



Video Resources: About 38 Minutes, so you'll have to pick and choose.

 campdeath.wmv Length: 00:02:46	 perrytop10.wmv Length: 00:03:07
 CarCamEd.wmv Length: 00:02:06	 Power of TV montage.wmv Length: 00:01:41
 FEMA_Trailer.wmv Length: 00:03:37	 RatsTacoBell.wmv Length: 00:02:33
 gaddafi1.wmv Length: 00:01:32	 reporterdangers.wmv Length: 00:02:19
 gaddafi2.wmv Length: 00:01:58	 Taurus_Report.wmv Length: 00:02:22
 gaddafi3.wmv Length: 00:00:49	
 gotcha.wmv Length: 00:04:45	
 Guns_on_Campus.wmv Length: 00:01:42	
 hit_and_run.wmv Length: 00:01:47	
 newmontage11.wmv Length: 00:04:09	

Deconstructing TV News



How to Evaluate Television News

(Lecturer: You've got to stay out of the way of the video in this lecture, you have to speak less, ask more. I'm just sayin')

Students have by now used the deconstruction guide on a number of print stories and have wrestled with ethical questions about certain images and facts.

Today we apply the principles of deconstruction to TV news stories, with all the unique presentation elements of TV, natural sound vs. introduced sound, editing techniques, etc.

(In preparation for the final, they'll rehearse these lessons on the Poynter NewsU course built by Marcy, so there's plenty of practice before the final.)

Deconstructing TV News



WNBC News Rats Out KFC/Taco Bell

Let's look at this local TV News story.

Be thinking about that deconstruction process...and about not letting the images overwhelm your intellect.

As you watch, be thinking:

Is this reliable information with which you can make a decision, take action, make a judgment?

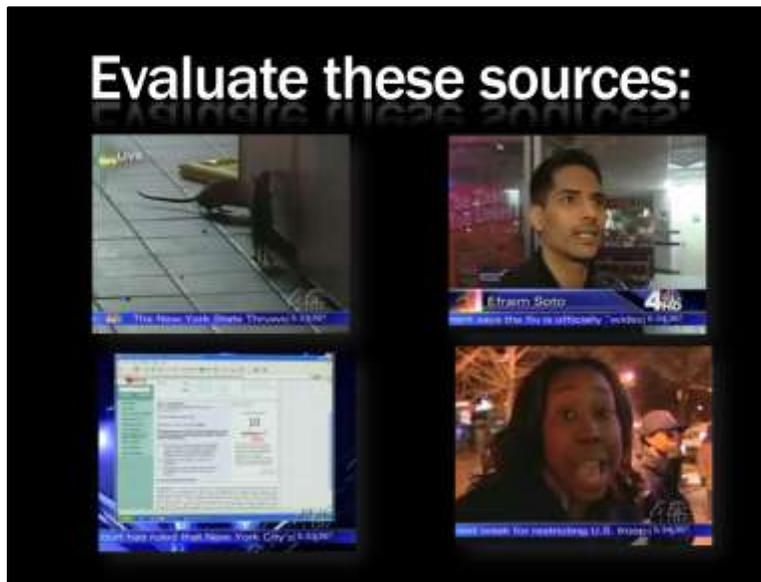
What could you rationally conclude?

INSERT RATSTACOBELL.WMV

(NEWS FELLOW LINK RATS VIDEO HERE)

Runs 2:33

Evaluate these sources:



Deconstruction of rats story

Direct evidence: Live video of rats

Verification: NYC health Department documents

Fairness and Transparency: reporter cites Health Dept website, but report does NOT give the consumer enough evidence to suggest who is at fault and why.

No mention of response from KFC/Taco Bell

Is the video of rats over-used to gain viewers?

Again, what can you conclude, rationally?

Advantages of TV News

- It makes you a witness to important events in real time
- It can be a powerful tool for verification
 - It makes news personal, relatable
 - It creates a national experience

Reiterating last week's lessons:

It makes you a witness to important events in real time

It can be a powerful tool for verification

It gives you personal storytelling: a strong connection to people in the news

It can create a shared national experience

(Think Chile, Man on the Moon)

Disadvantages of TV News

- Airtime is limited, brevity rules, so context is often sacrificed
- Powerful personalities and emotions distract viewers from facts
- Important stories without good video get little or no air-time

It CAN BE limited by time

It may rely too heavily on personalities, emotions, opinions...not facts

It can shortchange complex stories or avoid them altogether.



And, TV News lives inside an entertainment medium.

After he flubbed the Las Vegas debate, Republican Presidential candidate Gov. Rick Perry of Texas, went on Letterman to do the Top 10 reasons he couldn't remember the third federal agency he wanted to eliminate.

(Run tape)

perrytop10.wmv

NEWS FELLOW, PLEASE LINK VIDEO TO THIS SLIDE

(AFTER IT RUNS) This highlights another confusing aspect of TV News: it lives inside an entertainment medium and some forms of entertainment might look like news.

In this case, Perry's flub was big news. Among the ways he tried to do damage control was by making fun of himself on late night television.

Now, it might be news that he did this.

And his supporters feel that he was funny and self-deprecating on Letterman, which may remove some of the sting of his mixups.

ASK: But is this broadcast a news broadcast?

(Break it down along the V.I.A. lines if they are mixed up and say it is)

Lessons for the TV News Consumer:

Be active, not passive: Keep your brain engaged.

- **Supplement TV news with web, radio and print news.**

Understand TV's limitations, rely on its strengths.

Reiterating again,

Understand TV's limitations....but also appreciate its strengths

-Use TV as one of many news sources, not your only news source.

BE actively involved—pay attention

And when there's a big event, turn to cable for non-stop reporting.

Test #2
Recitation after Thanksgiving
Covering Lectures 7-12
Be there.

The University Schedule

Weird, again, for a little while.
Tuesday the 22nd follows a
Thursday schedule.



Your Evaluations Help Us Improve the Course

Online evaluation site will soon open

Responses are completely anonymous (It's an off-site contractor)

Instructors and lecturers only see data after all grades are released.

Past student evaluations have led to:

- Changes in course textbooks
- Changes in assignments
- Changes in faculty (both retention and release)

Online Evaluation system

Students have received notice that the University's online evaluation system is now open.

I ask you personally to participate. This kind of feedback is valuable to me in my work.

I ask you as a professional to evaluate all of your professors.

Final Essay: We're Looking for One Good Letter

- Reads like a letter, not a research paper.
- Demonstrates you've learned to spot and ignore junk news.
- Demonstrates you know how to find reliable news
- Demonstrates you know how to use news for:
 - ✓ Making a decision,
 - ✓ Taking action, or
 - ✓ Making a judgment

Your writing should reveal your process of evaluating news reports.

All the President's Men
An extra credit opportunity
for Thanksgiving Break

Truth and Verification in the “Wasteland” report on 60 Minutes



This slide is intended to prompt a discussion of the Wasteland assignment



Change Your news website.

The remaining quizzes this semester will be drawn from Fox News.

Remember, **not** Fox 5 local news.

The Fox News Cable Channel, or Fox News.com

And if you do use cable, remember Fox promises all weekday programming from 9-4 and 6-8 observes the rules of journalism.

Deconstructing TV News



How to Evaluate Television News

SLIDE: And now for the lecture at hand

Types of TV News Reporting

- Breaking News**
- Planned Major Events**
- Taped Stories for Broadcasts**
- Live Reporting**

When you watch TV news it all falls into 4 types

1. Breaking Stories
2. Planned Major Events
3. Taped Stories
4. Live Reporting

Live TV News Can Be Dangerous



Slide: Live TV can be dangerous to your health.



Reporterdangers.wmv

NEWS FELLOW: Please link Dangers TV
Reporter video here
Runs 2:19



We've talked about the reporting and editing process in print and online. Television is similar in that a field team puts together a report, typically written by the producer and then as the show gets moved toward broadcast, higher-ranking producers review and rewrite or re-cut the story. The market plays a major role, in television. Since ratings are available and reliable, they heavily influence what gets aired.

As you learned in Professor Miller's online snoozer video...Ratings dictate ad rates and station or network revenue so... if there's one over-arching bias in TV it is a bias in favor of ratings, although news drivers and the mission of journalism also influence coverage decisions.

What gets watched gets replicated.

What doesn't get watched does not.

(...and so forth)

Deconstruction is Deconstruction

- 1) Summarize the main points: Does the promo and the lead-in support the main point(s)?
- 2) How close does the reporter come to opening the freezer? Is the evidence direct or arm's-length?

When the topic really matters to you and you're getting ready to make a decision or take action...you better be sure you're working from reliable information.

Let's review the standard Deconstruction Worksheet.

These guidelines are applicable across all platforms.

Deconstruction is Deconstruction

- 3) Evaluate the reliability of the sources using I'M VA/IN
- 4) Does the reporter make his/her work transparent?
- 5) Does the reporter place the story in context?

3. Are the sources reliable? (Are you reacting to them, or analyzing them?)
4. Does the reporter make his or her work transparent? How does the reporter know what is being reported?
5. Does the reporter place the story in context?

Deconstruction is Deconstruction

6) Are the key questions answered?

- Who -What -When -Where? -Why? -How?

7) Is the story fair?

(ANIMATION: who, what, when where, why, who all fade in, in succession.)

6. Are the key questions answered? (And what is left out.)

7. Is the story balanced? Should it be? Is it fair to the evidence and to key stakeholders?

Questions Unique to TV News:

- Are you being manipulated by the speed of cuts or types of transitions?
- Is the sound added or altered?
- Is this story suited to TV's strengths?

Deconstructing TV, you will use the same approach you use in deconstructing any other news report, but with these added questions specific to TV:

1. Are you being manipulated by video, audio or production techniques?
2. Skilled video editors say “Ears don’t blink” and they use sound to tell their story as much as the visuals. Pay attention to sound, particularly music. How does it change your perception of the story? Is it natural to the scene or has anything been added, especially music.

Deconstructing TV News



A Hit and Run Accident

Let's look at a routine story.

A follow-up on a hit-and-run fatality, in which the reporter talks to the defendant and the victim's mother after a bail hearing.



News Fellow: Link Hit-and-Run video here)
Runs 1:47

Evaluate these sources:



DECONSTRUCTING HIT & RUN

EVALUATE THESE SOURCES:

MRS. CASINO: Mother of victim

MR. MORALES: Suspect

To what extent does the emotion carried on this tape overwhelm your ability to analyze, intellectually, the information?

What is asserted? What is verified?

Is this report fair, balanced?



Monday, April 16, 2007

In two separate attacks, approximately two hours apart, Seung-Hui Cho, an imbalanced student, killed 32 people and wounded 25 others before committing suicide. The deadliest peacetime shooting incident by a single gunman in US history, on or off a school campus.

Virginia tech graduate student Jamal Albarghouti captured video of the deadly shooting on his cell phone, which launches this story about the reaction, which in some places has been to encourage people to carry guns on campus.

Utah so far is the only state with a law allowing concealed weapons on state campuses, but at least 14 states introduced 35 bills that would allow students and faculty to carry concealed weapons on state colleges and universities or loosen restrictions on gun bans on campuses, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.



NEWS FELLOW: Link Guns on Campus
Video here
Runs 1:42



(Animation: Lecturer clicks to bring up each source.)

Evaluate these sources in the CNN story
Campus gun advocate Michael Flitcraft
Professor Ron Holt

University of Cincinnati Police Chief Gene
Ferrara

Student #1

Student #2

Student #3

ASK: What conclusion can you draw from this story? What else would you need to make a decision, take action or make a judgment? Are there any dubious production techniques worth noting?

Deconstructing TV News



FEMA Trailers Making Residents Sick?

(This is a remarkable piece of TV journalism. Which is why we keep using it.)

This is a report on formaldehyde fumes in some of the FEMA trailers in Louisiana and Mississippi - CBS news.

Again, keep track of those deconstruction points as you watch.

Is there reliable information in this that can form the basis of a conclusion?

Imagine your grandmother is being moved into a FEMA trailer in Connecticut because the power company still can't re-connect her to the grid.



(News Fellow: Insert FEMA trailers video here)
Runs 3:33



(Example of verification process, fairness, transparency; good use of named, authoritative and independent sources.

- Mother of child: Self-interest and asserting, but authoritative as to child and a direct witness
- Dr. Kneedle: Independent, authoritative, verifies.
- Plant Worker: Asserts, but an eye witness and possibly independent (depending on circumstances of departure)
- Company Statement: Self-interested, authoritative as to itself, cites verifiable federal standards, asserts as to safety.
- Sierra Club: No financial or personal stake, cites research but as an advocacy group that holds a definite point of view, not exactly independent.
- EPA document: Verifies health concerns
- Bureaucrat: (source of drama material)
- Air tester: Reporter is opening the freezer by doing test himself

Deconstructing TV News



A Teen Boot Camp Death

Here's another kind of investigative or enterprise reporting.

Again, let's pay attention to prepare for the final, you'll be sent to News U. to deconstruct this story.



CampDeath.wmv

As you watch this report, take note of the sources and evidence and start judging the reliability of the report. Who is to blame for the death of this child? Is the story fair? What's missing?



(Animation: Lecturer has to click to bring up each screen grab)

ASK: What do you notice?

Now, as to sources, let's break them down using IMVAIN analysis.

ASK: **The Mother?**

ASK: **Congressman Miller, the legislative expert?**

ASK: **The State of Texas Investigation?**

ASK: **Government Accountability Office?**

(Many students have not heard of the GAO. Congress Proposes director, President appoints to 15-year term)

1. Mother: self-interest, knowledgeable but not a witness. She asserts, without verification: *"he died and suffered so badly... he begged for help... The last 200 yards were the worst."*
 2. Lone Star Boot Camp's website: verifies statements made about their recruiting
 3. GAO report makes conclusions based on evidence collected
 4. Rep. George Miller: Independent, Authoritative as a legislative expert, also his reputation is for investigation of shady operations, so he has perspective.
 5. GAO Audio: Direct evidence to back statements about referral agencies
- Fairness:** Reporter gets boot camp organization, response from Lone Star website.

Transparency: Reporter shows document, plays audio (but isn't clear enough about its provenance)

ASK: What can you conclude from this report?\

Did anyone open the freezer?



(vice squad sting operation)

Take notes. This is like the final. You want to be noticing deconstruction points, Good and Bad. Listen to the language used by the anchors and the reporter

Listen to the sign-off

Listen for any sounds that may have been enhanced or added.

Note the way the video and sound are cut and edited together. Are there any emotional manipulations?

Is the report fair, balanced? What about transparency...context...opening the freezer?

Ready?



gotcha.wmv

News Fellow: Link Operation Gotcha Video
here

Runs 4:45



Click to bring up each screen grab

DECONSTRUCTING OPERATION GOTCHA

1. Detective in surveillance van (any defense attorney, ACLU, law professor-type commenting on the validity of police tactics?)
2. Perp #1: Fair to him?
3. Perp #2: Fair to him?
4. Sign-Off chatter between anchor and reporter

ASK: How about that hand-cuff sound?
Natural or enhanced?

ASK: How many times did they use the shot of the
“hooker” officer in hot pants? (Next slide counts
them)



Operation gotcha screen grabs of the hooker shots.
Animation automatically reels them off.
Those tight shorts get shown 24 times.



As you recall from Prof. Miller's continuation video last week, the TV news business is enormously competitive, ratings driven and now it, like newspaper and radio journalism, is being upended by web tv.

Viewers watch when they want, pick the stories they want and in the order they want. ASK: What power does that give you? (Content that gets your traffic gets rewarded. So, if you ignore reliable, all that gets out is junk.)

ASK: If you're driven by links and shout-outs, what stories might you be missing on TV news, whether you watch it on cable, online or on You Tube via your phone?

This is a little primer to get you started thinking about issues we tackle in next week's lecture about News on the Web.

But for this week, here are the overall lessons for TV deconstruction, which will be on the test in this week's recitation.

Rules for the TV News Consumer Be Aware of the Sinners

- Show **and refer to only one point of view**
- Language and or **production techniques that can manipulate your emotions**
- Little or **no independent reporting**
- Only one eyewitness; **no sourcing**

(Animation: each click brings one up. This continues for the Sinners and the Winners slides)

Here's a reminder of the rules for smarter TV Viewing: Be aware of the SINNERS

- Be aware of the stories that show and refer to only one point of view
- Be aware of hype - language and or production techniques that can manipulate your emotions
- Be aware of stories that have little or no independent reporting
- Be aware of stories with only one eye witness; no sourcing
- LISTEN, LISTEN, LISTEN!

Rules for the TV News Consumer
Look for the Winners

•Differing viewpoints of a controversial story

•First-hand accounts, good sourcing, credible eyewitnesses, independent, verified information

LOOK FOR THE WINNERS

- Look for differing viewpoints of a controversial story
- Look for first-hand accounts, good sourcing, credible eyewitnesses, independent, verified information
- Look for comprehensive news stories. Did you learn who, what, where, when, why and how?
- Look for verification, transparency and context
- Deconstruct as you watch. Don't be a sponge.

Rules for the TV News Consumer Look for the Winners

- Comprehensive :Did you learn, "who, what, when, where, why and how"?
- Verification, transparency and context.

LOOK FOR THE WINNERS

- Look for differing viewpoints of a controversial story
- Look for first-hand accounts, good sourcing, credible eyewitnesses, independent, verified information
- Look for comprehensive news stories. Did you learn who, what, where, when, why and how?
- Look for verification, transparency and context
- Deconstruct as you watch. Don't be a sponge.

Assignments Coming Up

25 minutes, Required and on Blackboard
“TV News By The Numbers”
A short video



You'll be Quizzed on This Material

(Lecturer: Here's where you tell students that after lecture, they need to go to Blackboard to watch **“TV News By The Numbers,”** a 25-minute extension of this lecture. It covers some of the economic aspects of TV that news consumers need to understand.)



hus endeth the Lesson...

TV News and the Web



ABC News Reports on a New Camera

On-Board Car Camera story on ABC



News Fellow Link Car Cam video here Runs 2:06

After it runs.

Ask: What are the main points of this report?

What can you conclude about the causes of wrecks?

About the location of wrecks?

About using cell phones while driving?

What is the evidence: (one-off video, reference to 3.5M recordings of wrecks, source is company)

Is there introduced sound or editing that might manipulate you. (crash video is powerful. Unknown if screams are real or enhanced.)

Evaluate the sources. (This is a one-source wonder: the CEO who sells this item)

If you're a parent, does this report make you want one of these devices?

The reporter says DriveCam released the example videos because it wants others to learn from drivers who had wrecks. Do you find this helpful?

How often did the "Drive Cam Video" label run? (9x in 2 minutes)

Is there context? Did the reporter open the freezer?

Now tell students: This was a VNR, just like the video games VNR in Lecture 3, with little or no independent reporting.

Does that change your view of the report?

What piece of transparency is missing?



(By now, students may be coming up with these points)

- Story was one-sided – only those supporting Taurus were represented
- Ford Corp not represented
- Anchor used judgmental language (“...Ford took a winning idea and drive it into the ground.”)
- Assertions without verification (“...if Ford wanted to save the Taurus, they could have.”)
- Heavy with self-interested sources (Taurus fan club president, car dealer, sales manager)

Deconstructing TV News



ABC Reports on the Ford Taurus

Let's look at a Network TV package. It's an old piece, but if you're paying attention, it carries lots of lessons you can use to practice deconstructing TV in real time.

Ford Taurus, ABC news

As you watch, think about the deconstruction questions

Insert Taurus here

NEWS FELLOW: PLEASE LINK TAURUS
VIDEO
HERE.
Runs 2:22

Evaluate these sources:



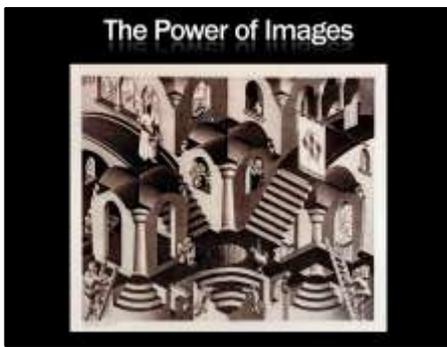
Evaluate these sources, using the I'M VA/IN vocabulary.

DELORENZO: Independent, authoritative, automotive analyst, mostly asserts

ALAN VIGIL: Self-interested, authoritative Ford dealer, asserts

MR. TAURUS FAN: Self-interested, uninformed, asserts

TRAVIS RENDER: Self-interested, authoritative, sales manger, asserts



How do we see the world?

CLICK FADES IN “Convex and Concave” by M.C. Escher

Is our visual sense a precise system of sensors and neurons that take in data and recognize archetypes?

(CLICK 2: directs students’ eyes to the left side guy on ladder, woman carrying water)

Does our mind mechanically harvest shadow and light until all the dots add up to...Man, Ladder, woman, staircase? That’s one view (James Gibson, father of modern psychology of visual perception)

OR

(CLICK: Directs students’ eyes to the right side, man carrying materials up ladder, lead on the edge of a ceiling, overhung by a massive staircase corbel.)

Is that visual data mostly lost in transmission through the soggy mess of our nervous system, leaving us to guess what’s in front of us?

In this model, proposed by Psychologist Richard Gregory, our prior experience and prior knowledge are at least as important as each moment’s new visual data, which we make sense of by what we already know. Ladders lean, ceilings hang, water runs downhill...

This is one of those debates that doesn’t seem to be settled yet.

Knowing what we know about the ways our cognitive dissonance warp our perceptions and memories, it makes sense to think about the visual element of our search for reliable information. Are our perceptions based on what is actually reflecting light in front of us? Or are our perceptions a reflection of the experiences that lie behind us?

(CLICK: Brings back the whole image)