



Local arts news and information

How is arts journalism, news and information doing in your community?

Student activities at three levels:

Flashlight: Go on line with the class. Everyone pick a different local news site. How much arts does it cover in any given edition? Look at [Alexa](#) or other analytics sites to see if it gets much traffic. Now use the [Wayback Machine](#) to see how much arts coverage the same site did on a sample day five or 10 years ago. Plot the results in a graph.

Spotlight: In some communities, alternative newsweeklies pick up the slack in arts and entertainment coverage. [Find a nearby alt-weekly in the directory of the Association of Alternative Newsmedia](#). Visit the website of an alt-weekly and describe its content, particularly its coverage of the arts. Class discussion: Are there any outlets in your community that serve this function?

Searchlight: Brainstorm a list of local arts organizations with your students, who then divide them up. Each student meets with at least one nonprofit to discuss what role the campus media outlet(s) might play in a citywide arts event that would call attention to local organizations. Is there a role that does not cast the journalists as publicists?

Extra credit: Art can be hard news. Have students choose an artist who has been in the news and tell the story of that artist in the medium of that artist. Suggested starting places: “[Using Art and Art Controversy to Teach History](#),” by Robert McBride, Jr; [the SPARC website](#), about giving voice to the voiceless; “[Arts and Science: Friends or Foe?](#)”; or the [documentary Press Pause Play](#).