

**SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM
USC ANNENBERG SCHOOL FOR COMMUNICATION**

**JOUR 447 Arts Reporting
Fall 2007
2 units**

Schedule/Syllabus

Day/Time: Mondays, 2-4:40 p.m.
Classroom: ASC 236

Instructor: Sasha Anawalt, Director, Arts Journalism Fellowship Programs, USC
Annenberg School for Communication

Course Purpose

The goal of this course is to learn the rules – and how to break the rules – of predictable arts & entertainment & culture coverage in mainstream America. You will learn how the media has historically evolved (from print to broadcast to digital) and how each revolution impacted the coverage of arts. And the ways in which the arts, especially in the present, are impacting media.

This course is designed to ramp up the debate and prepare the next generation of journalists for the frontline of arts and culture reporting. Museums and performing arts events have never been more attended and prolific in America than they are today. As many as 95% of American adults participate in some kind of cultural activity on a regular basis. Applications to art schools and graduate program in the arts are at an all time high. Yet, arts reporting is being systematically eroded, marginalized and dismantled in the conventional media, often because it is viewed as irrelevant.

Is this change reversible? You bet.

“As access to culture and the arts continues to expand, a new culture of arts journalism is coming into focus,” remarked Doug McLennan, editor of artsjournal.com, recently on the re-launch of the National Arts Journalism Program. “Historically, critics have made their most important contributions during times of great cultural change.”

This course is a Big Ideas *and* practical course. It encourages questioning how the media is adapting to evolving technologies and consumer demand. To shifting demographics. To race and class. To globalization. To localization.

I want you to be as creative as the artists you are writing about. You have to be in order to confront the challenges of evolving media and digital technologies. Think of this class as a lab, a community, a playpen, a place to get messy. The journalism stakes are high these days, and so it cannot be business as usual.

You will learn where serious arts reporting is actually happening. You will also have the opportunity to question what is meant by “arts” and ask where art is to be found exactly. Above all, you will write and advance your writing practice, your thinking and discipline, your critiquing skills and habits of analyzing performances, architecture, art exhibitions and culture.

First hand experiences with dance, theater, film, sculpture, architecture and music are integral to the course. While imagining a new model for arts reporting – and relying heavily on posting your written work on our internal class blog, Great Pirates, and opening yourself to comments from your peers -- you will be provided an arts immersion.

A fundamental credo of this course is that in order to know and write about the arts, one must understand artists and their process. To that end, your final project is a publishable profile of one living artist or group in Los Angeles with whom you have spent significant time.

If you can master the craft of writing an intelligent arts review without egotism -- allowing your reader to see what you have seen, be persuaded by your arguments and possibly to understand the works’ broader context -- you will be a better journalist. You will possess some of the essential skills for being a foreign correspondent, an investigative reporter, a sports caster or anyone in journalism who must ask another human being to divulge his/her secrets and truth.

Course Objectives

To develop the judgment, understanding and conscience of a professional arts reporter, critic and culture-watcher

To strengthen one’s attention span for the arts and become arts literate

To practice forms of professional writing about arts & entertainment & culture on deadline and on the Internet

To conjecture new models for arts reporting and play with them

Course Description

This course is designed to develop your skills as an able and ethical cultural interpreter. The critics' job is a complex balancing act requiring full understanding of what is right and wrong, fair and unfair, about judging another person's creation. In perhaps no other area of journalism is a writer asked to engage more intently on a personal and subjective level with his or her subject, while at the same time detaching and shedding any vestige of self-importance.

Writing, editing and reading reviews, columns, profiles and essays, and attending performances and art exhibitions or talks are the weekly assignment. You will learn to edit and work as a news team – posting your work on our class blog, Great Pirates. Editing and working collaboratively are almost as much a part of this course as writing and you will be graded on it. You will be paired with an Editing Buddy – and learn to give and *take* criticism.

In order to make the class as useful as possible, we will strive intentionally to create a workshop culture that is tough-minded and generous and void of damaging competitiveness. This is *your* class and you will lead it, shape it and make your own discoveries through it. Participation – and the positive quality of it -- count.

You should expect an extraordinary learning experience and expect to help make it happen. You should expect fine work of yourself and your peers. I do.

Any arts critic or editor worth his or her salt also knows the rudiments of the art forms and the history of the arts. Reading assignments on these topics will accompany written assignments, but the class will emphasize practice (seeing performances, going to galleries, meeting artists etc.) over theory. Professional journalists will also be brought in as guests to work on your writing and offer their techniques and advice for advancing in the business.

I expect you to *come prepared* to each artist's studio visit or to performances or to a class with a guest speaker. This means that, in addition to doing some advance reading, you will spend time beforehand composing yourself. You will train yourself to be reflective, thoughtful and able to pay sustained attention to the art you are looking at or hearing. I will provide mental exercises to assist you with this.

There will be in-class writing exercises, as well. They are designed to build creative muscle and verve and teach you how to hold your readers' attention and write on short deadline.

In the spirit of lively conversation and debate, you will also be expected to lead one class with two selected passages from your readings that viscerally grab you and make you want to dig deep, ask questions, find answers and bring your peers in on it. Your Leadership Discussion is to take five minutes and may be a multimedia presentation.

Multimedia platform use is strongly encouraged.

You will also be encouraged to keep up with your own journal, called Bag of Marbles, as well as to read daily arts news sites and stay on top of current events. I will also distribute noteworthy stories in class or via electronic communications. We will email stories, comments, communications, and I expect professional email protocol.

As was said before, we will post all completed written assignments on our internal blog, Great Pirates. You are expected to keep copies of your original work (writing and editing) in a desktop portfolio and in hard copy. You will honor your Editing Buddy by editing her or his work by the stated editing deadline, leaving enough time for revisions. If everybody in the class has a laptop that's easy to transport, we'll rely on working in class electronically. But be prepared to bring hard copies of your written assignments (enough for each individual) and one copy of your editing to each class.

The course culminates with a 1400-1800 word on-line profile of a living Los Angeles artist or group of your choice. You must meet with me at least once during the last four weeks of class to discuss your profile project. It is to require original research and be able to be published somewhere in print, but you will present it as a multimedia story using your digital skills. You will prepare a four-minute in-class report about your profile for the final class on December 3.

You are encouraged to have your reviews and stories run in the *Daily Trojan*.

You may opt out of one performance-and-writing assignment *or* choose to have your lowest writing grade dropped from the record.

Quizzes on the weekly readings and on your knowledge of the information from guest speakers and artists may be given.

Textbooks

The following books are required:

The Medium is the Massage: An Inventory of Effects, by Marshall McLuhan and Quentin Fiore, Bantam Books, 1967, 160 pages

Amusing Ourselves to Death, by Neil Postman, Viking Penguin, 1985, 163 pages

Web sites

The following site is a daily requirement to visit:

www.artsjournal.com

Suggested reading

"Dispatches from Blogistan: A travel guide for the modern blogger" by Suzanne Stefanac, published by New Riders, NY.

"Operating Manual for Spaceship Earth," R. Buckminster Fuller, Simon & Schuster, 1969.

"Video Night in Kathmandu: and other reports from the not-so-far-East" by Pico Iyer, Vintage Departures, 1988

"The Long Tail: why the future of business is selling less of more" by Chris Anderson, Hyperion, NY, 2006

"Wikinomics: how mass collaboration changes everything" by Don Tapscott and Anthony D. Williams, Penguin Group: Portfolio, 2006

Grades

Grades will be determined as follows:

Writing & editing assignments	40%
Prepared oral reports	20%
Final profile	25%
Participation	10%
Bag of Marbles	5%

Final Paper

Four weeks from the final class on December 3, you will embark on a project to write a 1400-1800 word on-line profile of a living Los Angeles artist or group. I will give you a list of pre-selected artists who have agreed to be interviewed in their studios, rehearsals rooms or homes. You may also choose someone not on the list, but who must be approved by me. S/he cannot be so famous that s/he is already researched to death; this should require original research.

I expect you to research your subject's background and be acquainted with her or his body of work, as well as with the arts discipline in which s/he works, *before* you conduct the principal interview. The piece should have a thesis that explores one important aspect of this person's life or work that intrigues you. No sloppy wet kisses or condescension. A profile can be a way to explore culture, professions, lifestyles, temperaments, academic disciplines, contemporary issues. Follow your curiosity; discover what motivates your mind and passions; learn how to harness your independent voice to work in service of the arts and your readers.

Organization is stressed. Preparation and research have few substitutes. Your first draft will be available for editing by your Editing Buddy on November 22. I will see all versions that are deemed by you to be completed, presentable drafts.

You will give a four-minute oral report on your profiles at the final December 3 class.

Attendance and Participation

This class requires approximately 6 hours per week, including class time and homework. You may choose either not to attend and complete one performance-and-writing assignment *or* to have your lowest writing grade dropped. This is *your* class; if you have an idea to make an assignment better, take leadership and suggest it. But I expect that you will not be absent or late to class except in cases of emergency or illness, and that your work will be made available, without trouble, for me and your peers on the Internet. Religious holidays and medical/family emergencies will be excused with advance notice and/or verification. I expect you to participate in class discussions and engage the guest speakers with literate questions that come from you out of honest curiosity.

Academic Accommodations/Statement for Students with Disabilities

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP when adequate documentation is filed. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the

semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is 213-740-0776.

Plagiarism/Academic Integrity Policy

The two greatest sins of journalism are fabrication and plagiarism. All work will be based on real events except for certain exercises designated by the professor. Students will use their own ideas and words and not appropriate the ideas and writings of others while passing them off as their own, or failing to properly attribute. Even self-plagiarism is not allowed; students who work for campus or professional media outlets may not utilize stories for class assignments. All work for class must be original.

The following is the Annenberg School of Journalism's policy on academic integrity as published in the university catalogue: "Since its founding, the USC School of Journalism has maintained a commitment to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found guilty of plagiarism, fabrication, cheating on examinations, or purchasing papers or other assignments will receive a failing grade in the course and will be dismissed as a major from the School of Journalism. There are no exceptions to this policy."

Internships

The value of professional internships as part of the overall educational experience of our students has long been recognized by the School of Journalism. Accordingly, while internships are not required for successful completion of this course, any student enrolled in this course who undertakes and completes an approved, non-paid internship during this semester shall earn academic extra credit herein of an amount equal to one percent of the total available semester points for this course.

Instructor bio

Sasha Anawalt is director and founder of the USC Annenberg / Getty Arts Journalism Program, as well as director and founder of the NEA Arts Journalism Institute in Theater and Musical Theater at USC Annenberg. She wrote the best-selling cultural biography, "The Joffrey Ballet: Robert Joffrey and the Making of an American Dance Company." The New York Times acclaimed it a "milestone in dance writing." Anawalt served as chief dance critic for the Los Angeles Herald Examiner for six years, and for two years at the LA Weekly. She was the voice of "Dance Notes" -- her dance criticisms and commentaries for KCRW, National Public Radio in Santa Monica -- for nearly a decade.

In 2005, she ran "The Latinization of Art & Culture in America" seminar for Western Knight Center, hosting 22 national journalists. The same year, she helped present the first-ever National Critics Conference for almost 500 critics from visual art, dance,

theater, jazz and classical music, hosted by USC Annenberg School for Communication in Los Angeles, where she is on staff and teaches “Arts Reporting” for the Journalism School. Her reviews and features can be found in the New York Times, New York Times Magazine, Los Angeles Times, Montreal Gazette, Dance Magazine, Ballet Review, KUSC and MSNBC-online archives.

Anawalt served on the 2006 and 2007 Pulitzer Prize Committee juries for criticism. She has participated on numerous other judging panels, including the 2007 Writing Contest for the American Association of Sunday and Feature Editors, the PEN USA Literary Arts Awards and the dance panel for the National Endowment for the Arts. She is the recipient of the 1998 Literary Arts Award from the Pasadena Arts Council. A native of New York City and a graduate of Barnard College, Anawalt serves on the Advisory Board for Art Sanctuary in Philadelphia, the board of L.A. Stage Alliance and is an official USC Ambassador. She is married and has three children.

SCHEDULE

All readings, assignments and speakers are subject to revision and rescheduling – and open to your suggestion and re-shaping.

Week 1 (8/27)

“To play needs much work. But when we experience the work as play, then it is not work any more.” Peter Brook

COURSE OVERVIEW AND INTRODUCTION

We will go over the syllabus, the goals and expectations of the class and introduce ourselves. There will be exercises that will raise several questions not the least of which is, What is art?

We’ll get a sense of each other’s backgrounds in the arts and journalism. What are your personal goals for this class? What do you really need to write? *Need* to write. What’s the connection between being a critic and being an artist? Why is criticism important? What’s the difference between a critic and a fan? We will survey the arts journalism landscape at present and begin to conjecture where it will be in the future.

One of our main tasks is to envision the future model for journalism and communication – in the spirit of Marshall McLuhan and Buckminster Fuller and Neil Postman who, as much as 40 years ago, foresaw the Internet, its inevitability and its

many uses. From Day One in this class, we'll look backward *and* forward, and work to make room for experimentation and create a lab for thinking.

We will get organized about how to plan seeing performances and artists and writing about them.

Homework: You will have two weeks to accomplish these tasks. The first is to:

Unplug. Make yourself go for 24 hours without *any* electronic media. No TV, cell phone, computer, DVD, MP3, iPod – nothing, *nada, niente, zilch, zip, zero*. If you find yourself using something, you have to start all over again.

Read Marshall McLuhan's *The Medium Is The Massage* all the way through slowly. It's a brief book, but loaded. Expect to return to it, almost memorize it.

Also read the syllabus all the way through.

And read "Dispatches from the Blogistan" (pages 1-9 and 65-69) about Mister Jalopy and get very familiar with his Hoopty Rides

<http://hooptyrides.blogspot.com/>

John Cage's "Silence," (pages 7 and 8)

See a performance or an art exhibit or an architectural site *only after* you have successfully unplugged yourself for 24 hours and read McLuhan. (I will supply a working list of mostly free events on campus for each week, but you can see just about anything in L.A. you want with my approval. For example: The animated film by Pixar, "Ratatouille," ends with a statement about the value of critics; I'd be interested to know what you think. A play called, "Clay" is at the Kirk Douglas Theatre in Culver City; it's about Hip Hop, but how does its title relate to the exhibition at USC Fisher Gallery or not?) Take your time at the gallery, museum or architectural site. Try to put into it what you think the artist put into it (time, energy, thought, technique, discipline).

Write about the art or performance you saw without having done deep research, if any, about it beforehand. [There are three free events of some magnitude at Grand Performances, and USC Fisher Gallery opens its exhibition, "Material Affinities: To Clay and Back on 09/05.] I want you to describe the work and insert your opinion without quoting from other minds (except possibly McLuhan's) and without brandishing your judgmental Ego Sword. This should be a 400-650 word Think Piece/Review, a judiciously wrought and honestly reflective column that incorporates criticism of the show *and* your experience of going dark on electronics for 24 hours. What did you think of the work? Put yourself on the line. In fact, post your writing on-line on our class blog, called Great Pirates after Buckminster Fuller's idea.

Deadline for posting on Great Pirates is **Thursday (9/06)**. This allows time before the September 10 class for editing by your partner and revision. (I urge you to write with enough time to put it on the shelf and leave it for a day to breathe. Read it the next day aloud to yourself. Make changes. *Then* paste your piece – fact- and spell-checked! -- onto the blog and post it.)

Edit your partner’s Think Piece/Review and make comments that you know would help you if you had written it. (We are working toward being your own best editor. Ask for revisions, if needed. Remember, you are graded on editing as well as on writing. Out of courtesy to your partner, have the editing job done by **Saturday (9/08)**.)

Whatever is up on **Monday (9/10)** is deemed final, and open to other classmates for comments. This is not a competition; the spirit of commenting is to further discussion and build ideas as a team. (Always print out a copy of the version you submitted to your Editing Buddy and one of the revised final version. Also, keep electronic versions in your desktop Arts Reporting portfolio – I’ll take a look at the end of the semester at your full body of work and factor your development into your final grade. You may revise your work and try to raise your grade on individual assignments.)

Remember to check out www.artsjournal.com as often as you can (daily is ideal), pay attention to the critics who blog on that site, and keep up with current events. Part of your job in this class is to seek for ways in which arts connect to culture and connect to news and give them a relevant context.

Keep your private journal on your desktop or in a real notebook. Think of it as a Bag of Marbles into which you put quotes, ideas, snippets that cross your path and you want to store for later. You can also use it to monitor your observations. What are you thinking about? (I will take a look at the end of the semester and factor the Bag of Marble’s contents into your participation grade [5%])

Optional extra work that helps the enthusiast: “Operating Manual for Spaceship Earth” by R. Buckminster Fuller, (pages 1-31); look through copies of MAKE and CRAFT magazines in the Annenberg Resource Center; get familiar with <http://www.boingboing.net/>

Week 2 (9/03) – No class – Labor Day

Week 3 (9/10)

"Etonne moi!" ("Astonish me!") Serge Diaghilev

FINDING THE STORY

A visit to Mister Jalopy's studio. Mister Jalopy is a crackerjack blogger and, because he says that he is *not* an artist and *not* an activist, he is just about the perfect person to meet to discuss what then defines an artist and an activist. Is he a journalist? The possibilities for stories are seemingly infinite and this visit is about finding *the* story. How do you gather information? How do you separate fact from opinion? What is the national story in his example? What are right questions? What part of McLuhan rubbed off onto your experience of Mister Jalopy? And, above all, what can you glean from him about best blogging practices? <http://hoptyrides.blogspot.com/>

Homework:

Write a 400-500 word column, to be posted on Great Pirates, based on what you learned at Mister Jalopy's. Pay attention to finding *the* story – the one that viscerally interests you and which you could pitch to your editor with full gusto. If this means your column is not about Mr. Jalopy exactly, but you have used our visit as a springboard to another relevant story, fine.

Tell the story. Think of this as a blog in the manner of Hopty Rides and Mister Jalopy's own writing. Make the piece a joy to read and pack it with information that gives your reader something to chew on, in part, because it is true to you and your experience. Connect your thoughts to facts and quotes. Support yourself. Use your finest journalist's reporting skills. Triple check your facts.

Deadline is **Friday (9/14)**, allowing for Rosh Hashanah or you can post earlier.

Comment on each other's postings over the weekend and engage in an on-line conversation through **Monday (9/17)** based on the ideas expressed. This is not an exercise in line critiquing each other's work. It is a debate, a discussion; use the blog commenting to explore your story choice. How does your story change with other people weighing in on it? What's the value of exchange?

Read Neil Postman's "Amusing Ourselves to Death," (pages 3-43) and "Dispatches from Blogistan," (pages 1-33). Buckminster Fuller's "Operating Manual for Spaceship Earth," (pages 1-31, if you have not already).

Handouts include: Carol Kino's piece on Juan Devis in the New York Times and Robert Smith's "In These Shows, the Material is the Message," (NYT 08/10/07).

Bring in a sample of a review that you possibly want to talk about in the next class, because it illustrates one of your concerns. Keep up with your journal (Bag of Marbles) and with www.artsjournal.com

For the discussion leader: One member of the class is exempt from the Mr. Jalopy/Find-the-Story assignment. S/he will prepare to lead a discussion on **Monday (9/17)**, selecting two passages from the readings to compare and use as leverage for class debate. The topic is historical: How has the media evolved (from print to broadcast to digital)? How with each revolution has the coverage of arts been impacted? What evidence do you see that the arts, especially in the present, are impacting media? The presentation itself is five-minutes and should relate to specific examples of art, popular culture, current events, arts issues and professional journalism concerns, and *must* be transparently inspired by the reading. It should provoke serious group conversation. Be thinking, too, about how you will *teach* your colleagues what you have learned.

[Radio host and producer, Ira Glass, gives a multimedia presentation of arts and storytelling on Sept. 15, 7 pm at Bovard Auditorium; some tickets are reserved for this class. Speak to me.] (I want to go to this!)

Week 4 (9/17)

"There's no change without exchange." John Malpede

WRITING WORKSHOP

The class will mostly be spent as a workshop, reviewing and critiquing the written work and the editing, especially for the first Think Piece you wrote for Sept. 10. We will read most of them aloud. (Be sure to bring enough copies for the whole class to read. Plan ahead. Or, bring your laptops – as long as everybody has one. I will need to see the Editing Buddy work, too. Bring one hard copy of your editorial remarks and comments for me.)

What is a useful workshop environment? How do we create a laboratory for exercising our minds and imaginations productively? What are you afraid of? Who told you you could write? Who told you you couldn't? What's the value of criticism...to your reader, to the artist, to yourself?

How do you write a solid, meaningful and professional review, column or Think Piece? We will go over examples by working critics, mostly ones that you bring in as influential.

Around 3:45 pm, the designated leader will take five minutes to present his or her prepared remarks and epiphanies about the reading, and then launch the class into a group discussion.

We will also prepare for the next week (How do you approach reviewing a concert in an art form you may not know well?). Take care of business: How is the blog working? The buddy system of editing? Bag of Marbles?

Homework:

Visit Leimert Park's World Stage on your own
<http://www.theworldstage.org/calendar.html>

Drum Workshop at the World Stage tonight

7 - 11:30 PM

\$5 donation

Learn to play the trap drum set and gain an intimate understanding of rhythm and percussion. Coordinated by Cornel Fauler.

Attend tonight's drum workshop or any of the other weekly workshops offered in voice, poetry and open mike, jazz or attend the Friday or Saturday concert with a mind to writing about community arts. Get to know people there and take notes. Hear their stories for your own. (\$5-\$10 donation)

Read and research selections from The James Irvine Foundation Report (pages 3-5); Steve Isoardi's "The Dark Tree," (pages 223-229 and 238); "Central Avenue Sounds: Jazz in Los Angeles," (page 282 and pages 286-287, 291-294 and 298-303; Ernest Hardy's book, "Blood Beats Vol. 1: demos, remixes & extended versions," (pages xiii-xviii and 87-91); and Judith Baca's *The Birth of a Movement* in "Community, Culture and Globalization," (pages 108-125).

Hand-outs about Leimert Park at present and recommended web sites about the area.

Write a 500-750 word report asking and answering: What are community arts and arts activism? What's the relationship between music and race in America? What is the role of music in building and sustaining community in LA?

I don't expect you to come up with definitive answers, but I do expect you to ask yourself, as a journalist having just experienced a workshop or concert at the World Stage, what is the value of community arts? What will happen if Leimert Park is overtaken by condos and real estate investors who drive out the artists in that neighborhood? What is the history of jazz in LA and what is its future? What part could the media play in representing the voices of the people you met at World Stage? Did you participate and did that influence your report, and how? Are you a reporter? An activist? A champion? What matters to you, your reader, your editor, your subject? And how are you reaching them?

Find your voice. Play with style. Discover what speaks to people (hint: supply details, write what you know.)

Deadline varies depending on when you get to the World Stage, the earlier the better. Leave enough time to check/triple check your facts and – *important*-- for your Editing Buddy to give input: aim for **Saturday (9/22)**. Revised, posted and open for group comments by class, **Monday (9/24)**.

Prepare for the performance of "Community Music Now! Featuring Build An Ark and the Dublab Sound System" (www.dublab.com), which we will attend next Monday, Sept. 24. (Organized by ASC communication's professor, Josh Kun.)

Can one of you get a *Daily Trojan* assignment to review this concert?

[If you cannot attend this performance, let me know now and you can pick a different concert to review. Two alternatives are USC Thornton Orchestras, "Time for Three," Sept. 20 at Bovard Auditorium, 7:30 pm. Free. Or, DJ Spooky on Sept. 21 at Ground Zero Coffeehouse, 8 pm.]

Week 5 (9/24)

"America might not be known as America for everybody while you and I are still here..."

Horace Tapscott

MUSIC AND COMMUNITY (OR THINKING WITH YOUR EARS)

The class will mostly be spent as a workshop, reviewing and critiquing the written work about The World Stage. We will read most of them aloud. (Be sure to bring enough copies for the whole class to read. Plan ahead. Or, bring your laptops – as long

as everybody has one. I will need to see the Editing Buddy work, too. Bring one hard copy of your editorial remarks and comments.)

Possibly meet with Josh Kun and attend part of a rehearsal or tech for this evening's performance of Build an Ark and Dublab.

Homework:

Attend tonight's "Build an Ark" and Dublab Sound System event (part of USC's Visions & Voices series); 7:30 pm, Bovard. Free, no reservations required, just get there early enough to find a seat.

Write: A 500-word review that could be published in a daily newspaper. Would you write it differently for a weekly? For a blog? If you have time, and the inclination, try writing the same review three different ways -- for the three different media. Make your opinion known through *how* you describe the event; be tone-conscious. Could you read this review aloud to the artists and stand behind it? If I sent the review to Josh Kun would he learn something valuable for the next time he organized an event?

Send your reviews to your Editing Buddy by **Thursday (9/27)**. Be sure to keep a copy of your original in your desktop portfolio.

Edit your Editing Buddy's reviews and make comments that you know would help you if you had written it, and get it back to your Editing Buddy by **Saturday (10/06)**.

Revise your own work according to your Editing Buddy's instructions.

Whatever is up on **Monday (10/08)** is deemed final and is open for comments by others.

Read about theater, focusing on censorship of the arts: Ben Pesner's article, "Where Are We Now?" from American Theater magazine; Arthur Miller's autobiography, "Timebends," (pages 335-342); Miller's overture to "The Crucible," (pages 2-8) and his description of Hale (pages 32-36).

Handouts: Kaelen Wilson-Goldie's piece about censorship in Beirut from the NYT (08/18/07); clip from the NYT about the death warrant for an author in India. There have also been numerous stories about Christians trying to burn or ban Harry Potter books. There was a school district in Federal Way, Washington, that tried to ban Al Gore's "Inconvenient Truth" this past winter. A school district in Florida tried to ban books because they were "gay"

Also read about cultural remixing in Tapscott and Williams' "Wikinomics," (pages 136-150). This is in preparation for Hip Hop America on Monday.

Handouts: selections from Lawrence Lessig's books.

Week 6 (10/08)

"The longer I worked the more certain I felt that as improbable as it might seem, there were moments when an individual conscience was all that could keep a world from falling." Arthur Miller on writing "The Crucible"

THEATER: POLITICS, MORALITY AND PRAXIS

This class will meet at the 24th Street Theater, 1117 W. 24th Street, Los Angeles, 90007 (off Hoover to the west), (213) 745-6516. <http://www.24thstreet.org/>

We'll participate in a theater workshop with co-directors, Debbie Devine and Jay McAdams. Wear comfortable exercise-type clothes and shoes.

Class will be dismissed at 3:30 pm in order to be able to attend "Hip Hop America" at Doheny Memorial Library.

4 pm – Hip Hop America discussion moderated by Ann Powers with Josh Kun, Jack Miles, Todd Boyd, Reza Aslan, Kevin Starr and Julia Sweeney in Doheny Memorial Library.

Homework:

Attend "The Crucible" at the Bing Theatre on 10/12 at 7 p.m. or 10/13 at 8 p.m. (A limited number of free tickets are available.) This is Trojan Parent's Weekend and if you can't attend "The Crucible," you can find another play in L.A. earlier in the week and I'll re-work the assignment or you can write about Hip Hop America.

Write a 500-750 word review using one of Anne Bogart or Jon Jory's pages as a jumping off point, if you want. This would be an inside-theater-mind review. Or, you can write a 500-750 word column that uses the play for a broader discussion. In either case, you must show your reader that you are thinking about the present atmosphere with respect to censorship, law, sexual mores, and sentencing people to death. Ask why "The Crucible"? Does this play have value to today's audience? Can your review supply a context that makes it relevant?

Be specific and be brave!

If you write about Hip Hop America, make it a 500-750 word column incorporating a report on the staged discussion *and* supply your thoughts about art and artists' influence on American mores. Be specific and be brave!

Deadline for first draft is **Sunday (10/14)**. Edit your Editing Buddy's review. Revise yours, if needed. Post the finished product by class, **Monday (10/15)**.

Reading: McLuhan's "The Medium is the Massage," (pages 41-111); Ted Shawn's "Every Little Movement," (pages 24 & 25, 32-34, 55-58, and 93); "African Art in Motion" by Robert Farris Thompson, (page 9); "Edwin Denby's article, "Dancers, Buildings and People in the Streets" (page 191-202); Joan Acocella's review of Mark Morris Dance Group in *The New Yorker* (08/20/07) and a selection from her book about Morris, (pages 159-164).

Check out <http://www.artsjournal.com/flyover/> blog for regional criticism and the Special AJ blog, "Critical Edge"

For the discussion leader:* One member of the class is exempt from the straight forward 500-word review assignment. S/he will prepare to lead a discussion on **Monday (10/08)**, selecting two passages from the readings to use for debate. The topic is "Art as Moral Action and Political Conscience." The presentation itself is five-minutes and should relate to specific examples of art, popular culture, current events, arts issues and professional journalism concerns, and *must* be transparently inspired by the reading. It should provoke serious group conversation.

* Remind me to give whomever leads this discussions some of Peter Sellars' writing.

[Lily Tomlin is spending an evening at USC, 7 pm, Bovard Auditorium.]

Week 7 (10/15)

*"Every little movement has a meaning all its own,
Every thought and feeling by some posture may be shown."* Otto Harbach

SEPARATING THE DANCER FROM THE DANCE

A lecture-demonstration with as many as three dancers representing different techniques (possibly classical ballet, modern dance and Bharata Natyam). The lecture is based on one originally given by Ted Shawn, who believed dance "includes every way men of all races, in every period of the world's history, have moved rhythmically to express themselves." Together with his wife, Ruth St. Denis, they founded the Denishawn schools (first in Los Angeles) and their students included Martha Graham, Doris Humphries and Charles Weidman – the progenitors of American modern dance.

We'll practice deciphering dance movements and learn how to read line, space and form. These tools will help with looking at architecture, painting, sculpture and drama.

In the final half hour, the leader for this week's class presents her or his five-minute report on "Art as Moral Action and Political Conscience."

Homework:

Attend performance by Mark Morris Dance Group at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 7:30 pm, on Sunday, 10/21. \$15 student tickets (reserved under Anawalt) and \$6 parking (if you park outdoors at REDCAT and walk over).

Write a quick overnight review of MMDG and post it by tomorrow's class.

Read Steven Leigh Morris's profile of Suzan-Lori Parks and his biography (hand-out). Familiarize yourself with his work at the *LA Weekly*. John Lahr's speech for the 2007 NEA Arts Journalism Institute in Theater and Musical Theater; Terry Teachout's *Wall Street Journal* article.

For the discussion leader: One member of the class is exempt from reviewing the Mark Morris performance. S/he will prepare to lead a discussion on **Monday (10/22)**, selecting two passages from the readings to use for debate.

The topic is "The Critical State of American Criticism." The presentation itself is five-minutes and should relate to specific examples of art, popular culture, current events, arts issues and professional journalism concerns, and *must* be transparently inspired by the reading. It should provoke serious group conversation.

[Oct. 16, "Sons of Noah" by USC's Stephen Hartke at Alfred Newman Recital Hall, 7:30 pm]

Week 8 (10/22)

"Since time immemorial people have been engaged in the act of remixing their culture."
Lawrence Lessig

WRITING WORKSHOP

The class will mostly be spent as a workshop, reviewing and critiquing the written work, especially your theater review or Hip Hop America column of 10/08 and your recent dance review of 10/22. We will read most of them aloud. (Be sure to bring enough copies for the whole class to read. Plan ahead. Or, bring your laptops – as long as everybody has one. I will need to see the Editing Buddy work, too. Bring one hard copy of your editorial remarks and comments.)

Steven Leigh Morris, theater editor for the *L.A. Weekly*, will join the class both to work on your writing with you and to prepare you for writing your final project, a profile of an artist or group in L.A.

The class leader presents his or her five-minute report, "The Critical State of American Criticism" during the last 45 minutes of class.

Homework:

Watch the Academy Award winning short documentary, "A Note of Triumph: The Golden Age of Norman Corwin," about Norman Corwin's work and life – a copy is in the USC Annenberg Resource Center (ARC), a place you should know and love, headed by Stella Lopez.

USC Annenberg | USC Annenberg Resource Center
Friday: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Saturday: 12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. ARC Manager, Stella Lopez, ASC 104 Phone: (213) 740-8277 sblopez@usc.edu

The Doheny Library (in the Cinema section) also has a few of Norman Corwin's titles.

Your homework is to have heard at least two of Norman Corwin's legendary radio reports (they can be ones from the documentary film) and be prepared to meet him next Monday with intelligent, invested questions that will serve your career as a journalist. He has been called "the poet laureate of radio" – know *who* he is and pay him the honor of having researched his background. (Here's a starting place: <http://www.normancorwin.com/>) You may want to explore with him in person the virtues of doing a profile, such as was done on him in "A Note of Triumph."

Keep up with your "Bag of Marbles" and with www.artsjournal.com

For the discussion leader: One member of the class will prepare to interview Norman Corwin publicly for us on **Monday (10/29)**. *Really* prepare. This will enable you to go right "to the line" and find out what matters to him now, then and ahead in the future. I suggest having about four topics prepared – such as, how Prof. Corwin used entertainment to tackle serious subjects. What can you learn from him that will serve you and the class? Follow your curiosity. Be real.

[Oct. 22: Art and War: Alex Donis and Ivonne Coll in Conversation, Ground Zero Coffeehouse, 6 p.m. Oct. 26 & 27: In the Vernacular: Poetry and Experimental Film – a symposium, for the schedule see V&V web site.]

Week 9 (10/29)

"That man unto his fellow man shall be a forever friend." Norman Corwin

RADIO LEGEND: NORMAN CORWIN

Visit from or to Norman Corwin, during which the class discussion leader will conduct a formal live interview. We may be meeting him at the Museum of TV & Radio in Beverly Hills, which has many of his programs available.

Homework:

Write a 500- word blog entry on what you learned from Norman Corwin and his example. What were you doing at age seven that relates to your work at present? How can Prof. Corwin's work as a journalist who has also been an artist, poet, philosopher, historian and critic be instructive for arts journalism's future? And for yours? Why?

Send your entry to your Editing Buddy by **Thursday (11/01)**. Don't forget to keep copies of your original work in your portfolio.

Edit your Editing Buddy's work and return it to her or him by **Saturday (11/03)**. If revisions are needed on your own copy, make them.

Post your Norman Corwin blog by class on **Monday (11/5)**, at which point it is open to commenting from your colleagues.

Read Richard Rodriguez's "Brown: The Last Discovery of America," (pages 125-143); Louis Uchitelle's "The Richest of the Rich, Proud of a New Gilded Age" from the *New York Times* (07/15/07); and Daniel Hernandez's piece on the Latino Initiative at the *LA Times* <http://www.laweekly.com/news/news/shades-of-brown/15235/>

For the curious, you can also read Hernandez's blog about how the story came about: http://danielhernandez.typepad.com/daniel_hernandez/2006/12/el_los_times_dy.html

Keep up with your Bag of Marbles and with checking www.artsjournal.com

For the discussion leader: One member of the class is exempt from the writing assignment and will instead prepare to lead a discussion on **Monday (11/12)**, selecting two passages from the reading to use for debate.

The topic is “The Latinization of Art and Culture in America,” which includes popular mainstream culture and entertainment. The presentation – dealing with race and class and changing demographics -- itself is five minutes and should relate to specific examples of art, popular culture, current events, arts issues and professional journalism concerns, and *must* be transparently inspired by the homework. It should provoke serious group conversation.

[Nov. 2 & 3: “Pentecost” by playwright David Edgar, with a discussion by him following the performances. 7 pm on Nov 2, and 8 pm on Nov. 3 in the Bing Theatre.]

Week 10 (11/5)

*“Whoever you are, go out into the
Evening, leaving your room, of
Which you know every bit; your
House is the last before the infinite,
Whoever you are.”* Rainer Maria Rilke

YOUR OWN BACKYARD: Art, Architecture, Culture and the Beauty of USC

Given clues, you will be sent on what amounts to a scavenger hunt through USC campus and its environs. You will find the “hidden” art sites and cultural activities and be expected to do quick on-line and/or original research about at least one of them during class. You’ll report to the class, also during class, providing the information you have learned and an appreciation for the architect, composer, designer or group you’ve “discovered.”

In the final half hour of class, the class leader presents his or her five-minutes of remarks – based on last week’s readings, about race, class and arts & culture & entertainment, “The Latinization of Art and Culture in America.”

Hand in your Editing Buddy remarks.

Sign-ups during this class for one meeting with me before the final class (12/03).

Homework:

The Profile Project begins next week. If you want to write about an artist or group of your own choosing, come to the next class with some background on your subject and be able to “pitch” and “sell” the story to me.

See the screening of “Brown is the New Green,” a documentary by Phillip Rodriguez, featuring comedian, George Lopez. On **Tuesday, November 5**, at 7 pm, Bovard Auditorium. The screening is followed by a panel discussion with Rodriguez and USC Annenberg School for Communications’ professors Felix Gutierrez and Josh Kun.

Write a 250-300 word short column that incorporates the reading you have done on the subject of race and class, and your thoughts about Rodriguez’s documentary. Make this a smart blog, as culturally analytical and personal as you can. How is America’s changing demographics, the growing brown majority and the widening gap between haves and have nots affecting journalism, the entertainment media and the arts? Invest yourself by musing and wondering transparently.

Deadline for final copy is class, **Monday (11/12)**, at which point it is open for commenting by your colleagues. No Editing Buddy work on this go-round

Read at least one profile in the selections offered; they will include Edwin Denby on George Balanchine, “Balanchine Choreographing.” Find a profile that you admire; dissect it and study it for craft – why does this profile work for you?

[Nov. 8-11: LA Chamber Orchestra and Italian Films, a festival, in Eileen Norris Cinema Theatre]

Week 11 (11/12)

“TV just became really, really white again.” George Lopez

THE LATINIZATION OF AMERICAN ART & CULTURE

Writing workshop on today’s 250-300 word column incorporating *all* the reading you have done on the subject of race, and your thoughts about Phillip Rodriguez’s documentary. (Bring hard copies to class, enough for the whole class. Plan ahead. Or bring your laptop. I will need to see the Editing Buddy work, too. Bring one hard copy of your editorial remarks and comments.)

This week you will launch into your final project, writing a profile of an artist or group in Los Angeles. We’ll go over some of the principals of good profile writing and a list of those artists who have offered to be your subjects. If you have someone in mind who you’d like to feature, now is the time to put him or her forward and state your case.

In the second half of the class, we welcome Phillip Rodriguez as a guest speaker to have a conversation about the making of his “Brown is the New Green” and the film’s larger concerns about race and culture.

Meet with me to talk about your profile, if you signed up for this week.

Homework:

Get started on your 1400-1800 word profile. (See the section of the syllabus, “Final Paper,” page 6.) I’ll have a list of artists and groups who are open to having you conduct an interview. You have four weeks to chart your course toward a final profile that could be published. If you show it to me early enough – and it is good enough -- I may be able to introduce you to an arts editor at the *La Opinion*, *LA Times* or *LA Weekly* or another local paper and you can make your pitch. But you have to get started early. Don’t forget *The Daily Trojan* as a possibility.

Ultimately, after choosing your subject, you are responsible for setting up a time to spend together with him or her, and doing the research *before* you meet. You might try and do the art form that’s practiced by your subject on some level. Work with your hands, bodies, minds.

See a film that Peter Rainer, film critic for *The Christian Science Monitor*, wants us to see relevant to the subject of globalization.

Read some of Rainer’s reviews and profiles, including his review of *L.A. Confidential* in “The A List;” Pico Iyer’s “Video Night in Kathmandu,” (pages xx-xx); *Time* magazine film critic Richard Schickel’s diatribe about film blogging and the AJ responses; Chris Anderson’s “The Long Tail,” (pages 15-26).

For the discussion leader: One member of the class will prepare to lead a discussion on **Monday (11/12)**, selecting two passages from the Pico Iyer and the Wikinomics readings to use for debate.

The topic is “The Globalization of Culture,” which allows you to talk about more than just film. TV is the most obvious other option – and you may want to consider Postman’s “Amusing Ourselves to Death” for a prompt. The presentation itself is five minutes and should relate to specific examples of art, popular culture, current events, arts issues and professional journalism concerns, and *must* be transparently inspired by the homework. It should provoke serious group conversation.

Week 12 (11/19)

"The new electronic interdependence recreates the world in the image of a global village."

Marshall McLuhan

FILM AND GLOBALIZATION

Guest lecture with Peter Rainer, film critic for *The Christian Science Monitor*, on the pervasive influence of film on globalization, and of globalization on film.

He will also give advice and tips about writing profiles.

In the final 30-45 minutes of class, the class leader gives his or her five-minute report on "The Globalization of Culture."

Meet with me about your profile, if you signed up for this week.

Homework:

Read The James Irvine Foundation Report, "Critical Issues Facing the Arts in California," (pages 17-24); "The Long Tail" by Chris Anderson, (pages 41-57); "African Art in Motion" by Robert Farris Thompson, (page x and pages 46-50).

Handouts: Jason Felch and Ralph Frammolino's coverage of Barry Munitz and the Getty Trust in the *LA Times*.

Know about the site that connects you to information about nonprofit organizations
GuideStar <http://www.guidestar.org/>

And also the Internal Revenue Service's site w/ tax information for charities and nonprofits <http://www.irs.gov/charities/index.html>

Work on your profile. Send your finished draft to your Editing Buddy by **Thursday (11/22)**. Edit your Buddy's copy and return to him or her by next class, **Monday (11/26)**. Be sure to keep hard copies and originals in your desktop portfolio.

For the discussion leader: One member of the class will prepare to lead a discussion on **Monday (11/26)**, selecting two passages from the economics readings to use for debate. The topic is "The Economics of Art" – and it is best to stick to America or California. You could also choose to look at one institution, as a case study. The presentation itself is five minutes and should relate to specific examples of art, popular culture, current events, arts issues and professional journalism concerns, and *must* be transparently inspired by the homework. It should provoke serious group conversation.

Week 13 (11/26)

"Sculpture occupies the same space as your body." Anish Kapoor

VIGOROUS SCULPTURE

During this class we will visit USC Fisher Gallery for "**Robert Graham: Body of Work**" -- Internationally renowned, Los Angeles-based artist Robert Graham (b. 1938, Mexico City) has explored the female figure in drawings, photographs, videos, and, especially, sculpture since the beginning of his career. The exhibition *Body of Work* reveals, for the first time in a museum context, a new phase in this exploration. Graham's interest in capturing movement and animating individual presence has been apparent in even his most restfully posed sculptural nudes. Conversely, dynamic compositions inspired by dance manifest a deep and abiding concern for anatomical and facial detail that aligns them with still portraiture.

In the last hour of the class, the leader will present his or her five-minute report on "The Economics of Art" and we will review how the profiles are going.

Meet with me to talk about your profile, if you signed up for this week.

Homework:

Work on your profile, revising it and preparing the multimedia components for the final presentation on **Monday (12/03)**.

Read Neil Postman's "Amusing Ourselves to Death," (pages 44-80); Doug McLennan's Sept. 27, 2007, presentation, "New Models for Arts Journalism" to the America Association of Sunday and Features Editors; Marshall McLuhan's "Understanding Media," (pages 7-14, 20 & 21); Tapscott and Williams' "Wikinomics," (pages 124-150).

Everybody prepares a four-minute presentation of his or her own on "The New Model for Arts Journalism." How will arts reporters make a living in the future? What will journalism in general look like? What kind of servers and media will be used? How will this affect our understanding of people, the world? What forces are impacting this change? How does the human being function, what does it need and desire to survive? McLuhan, Walter J. Ong and Eric A. Havelock argue that in the future the human being will not think and act as human beings do now (see Postman, page 27.) They believe

that the media and forms of communication change us and our ability to perceive. What do you think?

Week 14 (12/03)

"By its fruit we judge the tree. Judge the tree by its fruit then, and do not meddle with the roots."
Igor Stravinsky

PRESENTATIONS

Profiles are due. Post them on the blog in full. Bring your Editing Buddy remarks to class, too, and hand them in as hard copy.

Each student presents four minutes of his or her profile, using multimedia platforms, if desired (which they are.)

Each student is also a leader for this final class and will make a four minute presentation in the spirit of McLuhan, Postman, Anderson, McLennan, Fuller, Lessig, Tapscott and Williams on "I have seen the future of journalism and it looks like..." and "Arts reporting plays this role in it: _____" and "Here's how I propose the arts and culture and people who enjoy and *need* them can be served by the media in the future" and "These are the risks; these are the journalism imperatives and this is why..."

Send me your Bag of Marbles and your Arts Reporting portfolio by e-mail.
Thank you!