

**Study at Brandeis University**  
**The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute @ Brandeis**  
**June 6-9, 2005: Monday – Thursday, 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.**  
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**The Culture of Journalism**  
**Mike Socolow, Ph.D.**

Mike Socolow, Brandeis faculty, will lead this timely program. Dr. Socolow directs the Journalism Program at Brandeis and is an Assistant Professor of American Studies. Previously, he was an Assignment Editor for CNN and a freelance television producer. In the Culture of Journalism, course participants will examine the social, cultural, political and economic influences on the practice and profession of journalism. It will provide the background and concepts for a critical analysis of American journalism.

“A good reporter used to make as much as a bartender or a police sergeant; he now makes as much as the average doctor or lawyer, and probably a great deal more. His view of the world he lives in has thus changed. He is no longer a free-lance in human society, thumbing his nose at its dignitaries; he has got a secure lodgment in a definite stratum, and his wife, if he has one, maybe has social ambitions. The highest sordid aspiration that any reporter had, in my time, was to own two complete suits of clothes.” **H.L. Mencken, “Reminiscence,” *The Baltimore Evening Sun*, January 10, 1927.**

“The {new} generation of... reporters...tend{s} to drink white wine or beer rather than Irish whiskey, and they carry cell phones so they can talk to their offices more than the once or twice a day I considered adequate. They go out running early in the morning, and a lot of them eat salads from room service, believe it or not. Some of the best - often the most-intensely motivated - are women. Many of the men seem to view covering politics as just another assignment, a place to get your ticket punched on the way to becoming managing editor or something equally Rotarian.” **Jack W. Germond, *Fat Man in a Middle Seat* (1999).**

“Journalism is probably the slowest moving, most tradition-bound profession in America. It refuses to budge until it is shoved into the future by some irresistible external force.” **Timothy Crouse, *The Boys on the Bus* (1972).**

Among the assumptions embedded in the quotes by Mencken and Germond is the notion that a good journalist should be satisfied to pursue the craft of journalism for its own sake. Good journalists will transcend social and economic pressures, lest these pressures somehow affect their work. Mencken and Germond are traditionalists within a culture that (as Crouse so aptly notes) is enamored of tradition.

This tradition-bound culture of American journalism is resistant to change, yet it is constantly transformed by such factors as new technology, economic demands and social movements. There exist, however, certain central ideals defining the profession. It is these key principles and their application to the practice of journalism that this class examines in detail. These ideals, which comprise the ethics of the profession, create the culture of journalism in the United States. All practicing journalists either work within that culture or produce work in response to it. By examining how journalists practice their craft, view their work and its place in society, and critique each other’s performance, this course will develop an understanding of the creation and maintenance of the culture of journalism in America.

**REGISTRATION FOR CULTURE OF JOURNALISM**

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- ✓ **Send To:** Interim Programs, BOLLI, MS085, Brandeis, Waltham, MA 02454
- ✓ **Questions?** Call Carol Allman-Morton at 781-736-2992 or [callman@brandeis.edu](mailto:callman@brandeis.edu)

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