



ALL ABOUT NEWS

Chapter 1

“Television News: A Handbook for
Reporting, Shooting, Editing &
Producing”

DEFINING “NEWS”

- ◉ Anything that's new
- ◉ What people are talking about
- ◉ What people want to know
- ◉ What people need to know
- ◉ Information that affects us
- ◉ For our purposes, news is a product of credible news organizations attempting to present an accurate and fair look at stories and issues that have importance and relevance in the lives of listeners and viewers
- ◉ Our perspective is that news plays an important role in the successful functioning of our society

THE IMPORTANCE OF NEWS

- ◉ In the U.S., the First Amendment guarantees freedom of speech and freedom of the press
- ◉ America's founding fathers wanted citizens to be able to speak freely (including critically) of their government
- ◉ The press fills a vital role in informing vote
- ◉ The media fulfill the role of watchdog of the government
- ◉ And also maintain surveillance over business, the social value system and all aspects of life in our society
- ◉ An effective system of government requires that the public get quality news

NOT ALL NEWS IS CREATED EQUAL

- “Mainstream” news organizations strive to present the news without a particular viewpoint
- Examples: USA Today, New York Times, The Post and Courier, Time, Newsweek, CBS, ABC, NBC evening news programs
- Mainstream news professionals believe in the cornerstones of journalism: fairness, balance, objectivity, and accuracy
- “Bias” in the news is often in the eye of beholder
- Ethical mainstream news media exhibit a clear difference between editorials/commentaries and news items
- Slanted/biased news coverage examples?

“MAINSTREAM IMITATORS”

- Today, with so many news media outlets, some programming clearly imitates mainstream media, but, in fact, presents subtle, unstated or distinct points of views that mainstream news media would find both unethical and unacceptable.
- Examples:
 - Rush Limbaugh, Sean Hannity, Bill O’Riley, Chris Matthews, Rachel Maddow, among others
- Viewers should be aware of such possible political “spin” even in news and public affairs presentations and seek out other perspectives for a more balanced understanding

NEWS CHARACTERISTICS

- ◉ Conflict
- ◉ Uniqueness
- ◉ Prominence
- ◉ Impact
- ◉ Relevance
- ◉ Location
- ◉ Human interest

GOOD REPORTER CHARACTERISTICS

- ◉ Strong sense of ethics
- ◉ Curiosity
- ◉ Desire to get the story right
- ◉ Healthy skepticism
- ◉ Enjoy being with people
- ◉ Persistence
- ◉ Organization
- ◉ Ability to be a team player
- ◉ Willingness to accept criticism
- ◉ Flexibility