The Heroes and Scoundrels Journalism in Popular Culture Project is a brand-new journalism studies program that is unprecedented in its multimedia approach. The project, now available for faculty to use in a variety of classroom and research environments, consists of the following:

*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 and director of the Image of the Journalist in Popular Culture. The IJPC is a project of the Norman Lear Center at Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism at the University of Southern California.

As Professor Loren Ghiglione of Northwestern put it, “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.”

The book is now available from the University of Illinois Press and Amazon in all formats.

*The Video: The 40-hour companion to the book, written and produced by the authors, follows the outline of the book and is divided by the same chapters using voice-over for excerpts from more than 350 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 books,” says Saltzman.


*The Class: The Heroes and Scoundrels Project offers the faculty member everything needed to create the perfect IJPC class. A class syllabus is available from saltzman@usc.edu.

“Heroes and scoundrel, delightful and despicable, public servant and public menace – that is the image of the journalist that popular culture gives us,” write the authors. “Pop culture routinely makes the press matter by showing good journalism saving the day and bad journalism wreaking pain and havoc. It suggests that in spite of formidable obstacles and occasional wrenching change, the press and its noblest ideals will somehow endure. Therein lies the ‘unseen power’ of journalism’s popular image, and that is why it is necessary that we continue to study and care about it.”
The newbook, *Heroes and Scoundrels: The Image of the Journalist* follows 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.

Journalist Richard Reeves calls the book "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."

Drawing on portrayals of journalists in television, film, radio, novels, comics, plays, and other media, Ehrlich and Saltzman survey how popular media have depicted the profession across time. They cover 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.

“Popular culture can exaggerate both the best of what journalists do, as well as the worst,” Ehrlich says. But in doing so, “popular culture heightens how it matters, and I think that’s part of the reason why it’s important that we study popular culture and the stories that it tells about journalism.”

In writing *Heroes and Scoundrels*, the authors did not confine their study to the obvious and prominent examples, such as *All the President’s Men, The Killing Fields* or *Anchorman* or such TV series as *The Newsroom, Lou Grant* or *Murphy Brown*.

They examine depictions of journalism in all manner of movies and television shows, in books going back to the 1800s, and in cartoon series, graphic novels, short stories, plays, video games, poetry and music. They reference *The Daily Show*, “the news” on *Saturday Night Live*, and even the Muppet reporters on *Sesame Street*.

The thematically structured book explores how popular culture has portrayed journalism history, professional ethics and objectivity, and issues of race, gender and sexual orientation. Other chapters look at issues of power, image, war and the future of journalism.

The *Heroes and Scoundrels* Web site is available free of charge at [www.ijpc.org](http://www.ijpc.org). To obtain the 40-hour video, a faculty member, a department or a library must become an IJPC Associate to legally receive the video package free of charge.

For AEJMC members, the $50 IJPC Associate membership fee has been reduced to $35. The complete 40-hour video is available to IJPC Members on a 1TB hard drive in mp4 files in Apple or Windows format for $100. For AEJMC members and IJPC Associates,
the cost is $80 for the hard drive, shipping and handling. Since the video takes up about 300 GB, the rest of the hard drive – approximately 600 GB – is available for the faculty member to use for storage of video, photographs, articles and other instructional materials. AEJMC Members may order the entire $150 package for only $115.


Cover of the book: