

[MUSIC PLAYING]

RICHARD CAMPBELL: I teach Journalism 101, and one of the very first things I teach is there's no such thing as objectivity in journalism, and all journalism is biased.

CLARENCE PAGE: You know, one of the biggest myths about journalism in America, I think, is the notion that we're all supposed to be objective, or rather that it was always supposed to be objective. I think some people think objectivity is actually in the First Amendment or something. Folks who haven't actually read the First Amendment. But the fact is that objectivity came about as a commercial concept around the turn of the 19th century. Newspapers that were being accused of being yellow journalists, being sensationalist, they stressed as a marketing tool, you know, by the *New York Sun*, the objective newspaper, or whichever paper it was.

JOE RANDAZZO: You can watch *The Daily Show* and see something that's more truthful than what you are going to be able to read in the *New York Times* or watch on the *CBS Evening News*. There's so much, I think, that gets buried under the mantra of objectivity and this idea that traditional media and news sources are striving so hard to be objective that they're unaware of their own prejudices that are this huge wall that's there with everything that's reported and how things are reported and how the news is filtered through these sources.

RICHARD CAMPBELL: And somehow this notion of objectivity sort of got caught up as the sort of model that journalists should strive for. But it's a very sort of deceptive model, because it's not science. I mean, the first time a reporter chooses an image and chooses words to put on a page, they're in the business of literature, really, not in the business of science. Now what we want them to do is tell the best story they can given the limitations that they have. And the other thing that I say about the bias factor is the main bias-- A lot of people, when they talk about bias in journalism they want to talk about political bias. I think the biases that are more troubling in journalism are actually professional norms biases, and the biases in favor of story conflict.

CLARENCE PAGE: And that's what today causes a tension, now, between the need for straightforward reporting and the need to be titillated. People like the excitement of opinions that they can argue with. So I think that's something that we're going to keep seeing for a while. But basically, there's still a great demand out there for objectivity.