I. Corporate News and the Social Construction of “Unreality”

A. Structure of Corporate News

1. concentration of ownership

2. television news

a. shared monopoly

b. source for most Americans

B. Goal

1. profit: increase revenue

2. cut costs

3. expand viewership

4. maintain positive relationship with advertisers

C. Result

1. new as entertainment

a. news is “wrapper”

b. advertising is “package”

c. News director to anchor: “Don’t get too full of yourself. Just remember you fill up the empty space between commercial

2. new as propaganda

a. reinforce dominant narratives about American society

b. manufacture of consent

3. undermining of U.S. democracy

a. democracy and journalism

b. function of journalism in democracy

4. social construction of “unreality”

a. uninformed citizenry

b. passive populace

c. collective illusion about American society and the world

II. TV News as entertainment: The “look”

A. Hype: teasers throughout the day

B. “Branding”

1. “39 alive”

3. self-promotion

a. best helicopter

b. best team

c. most awards

C. Opening: musical theme and flashy visuals

1. helicopters

2. team in action

D. Team or family

1. handsome and attractive news readers, but not

too handsome or attractive

2. pleasant and ingratiating personalities, but convincing and sincere

3. they like each other and they like you

4. skill: read teleprompter without seeming to be reading

5. anchor/”star”

a. at national level millions of dollars

b. at local level hundreds of thousands

c. “breaking through the glass”

d. legitimizes news itself

6. “on the spot” reporters

7. the weatherman

a. more and more technology

b. cares about weather and you and gardening

c. very important - national level

8. sports anchors that are irreverent, tell it like it is

9. Features

a. cooking

b. consumer activist

F. Set

1. Impression of god's eye view

2. surveying the world

G. Stories: Look

1. Short visually stunning segments between 30 seconds and

two minutes

2. juxtaposed to suit advertisers

3. pods of commercials every three to five minutes

a. three minutes

b. about 30 seconds per, including advertising and promos

4. bumpers before the commercial, stay tuned.

H. Stories: Content

1. if it bleeds it leads

2. natural disasters

3. disease

4. car crashes, plane and train crashes

5. “war”

6. celebrities

7. political coverage is down, staff is down

a. coverage of campaign - polls and strategy

b. results of surveys

c. who won the debate?

a. surveys

b. pundits

I. Total news time

1. local: 10 minutes

2. national: 20 minutes

J. “Unreality”

1. “Fear being murdered by a stranger”

a. Annenberg Study

b. actions

c. policies supported

d. reality

2. “Death from Ebola”

a. chances of dying from Ebola

b. reality

3. “In a crisis the poor and minorities will loot, rob, rape and murder.”

a. New Orleans

b. reality

II. TV News as Propaganda

A. ? It is not directly controlled by government, how then can government

control it.

B. Control related to profit, but more related to the consequences of “cutting costs”

C. Cutting costs

1. close news bureaus all over world

2. fire staff, including reporters

3. no investigative reports

<http://www.thedailyshow.com/watch/mon-january-14-2013/investigating-investigative-journalism>

4. “shared services agreements” (83 markets)

a. video news stories

b. local interviews, graphics

c. scripts

D. Consequences for corporate “journalism”

1. dependent upon:

a. press releases: government and corporate

b. press conferences/briefings: government

c. public relations firms: VNR: video news release

d. government news releases (GNR)

e. centralized sources

i. AP, NYTimes

ii. stenographers for those in power (see a-d)

iii. native advertising

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E_F5GxCwizc&feature=youtu.be>

f. new journalistic norm

i. objectivity = “balance”

ii. present both sides

iii. journalist: remains neutral

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cjuGCJJUGsg>

g. experts

i. government officials, business execs,

Military and ex-military, intelligence and ex-intelligence

a. conflicts of interest

b. marginal professional or academic competence

c. no constraints on lying or misrepresenting the truth

d. acceptable boundaries of thought

ii.Think tanks: American Enterprise Institute, Brookings Institute

iii.pr firms: dial an “expert”

iv. front groups: American Council on Science and Health, Californians for Statewide Smoking Restrictions

VI. Consequences for dependency on corporate owned advertising supported news

VI. If it really were a liberal media.

A. Know about the political system.

1. how wealth biases the system?

2. how minorities have recently been disenfranchised again

B. The labor point of view>

1. the latest strike/lockout and no I don’t mean the baseball union

2. labor organization in American.

3. job security, benefits, wages adjusted for inflation

C. War

1. from the point of view of the potential victims

2. international law

3. war and the press

4. consequences of war

D. US foreign policy and dictators

1. history of supporting dictators

2. who do we support now? Inconsistencies

3. support for illegal military occupations

E. Trade agreements

1. who writes them?

2. how about people in third world, what do they think about them?

3. NAFTA Ch 11

A. Limited knowledge about the world.

B. Distorted knowledge about your vital interests.

C. Believe the world is more violent that it really is.

D. Believe that global problems are random like natural

disasters, including terrorism.

E. Believe most Americans are better off than they really are.