

Media and Conflict in Africa

AFRICAST 31 / 131

Winter 2017

Class schedule: Tuesday / Thursday, 4.30-5.50pm

Building 200, Room 107

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Office Hours: Thursday 3-4pm or by appointment

Course description

This course provides an introduction to the variety of roles played by local and international media in covering conflict situations across the continent in the late 20th and early 21st century. The objective of this course is to develop a theoretical and empirical understanding of the media as active participants in conflicts, rather than neutral witnesses. The course engages with the media as social, economic and political institutions playing a key role in conflict situations. We will analyze how the media in the African context have become tools for propaganda and for encouraging violence, as well as their role in promoting dialogue, peace and reconciliation between communities. These questions are particularly relevant to the context of contemporary Africa where conflicts fueled by ethnic hatred or democratic aspirations have unfolded along with the tremendous development of media and communication technologies.

We will build a gradual understanding of key concepts – objectivity, impartiality, hate speech, peace journalism, citizen journalism, and cosmopolitanism – to analyze the role played by the media in case studies in Burundi, Cameroon, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda and Uganda. We will rely on a wide variety of material throughout the course, including: readings drawn from a variety of fields (media and journalism studies, political sciences, anthropology, postcolonial theory); linguistic, visual, audio, video and multimedia material produced by news media; films and documentaries.

You will work towards conducting an original analysis of the role of the media in a conflict of your choice, hereby giving you an opportunity to apply the analytical skills gained throughout the course.

Structure

This is a seminar course style, which means that the emphasis is on collaborative learning, exchange and discussion. We will meet twice a week. On Tuesdays, we will discuss key concepts and theoretical debates about the role of the media in conflict situations. On Thursdays, we will use the theoretical discussion to analyze the role of the media in a specific case study. Some weeks, a reading may be replaced by, or complemented with a film or documentary. The case studies will be used to exemplify but also challenge and deepen the theoretical discussions.

There are no prerequisites for this course. The seminar will enable you to develop your own interests and expertise as you work towards your media analysis report. If you have prior experience and knowledge of the media in Africa, this seminar will allow you to deepen your knowledge and to learn about theories of media and conflict, in addition to conducting an original analysis of the role of the media in a conflict of your choice.

If you are looking to qualify for the minor in African studies, this analysis report could serve as a relevant basis for the 25-page minimum research paper required.

Learning outcomes

In this course, you will:

- Develop a gradual understanding of different theories about the role of the media in conflict situations;
- Apply these conceptual tools to understand the role of the media in conflict in the African context;
- Examine the various role played by the media as social, economic and political institutions in conflict situations in Africa;
- Compare and appraise different methods to critically analyze the role of the media.

These learning outcomes culminate in you conducting an **original analysis** of the role of the media in a conflict of your choice. The weekly discussions and readings will equip you with the necessary tools to develop the framework, questions and method of your analysis. In addition, from Week 2 onwards, we will dedicate 20 minutes on Tuesdays to discussing your ideas and questions about which conflict to focus on, what aspects of the media you would like to research, what questions you would like to ask, and what method you would like to use. For more information, see the “background paper” and “media analysis report” sections below.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance and class participation

Your attendance and participation account for 25% of your grade, and will determine the quality of the seminar. The course therefore relies on your attendance at all sessions and on your active participation in the class discussions. This includes being on time, doing all the readings and being prepared to discuss them in classes.

I will provide key questions for each session so as to facilitate your reading. These questions will then be used for our in-class discussion. We will take turns each week to present and lead the initial discussion of the readings. You may decide to write your answers or bring notes. In any case, you should be ready to provide answers to the questions every week, and demonstrate serious engagement with the readings.

Your participation also includes presenting your ideas about the media analysis project as you develop it, and to provide feedback and ask questions about other student projects.

Grading

For a timeline of the assignments due date, see the table at the end of the syllabus.

If you are taking the course for 5 units, the grading system is as follows:

<u>Attendance and participation:</u>	<u>25%</u>
<u>Short reading response paper:</u>	<u>20%</u>
<u>Background paper:</u>	<u>20%</u>
<u>Media analysis report:</u>	<u>35%</u>

If you are taking the course for 3 units, the grading system is as follows:

<u>Attendance and participation:</u>	<u>25%</u>
<u>Short reading response paper:</u>	<u>30%</u>
<u>Media analysis report:</u>	<u>45%</u>

Short reading response paper (1200 – 1600 words)

This short paper should summarize the main arguments in a week's readings, between Week 2 and Week 8. This includes both the theory-oriented readings (Tuesday) and the case study readings (Thursday). The paper should include a concluding section (around 300 words) where you link and compare the themes explored in the different readings. It is due at the beginning of the class on the week the readings are discussed, starting on week 2 and no later than week 6. If you would like to write a reading

response paper for the readings of week 7 or 8, this is also possible, but you will need to hand it in no later than week 6.

Background paper (1500 – 2000 words) (only if registered for 5 units)

From Week 1 onward, you will need to start thinking about a particular conflict you want to work on. There will be ample opportunities to discuss this in class, and you are highly encouraged to discuss it with me during office hours. You should have settled on a conflict by the end of Week 3. Students who want to focus on an ongoing conflict and want to conduct media monitoring (gathering information as it is produced live) are encouraged to do so; but they should discuss this with me in office hours before the end of week 3.

If you are taking the class for 5 units, you will then write a background paper (1500 to 2000 words) that is due by the end of week 7. The background paper should contextualize the chosen conflict, by providing a timeline of the key events and dates, and a profile of the key actors and players involved in the conflict. The background should conclude by formulating a set of research questions about the role of the media in the given conflict. This paper will serve as the background for the media analysis report.

Media analysis report

You will conduct a media analysis project, and present findings in a written report. This report will be between 2000 and 2500 words if you are registered for 5 units. It will be between 3000 and 3500 words if you are registered for 3 units (it is longer because students registered for 3 units won't submit a background paper).

Based on the work done for the background paper and/or the discussions and research done in previous weeks, you will:

- Decide whether to focus on local, regional or international media – or a combination of those.
- Settle on no more than 3 questions about the role of the media in the given conflict.
- Develop a method to gather media material and analyze it (there will be many opportunities to discuss method throughout the course as we encounter different methods every week, and also as I'll direct you towards method readings relevant for your individual projects).

The report should include a presentation of, and rationale for, the key questions; a section about data gathering and analysis method, a presentation of findings and, finally, a discussion of the findings. Detailed guidelines about producing the media analysis report will be provided no later than week 4.

The report is due by March 24.

Report review workshop

On Week 9, the two sessions will be entirely dedicated to discussing your project; you will present your ideas thus far and provide feedback to other students about their work. For this week, I will assign personalized readings based on your respective interests and on the focus of your report. We will also put the emphasis on discussing methods, and how to implement them in the context of your specific media analysis projects.

OVERVIEW OF THE COURSE

Week 1 – Media, conflict and Africa’s image / The 1984 Ethiopian Famine

Week 2 – Objectivity / The 2007/2008 post-election violence in Kenya

Week 3 – Media ethics and professionalism / The politics of belonging in Cameroonian media

Week 4 – Hate speech / The 1994 Rwandan genocide

Week 5 – Peace journalism 1 / The media in post civil war Burundi

Week 6 – Peace journalism 2 / The 2013 Kenyan elections

Week 7 – Citizen Journalism / The Egyptian revolution

Week 8 – Cosmopolitanism / #Bringbackourgirls and #KONY2012

Week 9 – Report review workshop

Week 10 – Media commemorating conflict / South Africa and Rwanda, 20 years on

SCHEDULE AND WEEKLY COMPULSORY READINGS

Week 1

Tuesday January 10: *Media, conflict and Africa's image*

- Wainaina, B. 2005. How to write about Africa. *Granta*. 92.
- Schoemaker, E. and Stremlau, N. 2014. Media and conflict: an assessment of the evidence. *Progress in Development Studies*, 14 (2): pp. 181-195. (non compulsory reading)

Thursday January 12: *The 1984 Ethiopian famine*

- Franks, S. 2014. "How famine captured the headlines" in *Reporting Disasters. Famine, Aid, Politics and the Media*. London: Hurst, 11-40.
- Michael Buerk and Mohammed Amin's report on the Ethiopian famine, *BBC*, 23 October 1984.

Week 2

Tuesday January 17: *Objectivity*

- Schudson, M. (2000) *The Sociology of News Production Revisited (Again)* in Curran, J & Gurevitch, M (Eds.), *Mass Media and Society* (3rd ed., pp. 175-200). London: Arnold.
- Sambrook, Richard (2004) *Holding on to Objectivity (Poliak Lecture)*.
http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/speeches/stories/sambrook_poliak.shtml

Thursday January 19: *The 2007/2008 post-election violence in Kenya*

- Ogenga, F. 2008. The role of the Kenyan Media in the 2007 Elections. *Journal of African Elections*
- Somerville, K. 2011. Violence, hate speech and inflammatory broadcasting in Kenya: the problems of definition and identification. *Ecquid Novi African Journalism Studies*.32(1), pp.82-101.

Week 3

Tuesday January 24: Media ethics and professionalism

- Curran, J. 2010 The Liberal theory of press freedom, in *Power without Responsibility* (Seventh Edition) Routledge: London, pp.326-340.
- Chuma, W., 2010. Western Paradigms, African media experiences. *Rhodes Journalism Review*, 30, pp.15-17.

Thursday January 26: The politics of belonging in Cameroonian media

- Nyamnjoh, F. (2005). *Africa's Media: Democracy and the Politics of Belonging*. London: Zed Books, Chapter 2 and 6.

Week 4

Tuesday January 31: Hate speech

- Mahoney, K. 1996. *David C. Baum Memorial Lecture: Hate Speech: Affirmation or Contradiction of Freedom of Expression*, 789-809.

Thursday February 2: The 1994 Rwandan genocide

- *Sometimes in April*, Raoul Peck (2005). [Film: 2h20m]
- Karnik, N.S. 1998. Rwanda & the media: imagery, war & refuge. *Review of African Political Economy*. 25(78), pp.611–623.

Week 5

Tuesday February 7: Peace journalism 1

- Lynch, Jake and Annabel McGoldrick, 2005. 'Peace journalism - a global dialog for democracy and democratic media', in *Democratizing global media: one world, many struggles*, pp. 269-88.
- Kempf, W. 2007. Peace journalism: A tightrope walk between advocacy journalism and constructive conflict coverage, *Conflict & communication* online, 6(2), pp. 1-9.

Thursday February 9: The media in post civil war Burundi

- Frere, M-S. 2007 "Burundi: The media during war, the media for peace". In *The Media and Conflicts in Central Africa*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner, pp. 9-40.

-*Silence Radio: Independent journalists in Burundi under threat*, 2015.
[Documentary: 20 mins]

Week 6

Tuesday February 14: *Peace journalism 2*

-Howard, R. 2015 Conflict sensitive journalism: (R)evolution in media peacebuilding. In *Communication and Peace: Mapping an Emerging Field*, p. 62-75
-Hanitzsch, T. 2004. Journalists as peacekeeping force? Peace journalism and mass communication theory, *Journalism Studies* 5(4), 483-495.

Thursday February 16: *The 2013 Kenyan elections*

- Nyabola, N. 2013. Kenyans chose Uhuru Kenyatta as president – for better or worse” *The Guardian*.
-Cheeseman, N. et al. 2014. Democracy and its discontents: understanding Kenya’s 2013 elections. *Journal of Eastern African Studies*. 8(1), pp.2–24.
-*The Inside story 50+1. What really happened during the 2013 Elections*, 2014. John Allan Namu (*Inside story*), Mohammed Ali (*Jicho Pevu*). KTN. [Documentary: 1h30m]

Week 7

Tuesday February 21: *Citizen journalism*

-Atton, C. 2009. Alternative and Citizen Journalism in *The Handbook of Journalism Studies*, edited by Karin Wahl-Jorgensen and Thomas Hanitzsch. Routledge: London, pp. 265-278.

Thursday February 23: *The Egyptian revolution*

-*The Square*, Jehane Noujaim (2013). [Documentary: 108 minutes]
-Kraidy, M. 2012. The revolutionary body politic: Preliminary thoughts on a neglected medium in the Arab Uprisings. *Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication*.
-Tufekci, Z. and Wilson, C. 2012. Social Media and the Decision to Participate in Political Protest: Observations From Tahrir Square. *Journal of Communication*, 62, 363-379.

Week 8

Tuesday February 28: Cosmopolitanism

- Appiah, K. 2007 *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers* (Introduction).
- Chouliaraki, L *The Ironic Spectator. Solidarity in the age of post-humanitarianism*. London: Polity, pp1-15, 174-190.

Thursday March 2: _____

#Bringbackourgirls (Nigeria) and #KONY2012 (Uganda)

- Kristof, N. 2014 “Bring back our girls”, *New York Times*, May 3 [online].
- Cole. T. 2012. “The White-Savior Industrial Complex”, *The Atlantic*.
- Li, J. 2014. The life of a hashtag meme: #BringBackOurGirls, The CivicBeat reader.

Week 9

Tuesday March 7/ Thursday March 9: Report review workshops

- Readings to be tailored based on the students project. It will include one reading oriented towards method, and one towards the given conflict or the media in the country.

Week 10

Tuesday March 14: Media commemorating conflict

- Steiner, L. and Zelizer, B. 1995. Competing memories. *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*. 12(2),pp.213–239.
- Edy, J. 1999. Journalistic uses of collective memory. *Journal of Communication*. 49(2),pp.71–85.

Thursday March 16: Rwanda / South Africa twenty years on

- “The Upright men Project” by South African artist Bruce Clarke to commemorate the genocide in Rwanda (website).
- Grill, B. 2015. Prison of the past: a reporter revisits his 'shameful' coverage of Rwanda, “Der Spiegel”
- “7, 14, 21, 28 Up South Africa Series”, Al Jazeera [Documentary].

Honor code

You are responsible for understanding and complying with the Stanford Honor code. Please read it here:

<https://communitystandards.stanford.edu/>

The honor code contains fundamental information about plagiarism that you should review carefully. Please see the following link for more information and sources about plagiarism:

<https://communitystandards.stanford.edu/student-conduct-process/honor-code-and-fundamental-standard/additional-resources/what-plagiarism>

Students with Documented Disabilities

Students who may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability must initiate the request with the Office of Accessible Education (OAE). Professional staff will evaluate the request with required documentation, recommend reasonable accommodations, and prepare an Accommodation Letter for faculty dated in the current quarter in which the request is being made. Students should contact the OAE as soon as possible since timely notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. The OAE is located at 563 Salvatierra Walk (phone: 723-1066, URL: <http://studentaffairs.stanford.edu/oae>).

MILESTONES AND ASSIGNMENTS TIMELINE

	W.1	W. 2	W. 3	W. 4	W.5	W. 6	W. 7	W.8	W. 9 <i>Report review week</i>	W. 10	March 24 <i>End of term</i>	
Attendance & Participation	Throughout											
Reading paper		Due on the week you decide to focus on. To be handed on or before the Tuesday class.										
Background paper			Decide on conflict/country				Due (End of week)					
Media report Analysis									Present method & initial findings in class		Due	