New York has played a crucial role in the history of media, and media have played a crucial role in the history of New York. This course explores the connections. Discussions of readings in common will focus on different media and different historical periods. The class is organized around the collaborative production of an online guidebook to the media history of New York. Students will be expected to (1) participate in informed discussion of readings in common; (2) contribute to the collaborative process of designing and producing the guidebook; and (3) engage in original research, related “field work,” and writing essays for the guidebook that the class designs.

The goals of this course are several. It aims to introduce you to the history of media in New York and to the implications such a subject entails. It seeks to engage you within the collaborative intellectual labors—give and take—of a discussion-based course. And it should challenge you to produce your own critical, written work in dialogue both with the material of the course and with other writers in the course and beyond. Exploring the Greater Metropolitan Area is a bonus. Though there are no formal “field trips,” you will be expected to visit the boroughs, ride the trains, and see some sites.

The requirements of this course are simply stated. Written work will consist of eight three-paragraph essays, revised and illustrated (60%) and a final paper (20%). Informed participation in class discussion is an additional requirement worth 20% of the final grade. Attendance is expected, and any absences may have a depressing effect on your grade. Obviously, if you are ill do not come to class.

Readings. The following books have been ordered for you at the bookstore, but are also readily available from online booksellers.

- *Charlotte Temple* (1791) by Susanna Rowson
- *The Life of P.T. Barnum, Written by Himself* (1855)
- *Dreams of the Rarebit Fiend* (1904-1913) by Winsor McCay
- *Invisible Man* (1952) by Ralph Ellison
- *Style: Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace* (9th Edition) by Joseph Williams
Schedule of Class Meetings and Assignments

1. Week of Sept. 6 (incl. Labor Day)
   Introductions
   Stephen Crane on Minetta Lane

2. Week of Sept. 13
   Read Charlotte Temple

3. Week of Sept. 20
   Read Kingdom of Matthias
   First 3-paragraph essay due, on the (real) grave of (fictional) Charlotte Temple
   Bring Style to class

4. Week of Sept. 27
   Read Life of P.T. Barnum

5. Week of Oct. 4
   Read Dream of the Rarebit Fiend
   Screening: What Happened on 23rd St. and other short films

6. Week of Oct. 11
   Editorial workshops, revising and modeling 3-paragraph essays
   Bring Style to class

7. Week of Oct. 18
   Read Jacob Riis, How the Other Half Lives (Google Books)
   3-paragraph essay due

8. Week of Oct. 25
   Editorial workshops, illustrating 3-paragraph essays
   3-paragraph essay due
   Bring Style to class

9. Week of Nov. 1
   Screening and discussion: Pick Up on South Street
   3-paragraph essay due

10. Week of Nov. 8
    Read Invisible Man
    3-paragraph essay due

11. Week of Nov. 15
    Invisible Man (continued)
    3-paragraph essay due
12. Week of Nov. 22 (incl. Thanksgiving)
   Read: *Traffic*

13. Week of Nov. 29
   Read *Sidewalk*
   3-paragraph essay due

14. Week of Dec. 6
    *Sidewalk* (continued)
    3-paragraph essay due

15. Week of Dec. 13
    Conclusion

Final papers due during exam week.