**American English in Journalism**

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**Time and place: Thursday 5pm, R433**

**ETR code:** [**BBN-AMW-210**](http://seas3.elte.hu/seas/cd.pl?c=BBN-AMW-210&t=s12)**(=**[**BBN-AMW-409**](http://seas3.elte.hu/seas/cd.pl?c=BBN-AMW-409&t=s12)**)**

| **Week** | **Date** | **Article/Topics** | **Article available at** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | 02.15. | Introduction, orientation +  “’The Dancingest Denomination’  How do Mormons celebrate?”  by Forrest Wickman | - |
| 2 | 02.22. | “How 9/11 has shaped a generation of Americans” by Peter Grier  (*topics: 9/11, the Millennial generation, generation gap*) | http://www.csmonitor.com/USA/Society/2011/0909/How-9-11-has-shaped-a-generation-of-Americans |
| 3 | 02.29. | “Iraq: Baghdad without America” by Adam Kirsch  (*topic: Iraq war*) | http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2011/12/25/iraq-baghdad-without-america.html |
| 4 | 03.07. | “Yes We Can (Can’t We?)”  (*topics: Obama’s 2008 and 2012 presidential campaign, the election system*) | http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2012/01/01/inside-president-obama-s-reelection-machine.html |
| 5 | 03.14. | “The Predator War – What are the risks of the CIA’s cover drone program?”  (*topics: CIA, war on terror*) | http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2009/10/26/091026fa\_fact\_mayer |
| 6 | 03.21. | “The Commandments – The Constitution and its worshippers.” by Jill Lepore  (*topics: US history, the Constitution*) | http://www.newyorker.com/arts/critics/atlarge/2011/01/17/110117crat\_atlarge\_lepore?currentPage=1?currentPage=all |
| 7 | 03.28. | “A Soldier’s Legacy – Don’t ask, don’t tell, but Alan Rogers was a hero to everyone who knew him.” by Jill Lepore  (*topics: gay rights, military, DADT*) | http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2008/08/04/080804fa\_fact\_mcgrath?currentPage=all |
| 8 | 04.04. | **Spring Break** |  |
| 9 | 04.11 | “The Death Penalty: Why We Fight for Equal Justice” by Andrew Cohen  (*topics: capital punishment, legal issues, the judiciary system*) | http://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2011/09/the-death-penalty-why-we-fight-for-equal-justice/245101/?single\_page=true |
| 10 | 04.18. | “The American Wikileaks Hacker” by Nathaniel Rich  (*topics: Wikileaks, cyber security, internet censorship*) | http://www.rollingstone.com/culture/news/meet-the-american-hacker-behind-wikileaks-20101201?print=true |
| 11 | 04.25. | “Birthright – What’s next for Planned Parenthood?” by Jill Lepore  (*topics: birth control, abortion, women’s rights*) | http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2011/11/14/111114fa\_fact\_lepore?currentPage=all |
| 12 | 05.02. | “The Myth of American Exceptionalism” by Stephen M. Walt  (*topics: US and world history*) | http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/10/11/the\_myth\_of\_american\_exceptionalism?page=full |
| 13 | 05.09. | “The Reality Principle – The rise and rise of a television genre” by Kelefa Sanneh  *(topics: reality television, media)* | http://www.newyorker.com/arts/critics/atlarge/2011/05/09/110509crat\_atlarge\_sanneh?currentPage=all |
| 14 | 05.16 | Wrap-up, grades | - |

The main aim of the course is to familiarize students with the linguistic and stylistic particularities of American journalistic writing. Each week we will discuss one article from a major American magazine (see chart) while focusing on the content, style and language of the text.

Classes will start with a **short quiz** (10 min). Questions will focus on vocabulary (mostly on topic-specific words) and content: important phrases, key expressions, persons and places that came up in the article. You will be asked to identify and/or explain them, which means that you will have to use not only your dictionary while reading but Google/Wikipedia as well.

After the quiz, one student will lead the discussion part of the class. First, s/he will give a **presentation** on the background of the major topics that the article focuses on (*see chart*). This presentation should be approx. 30-35 minutes long, and it has to be accompanied with a handout and audio-visual aids (a PowerPoint presentation with pictures, videos, etc.).

After the presentation, the same student will **lead the** **discussion of the article** itself (approx. 45 min). The focus should be on the structure of the article (title, introduction, body and conclusion), on the style of the writing, on the attitude of the magazine/writer regarding the topic, on the language (vocabulary/grammar), and on how the article can be placed within the larger framework of the topic(s) in question. Please note that this part of the class is supposed to be a discussion, which means interaction between the student in charge and the others. You all are expected to actively participate, which could be encouraged by the student leading the discussion by preparing written (or oral) exercises in connection with the above mentioned aspects.

Please make sure to give yourself enough time to read the articles and to prepare for the class. Most of the articles are quite long (the average length is 8-10 pages in MS Word) and require additional research. As mentioned before, quizzes will focus on vocabulary AND content. This means that you will need time to look up a lot of details online: names, places, dates, etc. For instance, if the topic of the article is the Iraq war, you can expect the quiz to focus on the names of some of the key people/places/events that are mentioned in the text (“What does Operation Iraqi Freedom refer to?”, “Who is General Petraeus?”); and on the topic-specific vocabulary (Humvee, IED, etc.). This, of course, means that you will have to do a thorough research of the topic in addition to reading the article, which will ensure that you are able to participate in the student-led discussion part of the class.

**Grading**:

20% - quizzes

60% - presentation and leading of the discussion

20% - participation in the discussions

If you have trouble accessing the articles, please send me an email and I will provide you a .doc file.

No more than 3 absences!