

USC Annenberg School for Communication & Journalism II *School of Journalism*

Specialized Reporting: Education, Youth and Learning
JOUR 584, 3 units, Fall 2010

Day/Time: Thursday, 2-4:40 p.m.
Classroom: ASC 228

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***“Education is for improving the lives of others and for leaving your
community and the world better than you found it.”***

***--- Marian Wright Edleman
American educator and founder of Children’s Defense Fund***

About the course

The pursuit of education binds us all. But this pursuit has been problematic for many, from limited access to good schools to poor funding for all schools to issues beyond the school that affect what happens in the class. While this course is billed as education reporting, this course is about much more. We will study broader issues that affect society – poverty, homelessness, crime -- and examine their impact on schools. We will also review key federal and state court decisions in the last half-century so that we better understand how these events have shaped the schools -- and the society -- we have today. We will also explore solutions. Ongoing school reform movements have made significant strides in reframing public education in a new century. Contributions to schools by faith-based initiatives and secular nonprofits, for example, have been enormous, and

they have helped stabilize school communities in these perilous economic times. Simply, thoughtful news coverage about schools and their neighborhoods arguably ranks among the most important journalism we produce.

This course also represents the most ambitious effort yet at the Annenberg School to experiment with emerging technologies and to produce a “paperless” class. Each student will be loaned an iPad with an expense account to pay for wireless service, and you will deliver your multimedia assignments to a class website with the iPad and other equipment allowing for the transmission of photos, slideshows and audio. The class will also experiment with storytelling by using Second Life. And as you’ll see below, there are two required e-books [less expensive than hard-covers] and all other readings will be either emailed in PDF form or available via the class’s Blackboard site.

Aided greatly by technology, and with a broad understanding of how schools intersect with larger issues, we will produce multimedia coverage that is sophisticated, well-researched and well-written for a general-interest audience. As we explore the rich lives of children, their schools, their families and their communities, we will hear from a variety of guest speakers, from academics to journalists to education researchers and people on the front lines: teachers and principals. Our class reading, discussions and guests will speak to state and federal laws and policies and how they impact schools and the lives of children and youth.

Finally, to supplement class discussions about how to observe a classroom, understand the sometimes complex world of learning and other elements that produce richly textured education reporting that these times demand, the Poynter Institute and the Hechinger Institute on Education and the Media at Columbia University’s Teachers College combined resources to produce a compelling online course that includes offers a glossary of education terms and definitions. The course is free, but it requires registration at News University at <http://www.newsu.org/>. There will be occasional readings from this online course.

Course objectives

Upon completion of this class, you will be able to report across a broad range of societal issues, anchored by schools, by exploring the relationships between children and young people, their families, their schools and their communities. You will be able to discern reliable academic research from questionable studies, use with confidence all manner of statistics, and weave compelling narratives infused with context. You will also gain more experience producing multimedia elements for your traditional print stories, understanding that in 21st century

journalism there are multiple ways to tell a story, and you will gain confidence navigating communities of color, and neighborhoods of immigrants and working class citizens.

Texts [e-books]

Making Schools Work: A Revolutionary Plan to Get Your Children the Education They Need, by William G. Ouchi and Linda G. Segal. [Simon & Schuster, N.Y., 2003] 350 pages.

What I Learned In School: Reflections on Race, Child Development, and School Reform, by James P. Comer. [Josey-Bass, San Francisco, 2009] 160 pages.

Required reading

Please read the *Los Angeles Times*, and *The New York Times* education page on Wednesday and a newsweekly of your choice. You will also receive *Education Week*, which I will purchase for each member of the class from my faculty research funds. [Please send me your mailing addresses so that I may complete the subscription process; you will receive access to Education Week's website, a rich collection of stories and offers stellar examples of multimedia storytelling]

Other readings:

Please subscribe to e-clips from the Education Commission of the States; the email contains some of the best education reporting from across the country. Sign up at e-clips@ecs.org. The National Education Reporters Association also features a daily fare of stories about education on its home page. www.ewa.org

Assignments and grading

The class will produce three substantial blogs about school and/or community reform and change, written and delivered with the iPad across three broad issues that reflect class reading and conversations. The class also will produce an assignment in Second Life [see week-to-week course description] and the final project will be a 1,300 to 1,500-word multimedia story based on one or more of your blog posts.

At the start of the term, I will discuss assignments of specific school campuses so that each of you will build trust and access sooner vs. losing time casting about for entry to indifferent or hostile school campuses. At each of your campuses,

you will write about broadly-defined school and community issues outlined below. **In each of these blog posts, as well as in your final project, the theme should be change. What types of change, broadly and specifically, have schools introduced? Why were they necessary? Alternately, why isn't change occurring at your school? What are the hurdles to change, reform, improvements?** These posts will require honed reporting and keen observation skills, which we will discuss as part of class discussions about reporting.

SCHOOLS & REFORM: This includes stories from inside the school building: learning, academic reform of every type, teacher issues and teacher training, state and federal policy designed to prod school improvement, continuing debates over enduring issue of equitable funding of schools, among other issues. Examples worth exploring on your school campus: The Obama administration's Race to the Top education grants, 13 innovation grants, the rewriting of No Child Left Behind, which the administration now calls the Elementary Education and Secondary Act, its original name.

SCHOOLS & COMMUNITY: This includes issues beyond the school building, reportage anchored in communities but in one way or another affect schools. One example: The growth of non-profits and faith-based organizations help improve schools in any number of ways. Another example: The LAUSD and LAPD last year put together a joint effort to combat gang problems in schools. Foster care, homeless kids, poor kids all fit this category. The sub prime mortgage debacle of the last year [and now, apparently, the prime mortgage market as well] significantly undermined school communities as families lost homes.

SCHOOLS & YOUTH CULTURE: This theme covers just about anything you can imagine that pertains to youth today and popular culture. How are schools managing a youth culture that a swath of studies asserts is adrift, particularly in urban schools? What are schools doing to provide strong anchors for youth? After- school programs, enhanced extracurricular activities, tutoring, mentoring, job placement are among a few examples. How do youth engage social media? How do schools manage social media and, in a sign of the times, cyber-bullying? How do African American and Latino relate to each other? [This is an especially intriguing idea given the race riots in May 2008 at Locke High School in South Los Angeles that involved 600 black and brown students] Any blog post that doesn't fit in the first two categories will probably fit here.

Assignments and grading

ASSIGNMENT 1: One 400- to 500-word blog post WITH IMAGES on a topic of your choice from your school campus. The blog post will cover issues only covered in class to that point. [See deadlines in the weekly class descriptions.]

A minimum of **five tweets** are required for this blog post, highlighting the issues on which you are writing. The tweets may be a retweet of a study you read on Twitter and serves as reference material for your blog post. Or they may be highlights from an interview with a school official, teacher, student or parent. **PLEASE USE THE HASH TAG #wattway ON ALL YOUR TWEETS.**

ASSIGNMENT 2: One 400- to 500-word blog post WITH AUDIO on a topic of your choice from your school campus. This post will include audio.

A minimum of **five tweets** with the #wattway hash tag are required on this blog post highlighting major themes you're writing about. The tweets may be a retweet of a study that serves as reference material for your post.

ASSIGNMENT 3: Second Life assignment. This innovative three-week module will be directed by Laura Castaneda, assistant director of the School of Journalism; Nonny De La Pena, senior researcher at the Annenberg School; and Wendy M. Chapman, Annenberg director of web technologies.

The Second Life assignment will be produced with laptops. It will also include a minimum of five tweets as you pursue your reporting and research on Oct. 21, the day of the Great Shakeout.

ASSIGNMENT 4: Final project: A 1,500-word multimedia story from your school campus. The final project can be based on one or more of your blog posts, or you may choose to produce a piece you found during the course of the semester but were unable to explore in your blog posts. This story will be produced with an iPad and will include multimedia components.

A minimum of **five tweets** with the #wattway hash tag are required on this blog post highlighting major themes you're writing about. The tweets may be a retweet of a study that serves as reference material for your post.

Finally, it is no longer enough to simply report about a problem; you must find sources that speak to solutions. These solutions, whatever they might be, should be folded into your blog posts and, of course, your final project.

Your blog posts will be posted directly by you to *Watt Way*, <http://wattway.uscannenberg.org/> the class website. Please be extraordinarily

careful about the spelling of names and statistics, which generate the most corrections for journalists.

Grades

20 percent: First blog post, including photos and tweets.

20 percent: Second blog post, including audio ~~slideshow~~ and tweets.

25 percent: The Second Life assignment will account for 20 percent of your grade. Tweeting represents 5 percent of your grade

35 percent: The final project – a 1,500-word story, with multimedia. The final project will carry three grades: The first grade reflects the depth of your content, including accuracy, context and breadth.

The second grade addresses the quality of writing, including precision of language, the appropriate print and broadcast styles, spelling and grammar.

The third grade reflects organization and flow. Pieces will be rewritten until they are strong enough to appear on the class website.

A minimum grade of C (2.0) is required in a course to receive graduate credit. Work graded C- or below is not acceptable for subject or unit credit toward any master's or doctoral program. A grade point average of at least 3.0 (B) on all units attempted at USC toward a graduate degree is required for graduation. In addition, a grade point average of at least 3.0 on all graduate work attempted at USC, whether or not all such units are applied toward the degree, is required.

Website resources:

The Metamorphosis Project, Annenberg School for Communication, <http://www.metamorph.org/> (for detailed statistical and socio-economic portraits of Los Angeles neighborhoods, many of which we will cover.)

USC Rossier School of Education (RSOE supports several initiatives and research centers devoted to issues in urban education. Also, see list of faculty experts, a good resource for your stories. Rossier professors have been exceedingly supportive of student work in this class.)

<http://www.usc.edu/dept/education/centers/research.htm>

Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University.

<http://www.annenberginstitute.org/>

Annie E. Casey Foundation, (family and children), www.aecf.org

American Council on Education, (higher education), www.ace.org

Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund, www.aaldef.org

California Department of Education, www.cde.ca.gov

Center for the Prevention of School Violence, www.cpsv.org

Children's Defense Fund, www.childrensdefense.org

Education Commission of the States, www.ecs.org.

Education Writers Association, www.ewa.org

Hechinger Institute on Education and the Media. Teachers College, Columbia University. <http://hechinger.tc.columbia.edu/>

The Civil Rights Project, UCLA. <http://www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/>

Mexican American Legal Defense & Education Fund, www.maldef.org

NAACP Legal Defense & Education Fund, www.naacpldf.org

National Center for Children and Poverty, www.nccp.org

National Center for Education Statistics, <http://nces.ed.gov/>

National Center for Fair and Open Testing, www.fairtest.org

National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty, www.nlchp.org

New York University Steinhardt Child and Family Policy Center,

<http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/steinhardt/db/centers/4>

Urban Institute, www.urban.org

U.S. Department of Education, www.ed.gov [great source for national data]

UCLA Institute for Democracy, Education and Access

<http://www.idea.gseis.ucla.edu/>

Academic integrity

Plagiarism is defined as taking ideas or writings from another and passing them off as one's own; in journalism, this includes appropriating another writer's reporting without clear attribution. The following is the 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 standard 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 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.

Academic accommodations

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DPS) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DPS is located in STU 301 and is open 8.30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. The DSP phone number is 213-740-0776. Finally, students are under a lot of pressure. If you start to feel overwhelmed, contact the USC Student Counseling Services office at 213-740-7711. The free service is confidential

Assigned readings should be completed before class.

The Semester

Schools, Society & a Century of Reform

The federal framework for U.S. schools and its impact on children

August 26: Overview of Class. We discuss the class, the syllabus, expectations for student projects and the South Los Angeles Reporting Project. We also view “In Schools We Trust,” a PBS documentary about the history of the American education system, from the creation of the first public school, to changes introduced by immigrants, to forced school busing for integration, and the continuing impact of Civil Rights on public education.

Viewing: “In Schools We Trust.” PBS documentary.

In Class Visit: Wendy M. Chapman, director of Annenberg Web Technologies, will discuss the cutting-edge technology we will use in this class. iPads will be issued and the semester’s iPad training schedule will be discussed.

September 2: How National School Reform Affects Schools. We look at contemporary campaigns and their effectiveness to improve schools. In President Johnson’s “Great Society” and “War On Poverty” campaigns, the first programs for disadvantaged youth appear. In “A Nation At Risk,” a national commission sanctioned by the federal government proposes for the first time a waterfront approach to improve education. Nearly two decades later, “No Child Left Behind,” the Bush Administration’s controversial 2002 education bill provides stronger language, and laws, to improve public education. We’ll discuss NCLB and early indications of what the Obama Administration might do in the upcoming reauthorization of the legislation. The president’s “Race to the Top” school reform bill has many critics. We’ll find out why.

Text Readings: Please read the first three chapters in *Making Schools Work*.

Readings: The report, “A Nation At Risk” and a collection of newspaper and magazine coverage of ANAR. *Readings:* Read the *No Child Left Behind Act* at www.ed.gov. Other readings, a collection of newspaper, magazine and academic research about NCLB, will be posted on class’s Black board site.

Training: The Web Technologies team will conduct a mini-workshop on how to create a blog post and edit images using the iPad (1 hr)

Guest: Why is school reform so difficult, and why do some schools succeed and others don’t? Skype conversation with Eric Sheninger, principal at New Milford High School and Google educator, New Milford, N.J. On Twitter: NMHS_Principal

Schools and Money

The Growing Divide Between Rich and Poor

September 9: Why Poor Schools Remain Poor, and Their Impact on Children. We look at historical reasons for the gulf between the “haves” and the “have nots” through red-lining, deed restrictions and planning and zoning

ordinances. Many state Supreme Courts, most recently Arizona, have struck down these punitive laws, but their impact remains. We look at the continuing, and difficult, efforts to minimize the impact of century-old laws designed to segregate communities and schools. Class discussion about book.

Text Readings: Chapter 4 in *Making Schools Work*.

Readings: Collection of articles from *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Time* magazine and other publications about landmark school finance lawsuits in New Jersey and Texas.

Viewing: “From First to Worst: California Schools.” PBS. How the nation’s preeminent school system goes from being one of the best in the nation to one of the worst. The dearth of money for schools is one reason.

September 16: The Campaign for Better-Financed Schools. The 1973 U.S. Supreme Court decision in *San Antonio Independent School District vs. Rodriguez* asserts that financial support of public schools is a state responsibility, not a federal matter. Few cases rejected by the Supreme Court have generated more reform. We discuss why.

Readings: “Education Equity and Quality: Brown and Rodriguez and their Aftermath.” Speech about the legacies of the Rodriguez and Brown decisions, by Columbia University President Lee Bollinger, 2003 <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/president/communications%20files/collegeboard.htm> . Also: *San Antonio Independent School District v Rodriguez* [read U.S. Supreme Court decision, and listen to oral arguments.] The Oyez Project: <http://www.oyez.org/>

“Reporting Statistics,” booklet by Education Writers Association. On class Blackboard site.

Viewing: “It’s Your Money.” PBS *Frontline* report about school finance and the disparity between rich and poor schools.

Youth & Poverty

Poor kids and their impact on schools

September 23: Children and Youth in Poverty: Drop out rates, underachievement, teen pregnancy and problem families. We look at poverty and its effect on learning and how schools and communities have responded.

Text Readings: Read Chapters 1 and 3 in *What I Learned In School*.

Training: The Web Technologies team will do a mini-workshop on recording, editing and uploading audio using the iPad. (1hr)

Readings: “The Vanishing Class.” Four-part 2006 *Los Angeles Times* series about the high school drop out rate.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/education/la-me-dropouts-series,0,7942897.special>

Hechinger Institute on Education and the Media, Columbia University Teacher’s College, and *Washington Monthly* investigation on national drop out rate. http://hechingerreport.org/static/dropout_primer.pdf

“Helping Disconnected Youth by Improving Linkages Between High Schools and Careers,” Urban Institute.

<http://www.urban.org/publications/406603.html>

Podcast: “The Achievement Gap.” PBS *NewsHour*, Nov. 12, 2003.

September 30 : Homeless Children and Schools. The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act requires a variety of services for the homeless, including the accommodation of homeless schoolchildren by public schools. The Los Angeles Unified School District has dedicated five schools across the city, most of them near homeless shelters, for homeless children, and the schools provide a waterfront of school and social services, including counseling, health care and a mobile library. We visit one of the five schools and talk to kids and teachers.

Readings: California Department of Education primer on efforts to educate homeless children and youth in the state, which has the largest homeless population of school-aged children in the nation.

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/hs/cy/>

Two-part series on homeless kids in Los Angeles Unified School District, by Matt Mundy, in volumes 2 and 3 of Watt Way digital magazine.

<http://www.wattway.org/ee/>

Audio: “Educating Homeless Kids: Schools Struggle to Comply With Federal Mandate” National Public Radio series on homeless kids and

schools, 2002.

<http://www.npr.org/programs/morning/features/2002/apr/homeless/>

First blog post due, with photo/s

Youth and Crime: A Public's Response

October 7: Youth, Crime and Criminal Courts. Case study of Columbine High School, scene of 1999 killings of 12 students and one teacher by two students. We look at society and school values surrounding guns and other weapons, and what schools are doing to combat crime.

Readings: National sampling of newspaper, magazine and broadcast reports about school violence.

Viewing: "Caught in the Crossfire." PBS. A look at the changing juvenile court system in America, and its impact on kids and schools.

Readings: "A Father's Pain, A Judge's Duty and a Justice Beyond Reach" 2002 *Los Angeles Times* feature about the involvement of state courts in Utah in charging and bringing to trial a man accused of negligence in the death of his son. A 1998 *Los Angeles Times* series about children with parents who are addicted will also be distributed.

"The Juvenile Court Enters Its Second Century." National Center for State Courts white paper offering a history of juvenile courts and contemporary trends. www.ncsconline.org/WC/Publications/KIS_JuvJus_Trends99-00_Pub.pdf

Higher Education/ Second Life module

How well prepared are California's campuses for a major earthquake?

Module taught by Nonny De La Pena, Annenberg School senior research fellow; Laura Castaneda, assistant director, Annenberg School of Journalism; Wendy M. Chapman, director, Annenberg Office of Web Technologies.

Students will work in teams

October 14: What would happen if campus were closed by an earthquake? Could we keep our class in session by using a virtual classroom? For the next

three weeks, we will prototype this scenario using the virtual world of Second Life. Students will report on the Great ShakeOut which tries to help protect and prepare for the eventuality of an earthquake. <http://www.shakeout.org/> After gathering their stories, students will then present their news stories in our virtual classroom using the special qualities and characteristics that the digital environment allows.

Students will chose topics they would like to cover such as schools, medical, police, fire or transportation issues.

In this class, you will be taught the fundamentals of getting started in Second Life, watch examples of existing projects, as well as hear a presentation via Skype about seismic preparation on college campuses by Erica Perez of California Watch.

Ms. Perez's investigation on seismic preparation can be found at <http://californiawatch.org/topic/higher-ed>

During the week, students are expected to begin reporting in preparation for the Great Shake Out. Nonny de la Peña and Second Life programmers will also be available to continue teaching and assisting students on the simple tools available to them.

Readings:

"What is Second Life?" <http://secondlife.com/whatis/faq.php>

"Immersive Journalism: Immersive Virtual Reality for the First Person Experience of News," forthcoming in the MIT Journal PRESENCE.

"Journalism in Second Life" will be provided in .pdf form for iPad reading.

"Case Study: Metanomics Leads the Way with Vibrant SL Business Community and Mixed-Reality Events" <http://bit.ly/byBNuW>

"California develops early earthquake warning system," NPR, 10/17/09
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=113877510>

"The Study of Household Preparedness: Preparing California for Earthquakes" A report for the California State Legislature.

Watch:

Mock Earthquake video depicting the Great Shakeout
http://laist.com/2008/11/12/watch_this_the_best_earthquake_prep.php

Guest: We visit via Skype with Erica Perez, higher education correspondent for California Watch. Ms. Perez is a Stanford University

graduate and earned her master's in journalism from the USC Annenberg School for Communication & Journalism in 2005 and was named Outstanding Print Student. She previously worked for the *Orange County Register* and the *Milwaukee Sentinel*. Ms. Perez can be found on Twitter @ericafperez.

October 21: NO FORMAL CLASS. Day of the Great Shake Out. Students will use the day, and class time, to report their projects. This is the date of the Great Shake Out, and students will be on the ground covering aspects of the mock earthquake. Students will use material they film, audio record or write about for their presentation on Oct 28, the third and final Second Life module. That material will be used to construct their stories to be shown the final day of class. Second Life builders, Nonny de la Peña and Wendy! Chapman will be available to guide students on constructing their presentations. which will be shown on the final week of the module.

Assignment: Micro-blogging with Twitter. Please send at least five tweets of your reporting to the Watt Way blog via #wattway

October 28: Class presentations of Second Life projects.

Immigrant Children & Youth

A Century of Reform Inspired by Newcomers

November 4: Covering immigrants in U.S. schools and neighborhoods.

Since the turn of the last century, immigrants have helped inspire the trade school, the high school, the early versions of ESL classes, the notion of health clinics in schools, the introduction of civic classes to assimilate immigrant children more quickly. More recently, the growing presence of immigrants has inspired more expansive textbooks that reflect contributions of immigrants to efforts by schools of education to improve teacher training for young people headed for the classroom of the 21st century. None of this, of course, has been without a fight by immigrants and resistance from schools themselves. We look at these and other ways immigrants have helped today's public school.

Guest: Esme Bermudez, reporter, *Los Angeles Times*

Audio: NPR interview with Pulitzer Prize winner Sonia Nozario, author of *Enrique's Journey*.

Readings: Other readings from newspapers and magazines will be distributed by instructor. “The Forgotten History of Immigration: For Schools the Impact Has Been Profound – and Positive,” *Education Week* commentary.

TRAINING: iPad training [audio] with the Annenberg Web Technologies -- Matt Frank and Wendy! Chapman.

November 11: Children of immigrants, the U.S. backlash and how schools have responded. Two U.S. Supreme Court decisions, in 1974 and 1982, improve immigrants’ access to U.S. schools. In the 1974 *Lau v. San Francisco* ruling, the court ruled that children must be taught in their native language until they are fluent in English. In the 1982 decision in *Plyler vs. Doe*, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that school districts must educate the American-born children of undocumented immigrants. The court’s ruling in the Texas case remains controversial today, especially with the continuing issues surrounding immigration and their impact on public services, including schools.

Readings: *Lau v. San Francisco* and *Plyler v. Doe* court decisions, and other state and federal court rulings affecting schools and immigrant children. Collection of articles about how schools have responded to the growing numbers of immigrant schoolchildren. *Lau and Plyler court cases available in text and audio at The Oyez Project*, <http://www.oyez.org/>

Higher Education *Issues of Access and Cost*

November 18: The Community College celebrated its 100th birthday in 2004. We look at higher education and its issues and challenges through the lens of what some education analysts have called the “work horse” of the American higher education system. Rising costs and higher admission standards at four-year institutions have put more pressure on the two-year school at a time when record numbers of students are trying to enroll in the more affordable community college – and being turned away because there is no room.

Readings: Center for Community College Policy, Education Commission of the States. <http://www.ecs.org/html/ProjectbySubject.asp?issueID=26>

“Trends in Higher Education,” College Board report. General overview of higher education, including data about high school graduate rates, cost of college and other trends. <http://www.collegeboard.com/highered/res/hel/hel.html>.

Viewing: “Academic Squeeze.” PBS report about the growing costs of higher education and the impact on young people and their families.

TRAINING: iPad training [slideshows] with the Annenberg Web Technologies -- Matt Frank and Wendy! Chapman.

Second blog post due, with audio

November 25: Thanksgiving holiday

December 2: Discussion of final assignment, due December 15. Final assignment will include combination of photos, audio and multimedia slideshow, produced by iPad.

About your professor

I have been writing about education, youth and related issues for the last 19 years, as an education correspondent for *The New York Times*, a domestic correspondent for *The Wall Street Journal* and, most recently, as a West Coast correspondent for *The Boston Globe*. My work about education issues also has appeared in *Education Week*, *The American Prospect*, *Teacher Magazine*, *The New York Times Week in Review*, *USA Today*, *Voices in Urban Education*, a quarterly produced by the Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University, and Columbia University's *Teachers College Record*, considered the top academic publication covering education issues. I also peer review academic articles for *Teachers College Record*.

I am the author of *Battle Rock: The Struggle Over A One-Room School in America's Vanishing West* (PublicAffairs, N.Y., 2002). The book was named a "Notable Book in 2003" by the American School Board Journal. *Battle Rock* was also named a "Southwest Book of the Year" by the Tucson-Pima County Library system, one of 11 titles on the list selected from 250 books. My second book covers many of the issues we will discuss in this class. The book is a 50-year narrative history of a Texas case that resulted in a landmark 1973 U.S. Supreme Court ruling about equal access to education and the case represents the intersection of the Mexican American Civil Rights movement and the immigrant rights campaign, two movements long aligned in the Southwest and West.

I earned a master's degree in 1982 from the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, where my master's project "Luis Angel Anaya: The Education of Gifted Minority Children," illustrates the merging of issues from learning to poverty to immigration. My undergraduate degree was earned in 1978 from Howard Payne, a small liberal arts college in my native Texas. I have taught at the USC Annenberg School since 2000 and was awarded tenure in spring 2007; I previously taught at the University of Colorado at Boulder for five years.

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In Spring 2011, I will teach an urban affairs reporting and writing class. In the Jour476 Special Topics course, students will learn about urban America, its historical and contemporary problems – and solutions – by producing multimedia projects across a broad swath of issues of their choosing. The course will help train students how to navigate in and through communities with which they are unfamiliar. The course will also help train students produce sophisticated and thoughtful multimedia journalism for Watt Way, since 2006 a multimedia website attached to all my classes and produced by students.
