

# TV News

Foundations of Journalism

Emerson College

Spring 2013

# TV News

- Time constrained
- Linear - stories viewed in order they're presented

# News Judgment

- To determine:
  - What leads the broadcast
  - What stories will appear in the broadcast
  - Order in which the stories appear
  - Length of the stories

# Tricks of the TV News Trade

- Keep it short
- Grab the viewer right away
- Make it feel urgent
- Own the story
- Make it look good
- Make it entertaining
- Make it more personal

# Keep it short

- TV news aims for:
  - Variety of story topics
  - High story count
  - Packages that run fewer than 2 minutes
  - Anchor copy that goes fewer than 20 seconds

# Grab the viewer

- The lead story is often chosen based on its:
  - urgency / breaking news value
  - timeliness
  - compelling video
  - high-interest
  - importance
  - relevance
  - proximity
- Larger stories may be “teased,” but most newsworthy story will always lead.

# Urgency

- Some ways producers seek to make a newscast feel urgent:
  - live reports from the field
  - flashy graphics and animation
  - sound effects
  - hype
  - repetition
  - teases

# Own the story

- A network can own a story even if it doesn't break it.
- More distinctive and aggressive reporting
- Excessive use of the word "exclusive"
  - Exclusive means you're the only network with the source/information.
    - Often over/misused in media
- Elaborate attempts to reinforce the brand using titles, logos and graphics



# Look Good

- Important to supplement TV stories that lack strong visuals.
- Can be done by using:
  - graphics
  - artist renditions
  - file tape / archive video
  - interviews
  - reporters on camera
  - audio

# Entertain

- Employing techniques from entertainment (non-news) TV in an attempt to captivate viewers:
  - rapid editing
  - extreme close-ups
  - dramatic music
  - fancy graphics
  - sound effects
  - sensational video

# Personalize

- Look to engage the viewer by connecting on a personal/emotional level.
- Stories that:
  - inform you
  - move you
  - forge an emotional connection
  - engage you
  - elicit an emotional response
  - keep your attention
  - amuse you

# Types of Coverage

- Breaking news
- Planned events

# Breaking News

- “Breaking News” - unexpected event of great importance OR major news that is happening in this moment.
- “Developing story” - news as it relates to a major story is coming in.
- Sometimes used interchangeably.

# Planned Events

- Events that are date/time specific
- Coverage can be planned in advance.
- Major stories will generally warrant live and taped coverage.
  - On-site live coverage

# Types of Reporting

- Live reporting
- Taped stories

# Live Reporting

- Name largely says it all.
- Reporting the news live, as it happens
- Often from the scene.
- Providing audience up-to-date info as soon as possible.



# Taped Stories

- Stories are shot, reported and produced by a team for use in newscasts.
- Stories can be produced for same day or can be produced for future date.
- Can cover all manner of topics

# TV News Providers

- Broadcast networks
- Local stations
- 24-hour cable networks
- Public television

# Broadcast News

- Also referred to as Network News:  
Traditional, non-cable networks (Fox, CBS, NBC, ABC)
  - Have local and national newscasts
  - Also news magazines, news morning shows
  - Local stations = affiliates

# Local Stations

- Focused primarily on events of interest to viewers in their markets.
- They generally air news broadcasts in the early morning, early evening and late evening, following their prime-time programming.
- Local stations affiliated with or owned by a broadcast network also carry network's news programs, but local and network programs are produced by completely separate newsrooms.

# 24-hour cable news

- 24/7 news coverage
  - MSNBC, CNN, Fox News
  - Also beat specific ESPN (Sports), CNBC (Finance)
- Move toward news and analysis
- Within U.S. domestic market, partisan shift (unless beat specific)
  - Not as much with international 24-hour cable networks

# Public Television

- Publicly funded news and local affairs programming.
  - PBS, WGBH

# Process

- How News Gets On-air
- Generating a story idea
  - Assignment editor
- Shooting the story
- Writing a script
- Approving a script
- Editing the story
- Writing anchor copy
- Reading final anchor copy and scripts

# Pros

- Witness.
- Verification.
- Visual and auditory storytelling
  - Emotional connection



# Cons

- CONS OF TV NEWS
- It can ignore or under-report important stories that lack visual elements.
- Not all stories are visual medium.
- Time constraints.
- Linear

# News

- Information gathered by journalists that can be verified by reliable, authoritative and independent sources.

# Raw information

- Information distributed from one party to another without editorial filters or verification.
- Social media age

# Other

- Propaganda
  - Information generated by government or political movements using manipulation and deception in order to garner support or trigger action.
- Advertising
  - Information generated by advertising agencies to sell products and services.

# Other

- **Publicity**
  - Information distributed by public relations companies to enhance the image of an individual or company.
- **Entertainment**
  - Information intended to create alternative realities, amuse and generate revenue.