



## **The Image of the Journalist in Popular Culture (IJPC)**

**A Project of the Norman Lear Center  
Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism  
University of Southern California  
Fact Sheet - 2026**

**MISSION:** The mission of the Image of the Journalist in Popular Culture, a project of the Norman Lear Center at USC Annenberg, is to investigate and analyze through research and publication the conflicting images of journalists in film, television, radio, fiction, commercials, cartoons, comic books, music, art, video games and other aspects of popular culture demonstrating their impact on the public's perception of newsgatherers. It was founded in 2000 by Joe Saltzman, professor of journalism at the USC Annenberg School for Communication. Today, the IJPC Web site ([ijpc.org](http://ijpc.org)) and the IJPC Database are considered the definitive worldwide sources for this subject and are used on a daily basis by scholars, students and professionals who want to do more research in this area.

**IJPC ASSOCIATES:** There are 350 IJPC Associates representing 250 academic institutions throughout the world. Our list of international and domestic universities is an impressive one, including American University, Andrews University, Arizona State University, Ball State University, Boston College, Brady University, Brigham Young University, Brown University, Brunel University West London, Buffalo State College, California State University at Fullerton, California State University at Long Beach, California State University at Sacramento, California State University at Santa Barbara, Central Connecticut State University, Central Michigan University, Central State University, City College of San Francisco, City University in Seattle, College of Management in Israel, Colorado State University, Columbia College in Chicago, Daytona Beach Community College, De Anza College, Deakin University, Delaware State University, Eastern Illinois, El Pais in Spain, Elon University, Emerson College, Fielding University, Florida A&M University, Florida International University, George College and State University, Goshen College, Hampshire College, Hofstra University, Honolulu Community College, Hood College, Indiana University, Interamerican University, Kent State University, Kutztown University, Lasell College in Massachusetts, Louisiana State University, Marist College, McNeese State University, Middle Tennessee State University, Missouri University, Monmouth University, Monosh University in Australia, Nanyang Technological University in Singapore, Napier College in Scotland, New York Institute of Technology, New York University, Northwestern University, Northeastern University, Occidental College, Ohio University, Oklahoma Baptist University, Pennsylvania State University, Point Park University, Purdue University, Quinnipiac University, Radford University, Randolph-Mason College, Regis University, Robert Morris University, Roxie New College Film Center, Ryerson University in Canada, Rutgers University, San Diego State University, Saint Xavier University, Sapir Academic College, Southern Adventist University in Tennessee, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, Southern Oregon University, State University of New York Fashion Institute of Technology, Stonehill College, Staffordshire University in England, Suny, New Paltz University, SUNY-Oswego University, Syracuse University, Texas A&M University, Texas Christian University (TCU), Texas Tech University, Thiel College, La Trobe University in Australia, Truman State University, Tulane University, Universita Saccesiana in Italy, Universidad Panamericana, University College Falmouth-England, University of Alabama, University of Alaska, University of Arkansas, University of Arizona, University of Augsburg in Germany, University of British Columbia, University of California at Berkeley, University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), University of Colorado at Boulder, University of Florida, University of Hartford, University of Hawaii, University of Hong Kong, University of Idaho, University of Illinois, University of Kansas, University of Lincoln, University of Louisiana at Lafayette, University of Maryland, University of Massachusetts, University of Massachusetts at Amherst, University of Miami, University of Minnesota, University of Mississippi, University of Missouri at Columbia, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, University of North Florida, University of Northern Colorado, University of Oklahoma, University of Oregon, University of Pennsylvania, University of Queensland in Australia, University of San Francisco, University of Scranton, University of South Alabama, University of South Carolina, University of South Florida, University of Southern California, University of Texas at Austin, University of Toledo, University of Tulsa, University of Utah, University of Wisconsin, University of York in the United Kingdom, Utah State University, Utica College, Wagner College, Washington & Lee University, Western Illinois University, Western Kentucky University, Western Washington University, Westminster College, Wichita State University, Wilfrid Laurier University in Canada, Zayed University, UAR.

**IJPC DATABASE:** The revised and updated **The Image of the Journalist in Popular Culture (IJPC) Database** includes more than 102,000 items on journalists, public relations practitioners and media in Television (36,887 items), Films (26,041 movies, movies made for TV and miniseries), Fiction (17, 913 novels, 1,823 short stories, 695 plays and 419 poems), Cartoons, Comic Books & Comic Strips (7,368 items – 2,795 cartoons-animation, 3, 938 comic books, 627 comic strips), Non-Fiction (3,928 documentaries-news-ports), Radio-Podcasts (4,429 items), Humor (752 items), Commercials (588 items), Games (280 items), Early References (120 items), Music (Songs-Compositions) (315 items), Internet-Websites (113 items), Art (55 items)

The IJPC Database includes **print journalists** (from large urban newspapers to small country weeklies, including editors, reporters, photojournalists, correspondents, columnists, publishers, newsboys), **broadcast journalists** (from networks to local stations including reporters, anchors, correspondents, producers, writers, technical personal, news directors, station owners, network executives and management), **internet journalists** (bloggers, podcasters, internet news providers, columnists, investigative reporters, editors, correspondents), **public relations practitioners** (from press agents to publicists), and the **news media** (anonymous reporters who show up in countless films and television movies ranging from press conferences to packs of reporters shouting questions or chasing after the main character to individual reporters asking questions). The Database can be referenced by year, title, type, occupation and author. As one scholar put it, “I don’t see how anyone can write anything in this field without referring to the database. There is nothing like it and it is an indispensable reference.”

**THE IJPC WEB SITE (ijpc.org):** The goal of the IJPC Web site is to collect everything written on the subject and to bring scholars, professionals, and students together to share ideas and research. The IJPC Headlines on the front page alert newcomers to the site to important developments in the field. The key areas of the Web site include The IJPC Journal, a peer-reviewed, refereed journal), the Student Research Papers featuring original research by graduate students throughout the world and the Resources page, which includes the latest IJPC Research Materials on Film, Television and Fiction with recommended books, articles and Web sites. This section includes original articles and selected reprints as well as a bibliography of key sources in the field, offering a wealth of information to the scholar. It is divided into several areas alphabetically and by subject: Films, Television, Novels and Short Stories, Public Relations, Art and Photography, Comic Books and Music.

**THE IJPC JOURNAL** is an online academic journal that adheres to the highest standards of peer review. The founding editors are Matthew C. Ehrlich, *University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*; Sammye Johnson, *Trinity University*; Joe Saltzman, *University of Southern California*. Current editors are Saltzman, Laura Castañeda, both from USC, and Richard Ness, Western Illinois University. Editorial Board members are: Maurine H. Beasley, *University of Maryland*; Bonnie S. Brennen, *Temple University*; Mary-Lou Galician, *Arizona State University*; Loren Ghiglione, *Northwestern University*; Howard Good, *SUNY New Paltz*; Norma Fay Green, *Columbia College Chicago*; Brian McNair, *Queensland University of Technology*; Richard R. Ness, *Western Illinois University*; Radhika Parameswaran, *Indiana University*; Karen Miller Russell, *The University of Georgia*; Barbie Zelizer, *University of Pennsylvania*. Its purpose is to further the mission of the Image of the Journalist in Popular Culture Project. The IJPC Journal is an interdisciplinary journal that, while centered on journalism, is open to contributions from many disciplines and research approaches, using a variety of methods and theoretical perspectives. Original investigation is expected, as well as clear, lucid writing and presentation.

**THE IJPC STUDENT RESEARCH PAPERS:** Research papers on IJPC topics never before explored. It includes the first USC Annenberg School of Journalism IJPC Thesis on “Law & Disorder: The Image of the Journalist in Television’s *Law & Order* Series” by Caley K. Cook. Editor: Matthew C. Ehrlich, professor of journalism at the University of Illinois.

**THE IJPC ARCHIVE** grows on a daily basis and now includes more than 35,000 DVD discs and videotapes containing more than 40,000 films and TV programs, more than 5,000 hours of audiotapes and MP3 files, more than 8,500 novels, short stories, plays and poems (the largest collection of novels and short stories featuring journalists ever assembled), scripts, research materials, articles, art works and other artifacts. By using the IJPC Database, scholars frequently order material from the IJPC Collection ranging from out-of-print novels to short stories never collected before to films, TV and radio programs and commercials not available anywhere else, to comic books, comic strips, musical selections and other areas of popular culture.

**IJPC VIDEOS:** The IJPC Videos are edited collections of film and television clips illustrating different facets of the subject. Most were created in conjunction with IJPC PF & R AEJMC panels over the last five years. They are unique collections never before available are included in a 1TB hard drive with membership and shipping-handling-equipment fee. The IJPC videos are:

- *The Heroes and Scoundrels Journalist in Popular Culture Project VIDEO*, approximately 40 hours of clips organized by each chapter of the book.

- [\*\*\*The Image of the Journalist in Silent Film, 1890 to 1919\*\*\*](#), a 6:37:00 compilation with excerpts from 56 movies tracing the origins of the image of the journalist in motion pictures.
  
- [\*\*\*Part A: The Image of the Journalist in Silent Film, 1920-1929\*\*\*](#), a 11:45:00 compilation with excerpts from 79 movies and [\*\*\*Part B: Celebrity Journalists, Newsboys, the Newspaper in Silent Films, Newsreels, 1920-1929\*\*\*](#), a 4:30:30 compilation with excerpts from 71 movies.
  
- ***The Image of the Washington Journalist in Movies and Television, 19032 to 2013***, an 8 hour-and-20 minute video compilation with 127 movie and television clips tracing the history of the public relations practitioner in the 20th and 21st centuries.
  
- [\*\*\*The Image of the Public Relations Practitioner in Movies and Television, 1901 to 2011\*\*\*](#), an 11:46:05 video compilation with 326 movie and television clips tracing the history of the public relations practitioner in the 20th and 21st centuries.
  
- ***The Image of the Gay Journalist in Movies and Television, 1929 to 2009***, a 4:40:29 video compilation with 122 movie and television clips tracing the history of the gay journalist in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. Included is also a special supplement on *The Image of the Gay Public Relations Practitioner in Movies and Television*.
  
- ***The Image of the War Correspondent in Movies and Television, 1931 to 2007***, a 255-minute video compilation with 166 movie and television clips tracing the image of the war correspondent in films and television from 1931 to 2007.
  
- ***Journalism Ethics Goes to the Movies***, a 110- minute video compilation for IJPC Associates created to supplement the book *Journalism Ethics Goes to the Movies* edited by Howard Good (Rowman & Littlefield, Lanham, MD). The book's 12 chapters explore issues that should concern anyone who aspires to a career in journalism, works in journalism or relies on journalism for daily information. The contributors do their exploring at the movies where sportswriters, war correspondents, investigative reporters, crime reporters, spin-doctors, TV anchors and harried city editors jostle for attention.
  
- ***The Image of the Broadcast Journalist in Movies and Television, 1931-2006***, a two-hour-and-48-minute video with 200 movie and TV clips tracing the image of the broadcast journalist in films and television from 1931 to 2006.
  
- ***Real-Life Journalists in Movies and Television, 1939-2006***, a two-hour-and-13 minute video compilation with 79 movie and television clips tracing the image of the journalist in films and television from 1939 to 2003. Featuring real-life journalists or actors portraying real-life journalists or movies based on the lives of real-life journalists.
  
- ***Sob Sisters: The Image of the Female Journalist, 1929-2007***, a two-hour-and-41 minute video compilation with more than 136 movie and television clips documenting the history of the female journalist in film and television in the 20th and 21st centuries.
  
- ***Hollywood Looks at the News: 1925-2007***, a 1-hour-and-49-minute video compilation with 165 movie and television clips documenting the history of journalists in film and television in the 20th and 21st centuries.

**CLASSES:** Class materials offered by the IJPC are being used by faculty at more than three dozen universities throughout the country. The IJPC Videos are not only used in journalism classes, but also in courses in gender studies, feminist studies, and journalism law, history and ethics.

**IJPC-AEJMC PANELS:** The IJPC PF & R panels have become a popular fixture at Association for Education for Journalism and Mass Communications (AEJMC) for the last eight years. For each panel, Saltzman creates special 10-minute videos taken from a two-hour-plus video based on that year's subject. The Entertainment Studies Interest Group and the Visual Communication Division on the Image of the Journalist in Popular Culture have co-sponsored panels on "The Image of Broadcast Journalists in Popular Culture," "Real-Life Journalists in Film and Television," "Sob Sisters: The Image of the Female Journalist in Popular Culture," and "Hollywood and the News: A History of the Image of the Journalist in Film and Television." In 2007, the Entertainment Studies Interest Group and the Ethics Interest Group co-sponsored "Journalism Ethics Goes to the Movies." In 2008, the Entertainment Studies Interest Group and the Magazine Division co-sponsored a panel on "The Image of the War Correspondent in Popular Culture." In 2009, the Entertainment Studies Interest Group and the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Interest Group co-sponsored a panel on "The Image of the Gay Journalist in Popular Culture." In 2011, the Entertainment Studies Interest Group and the Public Relations Division co-sponsored a panel on "The Image of the Public Relations Practitioner in Popular Culture." In 2013, the History Division and the Entertainment Studies Interest Group co-sponsored a panel on "The Image of the Washington Journalist in Popular Culture."

In 2005, Saltzman delivered a 44-page seminal paper *Analyzing the Images of the Journalist in Popular Culture: A Unique Method of Studying the Public's Perception of Its Journalists and the News Media* at the University of Wales Media History and History in the Media Conference and at AEJMC in the United States. The paper set the agenda for more scholarly research in a field previously ignored by academia.

## **THE HEROES AND SCOUNDRELS JOURNALIST IN POPULAR CULTURE PROJECT: THE BOOK:**

### *Heroes and Scoundrels: The Image of the Journalist in Popular Culture*

By Matthew C. Ehrlich, professor of journalism at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and Joe Saltzman, professor of journalism and communication at the University of Southern California, published by the University of Illinois Press, 2015.



Following the crusaders and scandalmongers of the Fourth Estate through more than a century of pop culture.

Whether it's the rule-defying lifer, the sharp-witted female newshound, or the irascible editor in chief, the journalists portrayed in popular culture have shaped our views of the press and its role in a free society since mass culture arose over a century ago.

Drawing on portrayals of journalists in television, film, radio, novels, comics, plays, and other media, Matthew C. Ehrlich and Joe Saltzman survey how popular media have depicted the profession across time. Their creative use of media artifacts provides thought-provoking forays into such fundamental issues as how pop culture mythologizes and demythologizes key events in journalism history and how it confronts issues of race, gender, and sexual orientation on the job.

From *Network* to *The Wire*, from Lois Lane to Mikael Blomkvist, *Heroes and Scoundrels* reveals how portrayals of journalism's relationship to history, professionalism, power, image, and war influence our thinking and the very practice of democracy.

"A perceptive study of an enduring and tantalizing question: What do they think of us? Ehrlich and Saltzman craft a persuasive, sometimes painful, sometimes hilarious montage of the omnipresence of journalists in popular culture. But the book does more than that. The authors' work also tells us a great deal about the powerful and defining role of popular culture itself. No one is safe from the roving eye of entertainment." – **Richard Reeves, author of *What the People Know: Freedom and the Press***

"Stimulating and thought-provoking. . . . No other work comes close to covering the subject as broadly." – **Maurine H. Beasley, author of *Women of the Washington Press: Politics, Prejudice, and Persistence***

"The assumption behind *Heroes and Scoundrels: The Image of the Journalist in Popular Culture* is that the audience's perception of the messenger shapes the message. That's hardly a new idea but, applied to journalism in a democracy, it's vastly significant. For example, it turns out that, while the media have been transformed by technology, archetypal images of journalists have persisted. Maybe everything hasn't changed all that much after all. That, along with other important insights gained from formidable research, will help both journalists and their audiences better understand the news of the future. Besides, it's fun to read all those stories." – **Warren Olney, Host and Executive Producer, "To the Point" and "Which Way, LA?", KCRW-FM**

"A great read that showcases depictions of journalists over the past century in popular culture. Its thoughtful analysis integrates cultural theory with media concepts and provides important historical context that will interest professionals and academics alike." – **Bonnie Brennen, author of *Qualitative Research Methods for Media Studies***

"Using a multidisciplinary approach that draws on everything from language studies to cultural studies, Matthew C. Ehrlich and Joe Saltzman creatively and entertainingly address the history of the journalist's image, 1890 to the present. Fascinating chapters focus on the images of photographers, war correspondents, gay and lesbian journalists, journalists of color, women journalists, and journalists of the sci fi future. The dueling myths of the journalist as hero and scoundrel, the book persuasively argues, raise questions about the enduring tension in society between the press as a force for freedom and a tool of oppression." – **Loren Ghiglione, author of *CBS's Don Hollenbeck: An Honest Reporter in the Age of McCarthyism***

**Matthew C. Ehrlich** is a professor of journalism at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and the author of *Journalism in the Movies* and *Radio Utopia: Postwar Audio Documentary in the Public Interest*, named winner of the AEJMC Tankard Book Award for outstanding research. **Joe Saltzman** directs the Image of the Journalist in Popular Culture, a project of the Norman Lear Center at the Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism at the University of Southern California. He is a professor at USC Annenberg and author of *Frank Capra and The Image of the Journalist in American Film*.

*Heroes and Scoundrels* is included in The History of Communication series edited by Robert W. McChesney and John C. Nerone. This series invites original and well-researched books on the history of media – radio, TV, newspapers, magazines, the Internet – and on their many functions as reporters, advertisers, opinion leaders, public relations for government and corporate interests, and businesses that compete with each other.

*Heroes and Scoundrels: The Image of the Journalist in Popular Culture* is available on Amazon in hardcover, paperback, ebook, Kindle and Apps for iPads, iPhones and other smart phones.

**THE WEB SITE:**

*The Heroes and Scoundrels* **Web site** continuously updates and adds supplementary material to the book. It includes original and reprinted articles, visuals and links to special materials for each chapter: History, Professionalism, Difference, Power, Image, War and The Future. It is available at [www.ijpc.org](http://www.ijpc.org) – Heroes and Scoundrels.

The *Heroes and Scoundrels* Web site is an invaluable addition to the book for students, teachers, journalists and researchers. It is updated weekly and anyone can email the authors for more information and clarification.

**THE VIDEO:**

The 40-hour video companion to the book was written and produced by the authors, edited by Megan Chao and Joe Saltzman. It is a production of The Image of the Journalist in Popular Culture (IJPC), a project of the Norman Lear Center at the Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, the University of Southern California.

The companion video follows the outline of the book and is divided by the same chapters using excerpts from more than 340 movies, television, and radio programs, Broadway plays and video games. More than 8,000 hours of video were edited down to the 40-hour final video project, which summarizes through visual and audio excerpts the examples used in the book. Only members of the IJPC Associates will be legally allowed to receive the video package. It is available on mp4 files stored on a 1TB Hard Drive.

**THE CLASS:**

*The Heroes and Scoundrels* Journalist in Popular Culture Project offers you everything needed to create a stimulating IJPC class:

- \*The book itself, which brings the IJPC into the field of journalism studies – *Heroes and Scoundrels: The Image of the Journalist in Popular Culture* by Matthew C. Ehrlich and Joe Saltzman. The introduction, six chapters, and the conclusion create an automatic semester-long outline for you. A syllabus is available upon request.

- \*The *Heroes and Scoundrels* Web site, which is constantly being updated, adding valuable materials on the subject.

- \*The 40-hour video project that is broken down chapter by chapter for easy viewing outside of class (you can also show the excerpts you want to emphasize in class).

- \*Homework is ready-made – chapters from the book, the video component, and the Web site provide innumerable potential assignment ideas.