have common goals but different strengths.

Newspapers

Newspapers were the earliest form of journalism. The first multipage newspaper published in the Americas was called Publick Occurrences Both Forreign and Domestick. It was published 1690 in Boston, Massachusetts. Only one edition was ever published because the Colonial Government shut down the paper immediately because they were not consulted about the paper in advance and they found that it "contained Reflections of a very high nature".

As The United States came into its own, the daily paper became more and more important. The Broadway musical Newsies tells the story of a group of young newsboys in New York City who go on strike to protest low wages. It is inspired by the true story of the newsboy strike of 1899, when newsboys stopped selling papers to cut off money from the publishers.

One famous song from the musical is "Seize the Day". This song comes from the scene when the boys are beginning their strike. Below is the song's first verse:

*Now is the time to seize the day
Stare down the odds and seize the day
Minute by minute that's how you win it
We will find a way
But let us seize the day
Courage cannot erase our fear
Courage is when we face our fear
Tell those with power safe in their tower
We will not obey!*



1. What do the lines "Courage cannot erase our fear / courage is when we face our fear" mean to you?
2. When would the lines from question one be relevant to journalists?



The most-read newspapers in the United States today include The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal, The Chicago Tribune and The Los Angeles Times. These big city newspapers are read by city residents but also by people around the country and even around the world.

Local newspapers are important too, as they are able to focus on covering local events like high school graduations, town elections and new restaurant openings. The Times Record is the local newspaper in Brunswick, Maine, where the College Guild office is located. (See the appendix for an article that appeared in The Times Record.)

3. Write an article for The Times Record about College Guild.

It takes a lot of people to produce a newspaper, including editors, reporters, fact-checkers, photographers, social media coordinators, columnists, cartoonists and more. Greg Kesich of the Portland Press Herald says that it's harder now than ever for newspapers to make enough money to cover their bases. He says that because fewer people are subscribing to newspapers, there is less money for special features and experienced reporters. Although Kesich personally would like the news of the future to come in the form of newspapers, he acknowledges that it doesn't have to. If people don't read newspapers, they can still get quality journalism in other places. Below are some of these places.

Magazines

Magazines are also found in a print format. However, they are usually published less frequently than newspapers. One can subscribe to a magazine or buy it in stores or at newsstands. Magazines often come on glossy, colorful paper and contain stories that dig deep into specific issues.

There are news magazines like The Atlantic and Time. Time Magazine also produces a magazine called Time for Kids to encourage children to develop an interest in and an appreciation for journalism. Schools can buy subscriptions of this magazine for their classrooms and use it for educational activities.

4. The issue of Time for Kids pictured here has a cover story called "The Workout Cure". It says, "A new study hopes to scientifically prove that exercise is good for you." You are a third grade teacher. Plan an engaging lesson based on this article.



Some magazines have specific themes, like sports, fashion or science.

5. If you produced your own magazine, what would be its theme?
6. Design one sample cover for your magazine. Include the name of the magazine, a cover story and descriptions of three other stories.

Television

TV is an important source of entertainment and news for many Americans. It's special because it can cover important events in real time. When there is a Presidential debate or political speech happening, Americans can watch it live on TV. TV stations have news anchors who stay in the station's office, but there are also reporters who go out into the field to cover stories. Here is a reporter out in a snowstorm for a news station.



7. Write a fictional story about a reporter who has to report on harsh or dangerous weather conditions.

Television stations get their money from commercials. Since some televised events are more heavily watched than others, advertising slots during those events are more expensive. For the Super Bowl in 2018, companies were charged \$5 million for a 30 second ad.

8. If an ad is that expensive, it better be memorable. Describe a 30 second commercial for a car that would be worthy of a Super Bowl advertising slot.



Just like with other mediums, TV can be national or local. Pat Callaghan works for a local network, and he says that he feels viewers trust him and his team more than they trust national news networks. He believes that this trust comes because the News Center Maine staff consists of members of the community who have a lot in common with viewers. With every story, they focus on how it matters to Mainers. They engage viewers by interacting with them through polls and social media.

The Newsroom is a TV show that tells the story of a fictional, national news network. It chronicles not only the personal lives of staff members, but also their disagreements and discussions about what makes responsible reporting and a good news network. Executive Producer Mackenzie McHale is determined that their network's goal and priority be educating voters so they can make informed decisions. Lead Anchor Will McAvoy worries about ratings and keeping supporters happy.

9. Write a dialogue between Mackenzie and Will.
10. Would you be more interested in a show about a newspaper/magazine or a show about a television station? Why?

Radio

Before there was television, there was radio. Radios provided music and entertainment of all kinds. They also provided news.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR) was famous for his "fireside chats" in which he talked to Americans right in their living rooms via radio. During his presidency (1933 to 1945),



he gave 31 such evening addresses. He spoke to the people as though they were close friends. His voice was a source of comfort during The Great Depression and World War Two. He made people feel like they could trust him and that they were part of his administration's decision-making process.

11. You are the President of the United States and there has been a big economic downturn. A lot of people have lost their jobs. Write a speech to reassure the country.

Public radio continues to be important in America today. Americans listen to the radio in the car, at work and as they do household chores.

Before Pat Callaghan did TV, he worked in radio news. He says radio taught him to write well because it's a challenge to bring people to a scene without visuals.

Greg Kesich says he sees real hope for the future of journalism in public radio. Though it is free and supported by ads, radio still depends on donations from listeners to survive. People donate to public radio because they feel it is valuable.

12. What skills does a radio reporter need to have that aren't as important in print or on television?

Podcasts

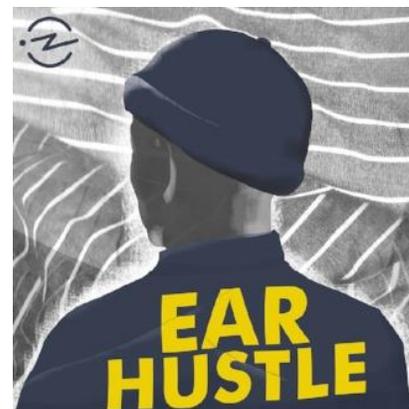
Podcasts are sound recordings that tell stories. Podcast episodes can be downloaded onto computers, phones and mp3 players and listened to like music. Most podcasts are free. Some are news themed, while others focus on specific topics.

The New Yorker, a major international magazine, did a story on a podcast produced in prison called "Ear Hustle". Below is an excerpt from this story.

Excerpt from The New Yorker: "'Ear Hustle': The Podcast Made Inside San Quentin

By Sarah Larson | August 16, 2017

"Ear Hustle," a podcast about life inside San Quentin State Prison produced by two inmates and a volunteer, might be the best new podcast I've heard this year. It's co-hosted by Earlonne Woods, who is serving thirty-one years to life for attempted second-degree robbery, and Nigel Poor, an artist who has volunteered at San Quentin since 2011. Antwan Williams, who is serving fifteen years for armed robbery with a gun enhancement, does the show's evocative, pitch-perfect sound design, often employing a keyboard in the prison's media lab. (For a Foley effect of a fight in one episode, he recorded beating himself up.) The Radiotopia network, which sponsored a new-podcast contest that "Ear Hustle" won, distributes it. Poor, Williams, and Woods are self-taught audio producers, and the show crackles with the joy of discovery. In prison slang, "ear hustling" is eavesdropping—"bein' nosy," Woods says—and the



show covers day-to-day life at San Quentin in almost tender detail by interviewing prisoners. It provokes thoughts about mass incarceration, race, justice, regret, violence, and moral complexity through small-bore stories about cellmates, food, sibling rivalry, isolation, and even pets. Many interviews are gently funny; some are devastating in ways that sneak up on you. Poor and Woods record in the media lab and outside in the yard, often catching peripheral sounds of prisoners singing or joking around. “Ear Hustle” is in many ways about the creativity required to live a satisfying life—or even a sane life—in prison, and is itself a product of that creativity.

In 2011, Poor started teaching a history-of-photography class at San Quentin. “Part of what I did was to use images as a tool for men to talk about their experience,” she told me. She’d show inmates photographs by August Sander or Walker Evans and ask them to interpret what was happening and to apply it to their own lives. “Amazing stories were coming out,” she said. “And I thought, Well, dang. You know? Audio.” She knew that San Quentin had a media lab, and had once had a radio program. Several men were interested in learning how to produce audio, and the idea of learning audio production alongside them appealed to her. “It just seemed like a much nicer way, a more equal way, to start a project,” she said. She started producing stories about life in prison with a small group. “It was all looking for opportunities. In a place where there don’t seem to be a lot of opportunities, how can you mine it for what it does have?” Poor said. “And that’s kind of a good way to engage in life anyway.”

Earlone Woods was a member of the group—an inconspicuous member. “He was so quiet, but he was always around,” Poor said. “I’m interested in the people who hang out in the corner and don’t say a lot. I zeroed in on Earlone.” Together, they came up with the idea of “Ear Hustle.” “I just knew he was a keen observer,” she said. “When we started working together, it was hard for him to talk. He was pretty shy. But then he just took off.” San Quentin’s public-information officer, Lieutenant Sam Robinson (a surprisingly lovable figure on the show: he has to approve every episode, and we hear him say so), was startled when he first learned that Woods was going to co-host. “He thought, How is this ever going to work? That guy never talks,” Poor said. But when quiet, observant people decide to talk, they can surprise you.

- 13. Tell us about a time when you were surprised by someone who was always quiet.**
- 14. If you worked on a podcast, would you rather host the show or do behind the scenes work like sound design? Explain.**
- 15. What would you like to make a podcast about? What are some examples of episodes you might do on this topic?**

Internet

The future of journalism depends on what happens with the internet. On the internet, anyone can publish their own journalism. Because of the internet, people can get notified immediately of breaking news and always have the latest information. TV networks, newspapers and radio stations often have their own websites. For example, the [New York Times](#) website has the same stories as the print edition. Every internet user gets ten free articles per month, but seeing more articles requires a subscription.

Pat Callaghan says that the biggest change since he started in the field is that now, “your deadline is all the time.” Because people expect to get updates in real time, his network can’t wait until the 6:00 news to reveal information. There is less time to think about decisions, as the news has to be reported right away. Though new tools make the work easier and sometimes more complicated, Callaghan says that the journalists’ mission remains the same.

Greg Kesich says that since the early 90s when he started at The Herald, technological advancements have led to “an explosion of opportunity” for creators and readers. However, he notes that experienced journalists now have to compete with anyone with a computer.

One new opportunity for readers is summary newsletters like The Skimm. These newsletters, distributed by email or via a website sum up the day’s most important news in a few short paragraphs.



16. What are the pros and cons of readers having access to summary newsletters?

A 1910 encyclopedia defined journalism as “the gathering and distributing of news and opinion by the medium of newspapers.” The field has changed a lot since 1910.

- 17. After completing this Unit, how would you rewrite this definition of journalism?**
- 18. Write, on the topic of your choice, a news script for either a television broadcast or a radio broadcast. Think about what makes this format different from a written format and how you can use this difference to engage your audience.**
- 19. With all of these options, which medium would you trust the most to accurately report the news and why?**
- 20. Which of these mediums do you find most interesting, as either a consumer or producer of news and why?**

Remember: First names only & please let us know if your address changes

Sources

<https://wikipedia.org>
<https://www.theskimm.com>
<https://www.newyorker.com>

Appendix

The Times Record: “Latest ruling has water tower tilting toward its demolition”

By Nathan Strout | June 29, 2018

HARPSWELL—Despite the latest effort by a group of Harpswell residents to save the Mitchell Field water tower from the wrecking ball, the structure is still on track to be demolished. On Thursday, selectmen rejected a warrant calling for an August Town Meeting for the purpose of saving the water tower.

Instead, they chose a contractor to demolish the structure.

A battle for the tower’s fate has been waged for two decades and escalated this year. Residents at the March Town Meeting rejected an article to give management of the tower to an outside entity and voted to have it taken down.

Tower advocate group Friends of Mitchell Field then gathered a petition calling for another vote, which selectmen rejected in May, citing the recent decision by town residents.

The Friends then initiated a seldom-used option of citizens calling a Town Meeting, which was set for Aug. 11, and presented selectmen with a warrant for that meeting on June 14.

Selectman David I. Chipman, an ally of the group, stated before Thursday's selectmen's meeting that he was glad the group took that action, because selectmen acted unlawfully in rejecting the petition.

But Town Attorney Amy Tchao told selectmen the warrant was invalid for three reasons: The date of the town meeting has to be at least 60 days after it's called; the town has to operate the town meeting process — not the Friends; and the group should have circulated a separate petition to call the meeting, not used one that had also asked selectmen for a revote.

Based on her advice, the board rejected the petition.

"Under the advice of the attorney," said Chipman, "I think we need to go along with it, because it is what it is."

A long history: The water tower has sat, unused, at least since the Navy closed its fuel depot at the site in 1992. For some, the blue bulb reaching into the sky is a fixture in Harpswell.

"It's always been there, as long as I can remember," said Chipman. "It's a landmark. You can see it from out in the ocean so you know where Harpswell Neck is. Some people, if you don't have GPS or something with you, use it for a navigational aid.

"When you ask 'why do you want to keep it,' they say 'Well, I like it — I don't want to tear it down,'" he added. "But there's no concrete reason other than they like the thing."

For others, the water tower is something that should have been removed years ago.

Former Selectman Katherine Chatterjee on Thursday said the board had "tried our very best to have that water tower removed" during her 1998-2001 tenure. "This has gone on for 20 years now," she said.

"The fire department does not want it, has no use for it, and this seems to be taking up an extraordinary amount of time and resources for this town," she added. "We need to do as the people voted and get rid of that tower."

Although the structure has gathered dust for the last two-plus decades, the Friends of Mitchell Field have argued the tower could still have value to the town. They've said it should be renovated to provide water for the property and/or repurposed as a host site for cell service equipment.

The group has accused town government of spreading misinformation about the tower — and the cost to renovate and use it.

Next steps: Friends of Mitchell Field member Robert McIntyre said in an email that the town's attorney had her facts wrong regarding the process of calling a town meeting without the selectmen's approval. He indicated that moving forward with the Town Meeting was a possibility.

As for the town, following Thursday's discussion, selectmen authorized a contract with Isler Demolition to remove the water tower.

The Michigan-based company came in with the lowest bid for the demolition — \$34,600.

Town Administrator Kristi Eiane said the company's low bid was due to the fact it specializes in this exact type of work, whereas the other contractors who bid on the project were less familiar and would take more time to do the work. Isler Demolition projects the demolition can be completed in a single day.

Eiane said that a date for the demolition hasn't been set yet, though the contractor was hoping to do it sometime this summer in conjunction with a similar demolition in New England.