

## **National Endowment for Humanities awards Department of Communication a \$65,000 grant to sponsor seminar "American Journalism in Historical Perspective"**

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### **NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR HUMANITIES SPONSORS UCSD SEMINAR ON AMERICAN JOURNALISM**

The National Endowment for the Humanities has awarded a \$65,000 grant to the Department of Communication at the University of California, San Diego, for a summer seminar designed for college teachers to examine major issues in American journalism. The seminar is part of the extensive NEH summer seminar program.

A dozen scholars, chosen by NEH and UCSD committees, will attend department chairman Michael Schudson's eight-week seminar, "American Journalism in Historical Perspective."

The aim of Schudson's seminar is to examine major issues in American journalism from colonial times to the present, from both theoretical and historical perspectives. The seminar will address journalism as a cultural form and literary genre, the meaning of political speech, the newspaper in 19th century popular culture and politics (1790-1850), the language of the daily press (1850-1920), the changing nature of the journalism profession, and contemporary press analysis and criticism.

"The seminar is designed for undergraduate teachers of American studies, literature, and history," Schudson said. "The people who would apply for this seminar have backgrounds in communication, sociology, or political science. Commonly, they are teachers who would offer courses on politics, popular culture or the media, or they are teachers of American studies, literature and history."

Seminar participants will be reading newspapers available on microfilm at the UCSD Central Library, such as the New York Times (from 1851), the San Diego Union (from 1868), the Los Angeles Times (from 1961), and the London Times (from 1785).

The seminar will be divided into eight, week-long sections: "News as a Cultural Form," "The Meaning of Political Speech," "The Newspaper in 19th Century Popular Culture and Politics: 1790-1850," "The Changing Language of the Daily Press: 1850-1920," "The Professionalization of Journalism and the Connection of Reading to Civic Virtue," "Journalism on a World Stage: 1920-1986," "Contemporary Press Analysis and Press Criticism," and "Special Problems in the Analysis of Television News."

Schudson said the seminar is highly significant for the advancement of the teaching of the humanities. "The history of journalism is an important part of American history in general, and its study has grown much more significant in the past decade as the study of the media has been taken more seriously. Also, aspects of popular culture--including journalism--are coming to be understood more widely as appropriate objects for examination in literary criticism and cultural anthropology. What lags behind the theoretical acceptance of popular culture for academic study," Schudson explained, "is the dissemination of up-to-date instruction on how to approach popular culture--including the news media--in systematic and illuminating ways."

Schudson, a sociologist, is the author of "Advertising, The Uneasy Persuasion" (Basic Books, Inc. 1984), and in 1986 was one of nine fellows chosen to attend the nation's first institute for the advanced study of mass communication and technological change, at the Gannett Center for Media Studies, Columbia University.

At the Gannett Center, Schudson studied memory as a social force, and the components of news. The results of his research will become the basis for a book on social memory (how and where a person acquires his sense of history): He has also completed a segment on components of news for a book called, "Reading the Newspaper," by Pantheon Books.

The NEH makes 51 summer seminars available to persons whose primary duties involve teaching undergraduates, and who have not recently had the opportunity to use the resources of a major library.

The UCSD seminar will run from June 22 to Aug. 14. Participants will meet twice a week for three-hour sessions, and will also be expected to undertake an individual research project. The deadline for seminar applications is March 2. For information on this and other NEH summer seminars, contact the National Endowment for the Humanities, Washington, D.C.

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