



How informative is the Daily Show?

Does it Alert, Divert or Connect?

Last week we talked about the battle to control information.

That battle is waged daily on the websites and social media sites you use, as information peddlers of all kinds try to get your attention, push a point of view, sell something, promote their self interest, or sell ads around media that entertains you.

And often they disguise their effort as news.

We will begin today to fill out the grid that helps you distinguish different types of information, and establish lesson one for smart news consumers: Always know what information neighborhood you are in.



ASK:

- What is journalism?
- Who is a journalist?
- So...Is Jon Stewart a journalist?

(This is just meant to stimulate discussion and set the table for the lecture.)

Here's a Daily Show story about a small political movement to make Long a separate state from New York.

LECTURER: CLICK NOW TO LAUNCH DAILY SHOW SAMANTHA BEE STORY ABOUT LONG ISLAND SECESSION MOVEMENT (2:16)



NEWS FELLOW: LINK (INSERT) VIDEO TO THIS SLIDE AND SELECT “START AUTOMATICALLY” AFTER VIDEO RUNS...

**ASK: So...Is it Journalism or Not?  
What’s the evidence for your answer?**

Today, you’ll start using a new set of critical thinking skills that will help you decide for yourself in a logical way.

Big word I want you to memorize and learn today: Taxonomy...An arrangement of objects or ideas into a hierarchy or systematic set of classifications.

A taxonomy works like this: Park Slope is a subset of Brooklyn and Brooklyn is a subset of New York City.

Using your Taxonomy of Information Neighborhoods, we will map the information landscape, noting boundaries between news, promotion, propaganda, and raw information.

As we practice these skills today, we’ll continually return to these questions:

How is news different from other information?

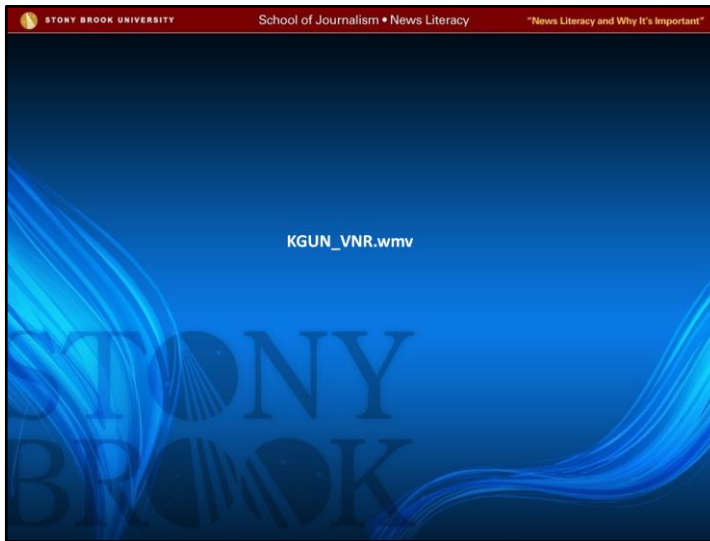
How can we tell the difference?

Why does it matter?



You're watching the evening news when this segment on electronic games airs. Tucson Channel 9's News Anchors, toss to Robin Raskin for some information about holiday gifts.

**LECTURER: CLICK NOW TO LAUNCH VIDEO (3:38)**



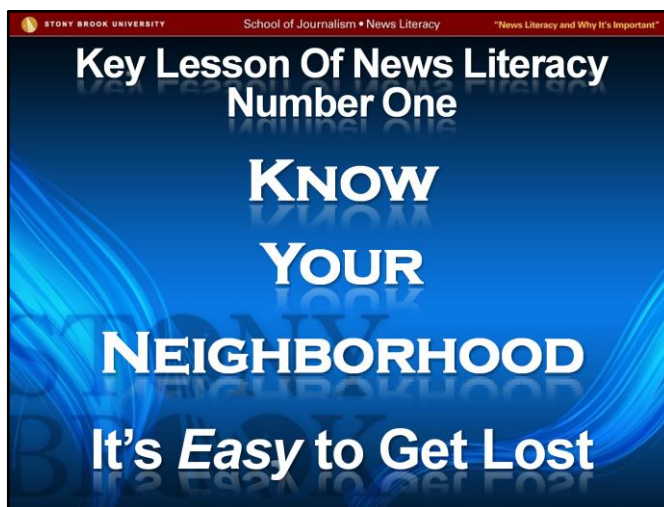
NEWS FELLOW: LINK (INSERT) VIDEO TO THIS SLIDE AND SELECT “START AUTOMATICALLY”

**(Lecturer...after video runs, but before you click to next slide)**

Was that journalism?

Why or why not?

Don't be surprised if it's a bit murky. Smart people with big budgets aim to make it confusing.



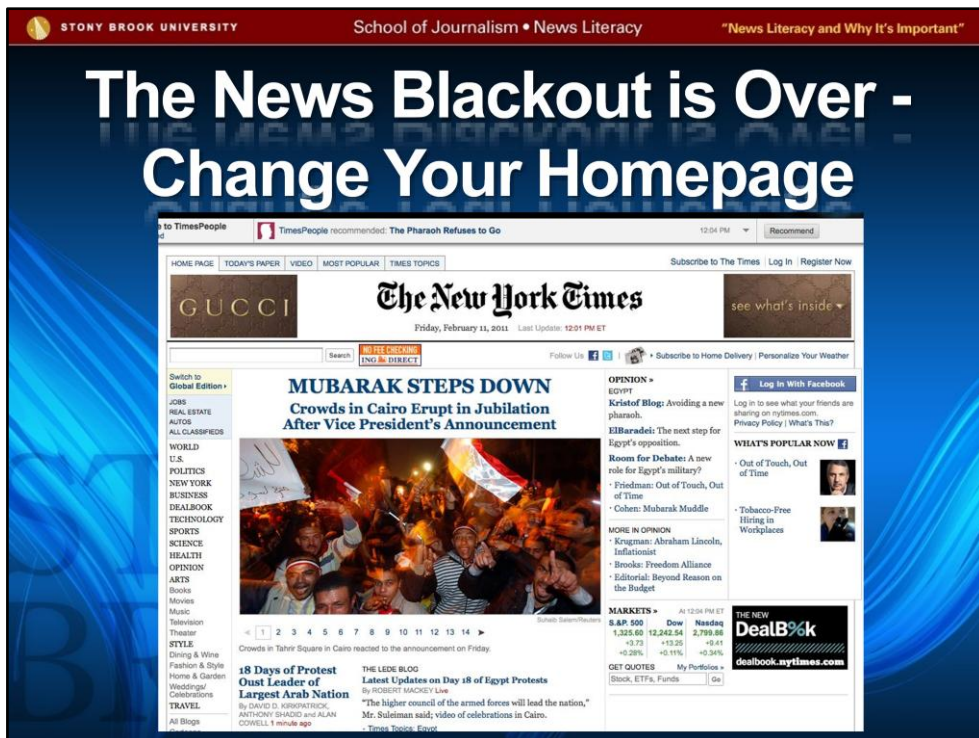
It's easy to get lost with so much information out there, plus there are people looking to benefit or profit from misleading you.

Which is what makes the first of the key rules of News Literacy so important:

“Know your neighborhood.”

Write that in big letters in your notes. After the housekeeping break, we'll return to that idea.

*Now to some housekeeping*



SLIDE: Blackout is over.  
Change your homepage and read the news daily. The news is your third “textbook.”  
Weekly News Quizzes begin next week.  
All questions are drawn from the NYT....for now





(Name is pronounced “Yahsson AH-ten-AH-SeeYAHduss”)

Every semester, the School of Journalism brings top journalists to campus to share with students their life experiences and their observations about news literacy. News Literacy students earn extra credit points for attending these evening lectures, which require tickets, but are free. You swipe your ID card to register your attendance. It can rescue your grade at semester’s end.

The first speaker of this semester is Iason Athanasiadis, a photojournalist, writer and video producer. Based in Istanbul, Turkey, he writes and takes pictures for a variety of publications in the USA and the UK, including the BBC, The Guardian, The Washington Times, and The Toronto Star. When protesters took over Tahrir Square two weeks ago, he flew to Cairo to cover the massive protests there for Corbis photo agency and other publishers.

In 2009, while covering the protests that followed the disputed presidential election in Tehran, Athanasiadis was held for 20 days of interrogation by Iranian police. He’ll speak to us about the themes from Lecture 2.



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# **"News Matters"**

## **Three Easy Steps to extra credit**

**Step 1:**  
**Find a news story that:**

- A. Illustrates a Course Concept**
- Or**
- B. Affects Stony Brook students**

As we have mentioned before, you can also earn homework points for contributing to the "News Matters" portion of lecture, in which you determine what news matters to you and connect it to News Literacy.

Here's how you do it.

1. Read the news, watching for connections.

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# News Matters Three Easy Steps Step 2: Fill in this template

(it's on Blackboard)

2. Go to Blackboard, grab the slide template and build a slide that explains what you chose and why. Try to find a visual to illustrate the story.



The Template looks like this

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# News Matters

Like this...

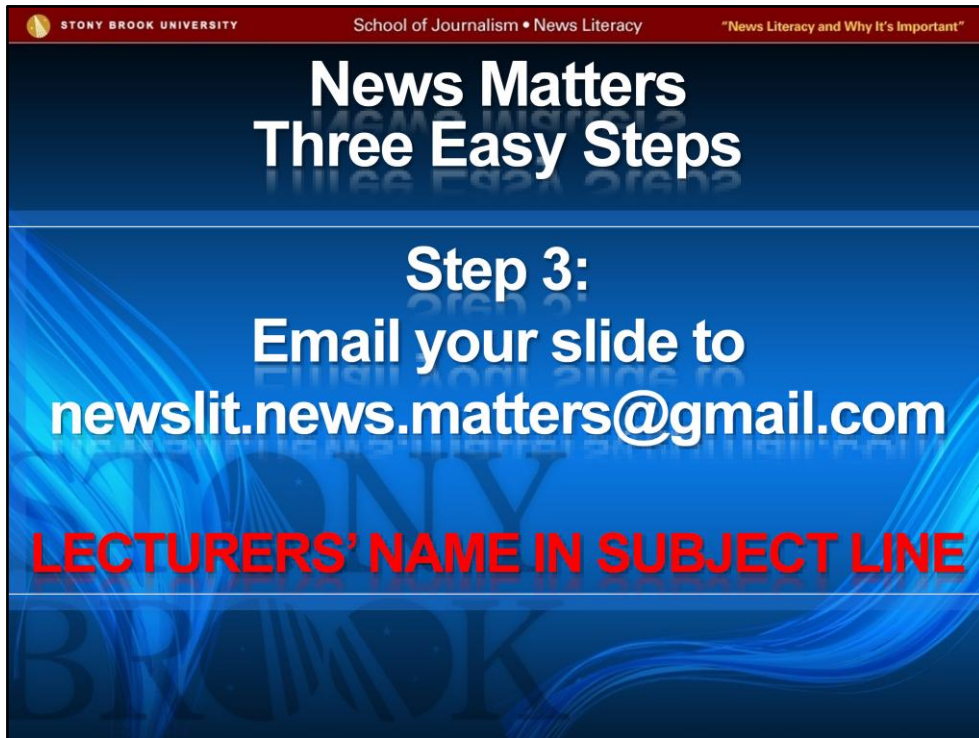


*Power of Information: Greek Journalist Jailed in Tehran*

10/10/10

Submitted by: Stu Dint  
Recitation Instructor: Ti Tcher

A properly filled-in template looks like this

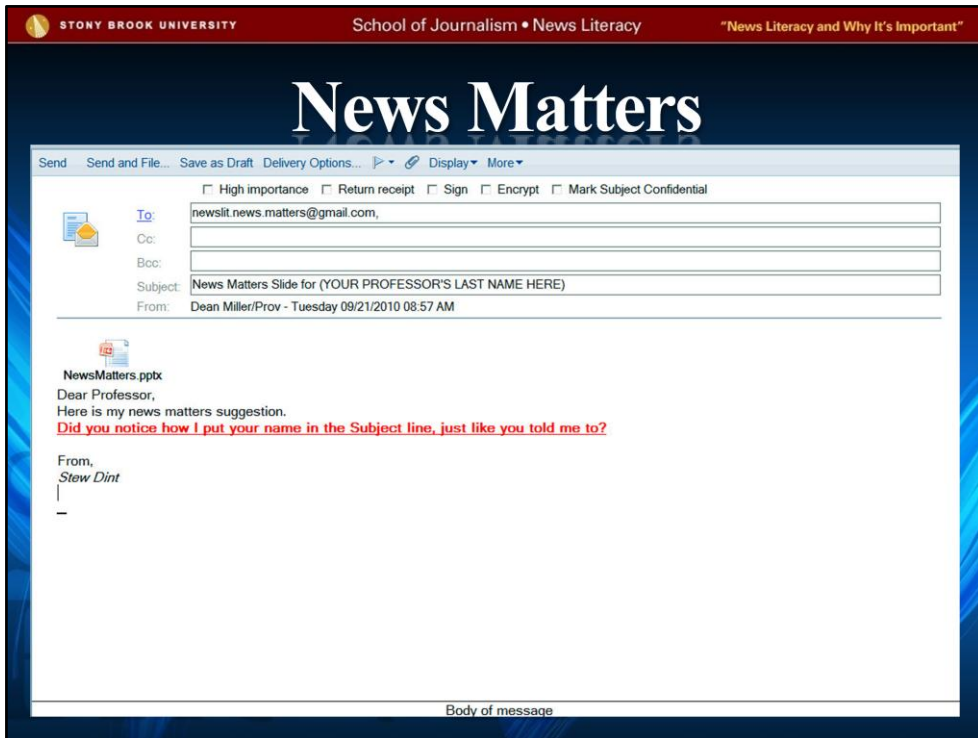


Step 3. Attach your slide (after saving it as a one-slide powerpoint slideshow) to an email, sent to

[NEWSLIT.NEWS.MATTERS@GMAIL.COM](mailto:NEWSLIT.NEWS.MATTERS@GMAIL.COM)

**The subject line should be one word: Your lecturer's last name**





LIKE THIS: AN EMAIL WITH THE ATTACHMENT

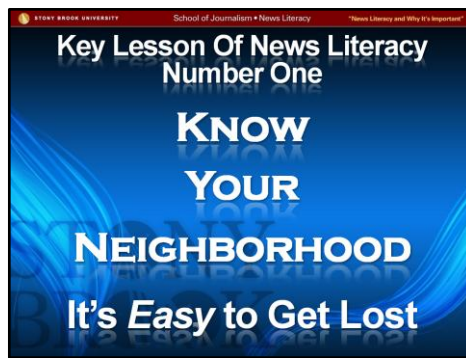
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**News Matters...it's your turn**  
**newslit.news.matters**  
**@gmail.com**

See Blackboard for directions:  
"Course Information" link  
"Extra Credit" folder

Once again, the email  
address to send to is...  
**newslit.news.matters**  
**@gmail.com**





What do we mean by “Know Your Neighborhood?”

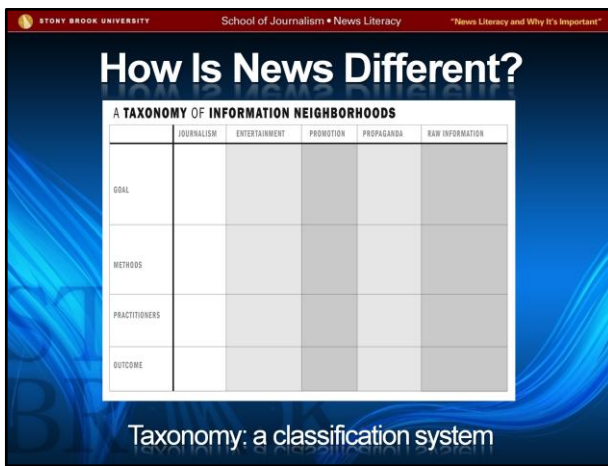
As you search for actionable information, you’re going to go through different information “neighborhoods”. It’s particularly obvious online, but there are also degrees of trustworthiness among publications, television news teams and radio shows.

We use neighborhoods as a metaphor to help you think about the difference between safe, reliable information and...not so reliable, not so safe information.

(If the neighborhood metaphor isn’t working for you, try poker.

In the game of life, there are people who know what’s going on and those who miss a lot.

*“When you sit down to play, if you don’t know who the fish is...you’re the fish.”)*



IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY. TAKE OUT YOUR TAXONOMY CHART.

One mark of an educated mind, in any field, is a muscular kind of critical thinking...the ability to sort similar ideas or objects into subgroups according to important distinctions.

Every specialty uses Taxonomy, which is a system of classification. Think of the categories in the library. You'd be lost without those last few Dewey Decimal points.

You cannot succeed as an engineer, doctor, lawyer, banker, businesswoman or biologist unless you sharpen this skill.

To help you educate your mind in this way, we have built this grid. Once you can fill in this grid with precision, you will have taken the first major step toward becoming News Literate.






If you've spent any time in the baby clothes department of Target or Saks Fifth Avenue, you know it's pretty hard not to buy the whole place. Everything is cute. And now Disney is making 101 Dalmatians "Onezies" for newborns. Anybody would want one, and Disney has decided to give them away for free at 580 maternity hospitals in the U.S. Plus, they've built a whole website with conception, pregnancy and childbirth information for parents-to-be. Isn't that nice? Disney does this because they want your kids to grow up healthy, right? No? Why not? So what neighborhood are we in, here?

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# Taxonomy: Promotion A Subset: Publicity



The measures, process or business of securing public notice. Information designed to enhance an image.

Here's how we define publicity: the measures, process, or business of securing public notice. Information designed to enhance an image. We emphasize that publicity is often an attempt to get news media outlets interested in covering a story that puts your product or personality in a positive light. It's called "free media" as contrasted with paid advertising. I like to tell students that publicity can be boiled down to The Stunt: some action that draws a crowd.

ASK: Which is more effective, ads or publicity?

Is Publicity ever News

Is a Publicity event ever Newsworthy?



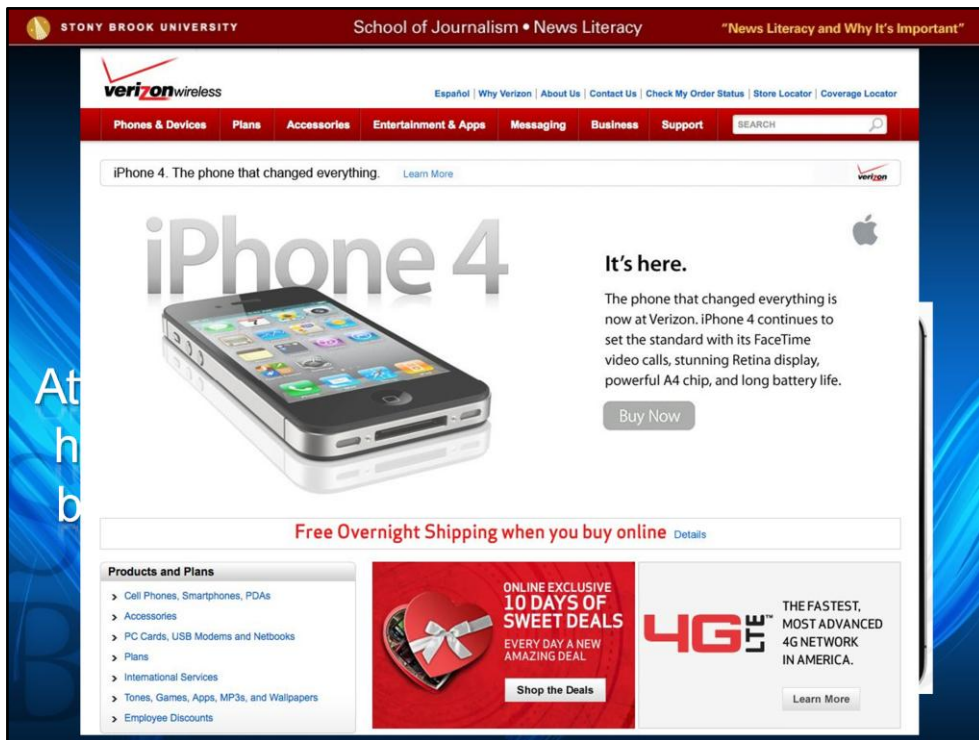
Designers produce fashion shows, twice per year in New York, to show their collections for the coming season. This week, New York's fashion show kicks off.

AFTER VIDEO

What is Fashion Week an example of?

(Use to untangle the event from the coverage of the event. Be sure to probe for their understanding of what coverage is news and what is not)





ANIMATION: Slide opens up with the iPhone 4 ad. Click once to bring up Advertising definition.)


Advertising is...The use of paid ads to attract attention to a product, service or other item for sale.

ASK: Again, Which is more effective...Ads or Publicity?



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# Taxonomy: Propaganda



Information, ideas or rumors deliberately spread widely to help or harm a person, group, movement, Institution or nation. It is often biased or misleading, in order to promote an ideology or political point of view.


POINT: Propaganda is Political, Not Commercial.

Propaganda: information, ideas, or rumors deliberately spread widely to help or harm a person, group, movement, institution, nation. It is often biased or misleading in order to promote an ideology or political point of view.

Example is Al Qaeda's "Inspire" Magazine

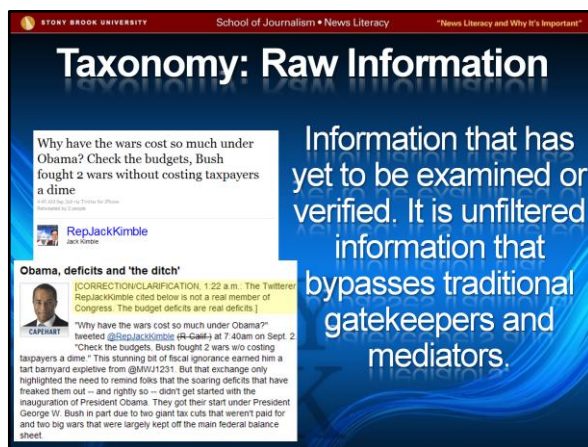
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# Taxonomy: Entertainment



Something affording pleasure, diversion, or amusement, often a performance of some kind.

(Animates automatically. No click needed)  
Entertainment: something affording pleasure, diversion, or amusement, often a performance of some kind. (As opposed to recreation, which you participate in)  
ASK: Why isn't "The Tillman Story" news?  
(Recreated dialogue, actors, etc)



## ANIMATION: 2<sup>ND</sup> CLICK BRINGS UP COLUMN CORRECTION

Raw Information: Information that has yet to be examined or verified. It is unfiltered information that bypasses traditional gatekeepers and mediators.

Tweets or Facebook Posts are a good example.


In this example, Washington Post columnist Jonathan Capehart spotted a Tweet from “Rep. Jack Kimble, R-California” and used that as a jumping-off point for an entire article in which he examined in detail the origins of our current federal budget deficit.

One problem...There is no Congressman named Jack Kimble, from California or anywhere else...


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# WikiLeaks Site

## When does raw/unfiltered information Become journalism?



**KEEP US STRONG**  
UNRECORDED AND UNCLASSIFIED



Currently released so far...  
3890 / 251,287

Articles

- Brazil
- Sri Lanka

Viewing cable 07CAIRO3155, SCENESETTER FOR FBI DEPUTY DIRECTOR JOHN PISTOLE

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the structure of a cable as well as how to discuss them with others. See also the FAQs.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
07CAIRO3155	2007-10-30 05:05	2011-02-07 21:09	SECRET	Embassy Cairo

VZCZCKYZ0030  
PP RUEHWE

DE RUEHGH #3155/01 3030500  
EM YSSSS ZHH (CCY TEXT AD0023CCBD/HSI9728 510)  
P 303050Z OCT 07  
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
TO RUEKJF/FBI WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
INFO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7320

S E C R E T CAIRO 003155

SIPDIS

//// CORRECTED COPY //////////////////////////////////  
////////// TEXT PARA 1 //////////////////////////////////

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/28/2027  
TAGS: FTER PREL PRUM RJUS  
SUBJECT: SCENESETTER FOR FBI DEPUTY DIRECTOR JOHN PISTOLE  
Classified By: Ambassador Francis J. Ricciardone,  
for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).


If you went looking for Classified U.S. State Department cables on the Wikileaks site, what neighborhood would you be in?

This one is a little tough because the information here could alert or divert you...but can you trust that it's true? Is it enough of the story that you can make sense of it? Why bother with journalism, when the grist of news is right here in your hands?

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## What is News?

Information of some public interest that is shared and subject to a journalistic process of verification, and for which the individual and organization are accountable.



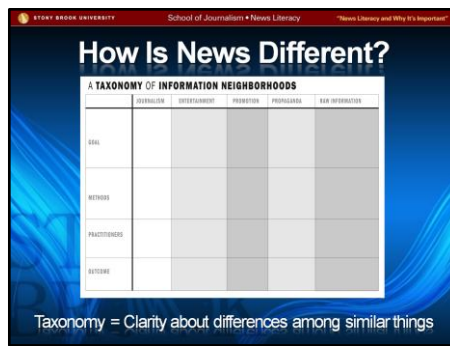
Which brings us to the final definition:  
What is News: For the purposes of this course, here's our definition.

“Information of some public interest that is shared and subject to a journalistic process of verification... and for which the individual and organization are directly accountable.”

A mouthful.

But like any good definition, it helps you distinguish news from things that merely look or sound like news.





(ASK for suggestions of the primary goals, which you can write on the board, the Power Point, using the Sympodium Pen, or just let student ideas hang in the air.

(Next Click brings up the Grid with Primary Goals in place)

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## How Is News Different?

A Taxonomy of Information Neighborhoods

	Journalism	Entertainment	Promotion	Propaganda	Raw Information
Primary Goal	To Inform	To Amuse or engage people during their leisure time or activities or when they are not participating	To Sell products and services or to influence attitudes toward products or services	To Build Mass Support for a particular cause or ideology or to influence public opinion or to influence government	To Bypass, circumvent and distribute news or information outside of established channels
Methods					
Practitioners					
Outcomes					

Taxonomy = Clarity about differences among similar things

(LECTURER: NOW THE GOALS ARE FILLED IN)

Here's a head start on your homework.

For the purposes of this course, here are our official entries for the Primary goals of the different types of information...

Journalism: To Inform

Entertainment: To Amuse or otherwise engage people during their leisure.

Promotion: To Sell

Propaganda: To Build Political Support.

Raw Information: To Bypass filters

POINT OUT: That advertising and publicity are methods of Promotion.

(AVOID: Long conversations about the other categories. This is News Literacy, not Media Literacy. For the purposes of this course, there is news and then there's everything else.)





ANIMATION: EACH CLICK BRINGS UP A WORD  
Remember, I said our primary focus is on news.  
Here are three characteristics that are as  
essential to the identification of news as  
Avenues and Cross Streets are to identifying  
your neighborhood.

These are three terms students are expected to  
begin using in class and in homework  
assignments, starting today.

--**Verification:** The process that establishes or  
confirms the accuracy or truth of something.

--**Independence:** freedom from the control,  
influence, or support of interested parties.

--**Accountability:** Responsible or answerable for  
your work.

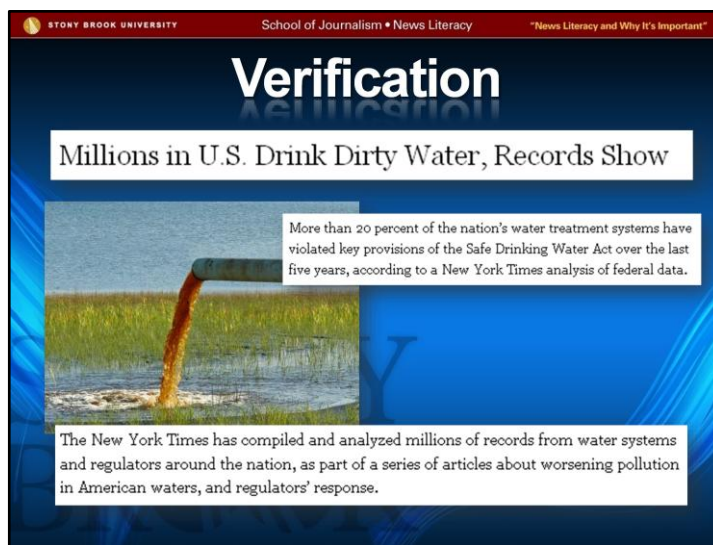


## ANIMATION: CLICK BRING UP DEFINITION

-- Verification: A process of collecting evidence that establishes or confirms the accuracy or truth of something.

This is a good place to plant seeds about evidence vs. inference.

(Tell ‘em the phrase: “Correlation does not equal causation” can be used to stun a verbal opponent into silence...provided you use it correctly.)



Verification by independent means not just taking one person’s word for it.

In this December 2009 story about polluted water systems , The New York Times compiled and analyzed millions of records from water systems and regulators around the nation. The documents showed Safe Drinking Water Act violations have occurred in every state.

In Ramsey, N.J., for instance, water tests since 2004 have detected illegal concentrations of arsenic, a carcinogen, and the dry cleaning solvent tetrachloroethylene.

In New York state, 205 water systems have broken the law by delivering tap water that contained illegal amounts of bacteria since 2004.



## ANIMATION: CLICK BRINGS UP DEFINITION

Independence: freedom (of the journalist and the journalism organization) from the control, influence, or support of interested parties.

As important, (since objectivity is a fictional state of mind) Independence is guarded by a journalist's conscious effort to set aside pre-existing beliefs AND a system of checks and balances by peers with the same goal.

ASK: What Other Professions attempt independence?



ANIMATION: EACH CLICK BRINGS UP A WORD

POINT: Introduce three characteristics that are as essential to the Taxonomy of Information as color, shape and size are to the taxonomy of animals. These are terms students are expected to begin using in class and in homework assignments, starting today.

--**Verification:** evidence that establishes or confirms the accuracy or truth of something.

--**Independence:** freedom from the control, influence, or support of interested parties.

--**Accountability:** Responsible or answerable for your work.



## ANIMATION: CLICK BRINGS UP SUB-HEAD

Remember the Air Races over New York Harbor and around the Statue of Liberty on June 19 and 20?

Was this publication an independent source of information about the safety, environmental impact and fairness of the race? (2<sup>nd</sup> click brings up the “almost independent” line under the title)

To their credit, they tip their hat to the value of journalism with this subheadline: “An Almost Independent Magazine.”

Professional Journalists have developed guidelines to ensure there is a difference between journalism and everything else. Here is one version, from an organization called SPJ.

Here’s what the SPJ Code of Ethics says:

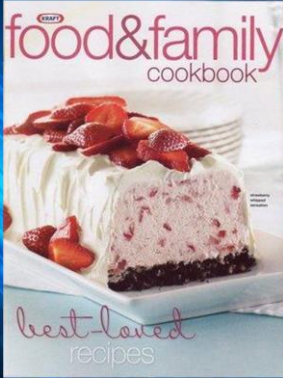
**Journalists should be free of obligation to any interest other than the public’s right to know.**

- Avoid conflicts of interest, real or perceived.
- Remain free of associations and activities that may compromise integrity or damage credibility.
- Refuse gifts, favors, fees, travel, and special treatment, and **shun secondary employment**, political involvement, political office and service in community organizations if they compromise journalistic integrity.
- Disclose unavoidable conflicts.
- Be vigilant and courageous about holding those with power accountable. Deny favored treatment to advertisers and special interests and resist their pressure to influence news coverage.
- Be wary of sources offering information for favors or money; avoid bidding for news.



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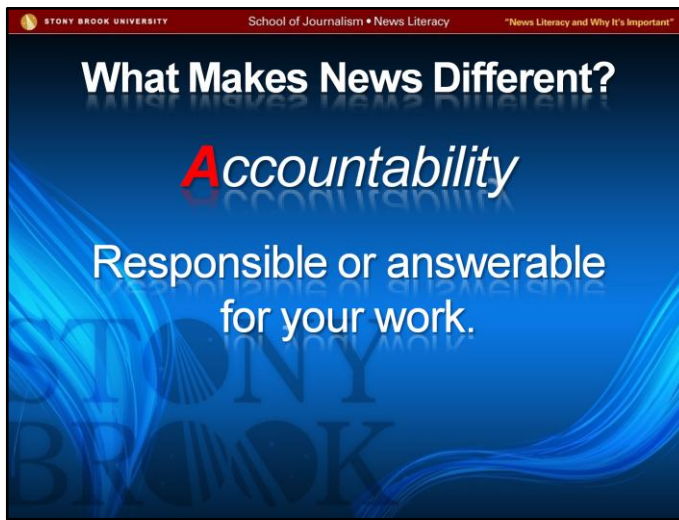
# Independence



Journalists must not have a relationship to their subjects.

So...same question as last week.  
This is a delicious looking cookbook.  
The recipes are all well-tested.  
But they all contain at least one  
Kraft product.





ANIMATION: CLICK BRINGS UP DEFINITION  
Accountability: Responsible or answerable  
for your work.

Journalists put their name on their work. In many cases, their email address or phone number is attached to each report. That way, if the report is factually wrong, a news consumer or subject of a news story can report the mistake.

ASK: What other professions or crafts do this?



Shortly after the Tucson shooting, NPR, CNN and NewYorkTimes.com reported Congresswoman Giffords had died of her head wounds. All three soon discovered their errors and published corrections and apologies. That's what we mean by accountability.

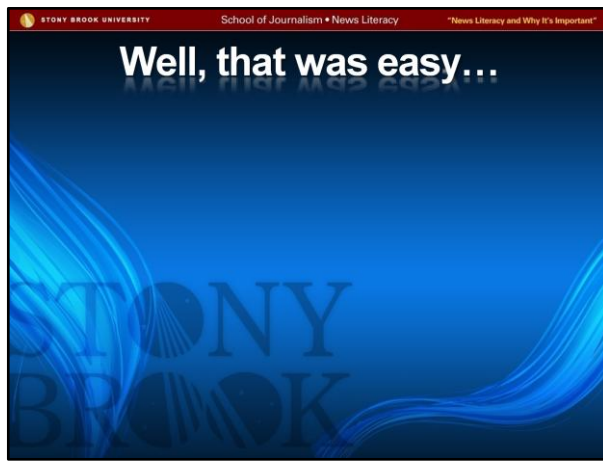
Here's the applicable section from SPI's industry-standard code of ethics:

***“Journalists are accountable to their readers, listeners, viewers and each other. Journalists should:***

- *Clarify and explain news coverage and invite dialogue with the public over journalistic conduct.*
- *Encourage the public to voice grievances against the media.*
- *Admit mistakes and correct them promptly.*
- *Expose unethical practices of journalists and the news media.*

*Abide by the same high standards to which they hold others.”* [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/01/10/media-outlets-apologize-a\\_n\\_806603.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/01/10/media-outlets-apologize-a_n_806603.html)

<http://topics.npr.org/article/0eGMbGSbugbwy>



Not so fast.

As we said earlier, what makes this course necessary is that there are people, lots of people, who want to mislead you. And while lots of people want to wrap themselves in the mantle of journalism, the yoke is very restrictive.



Point: Watch this report that aired on television and decide which information neighborhood you are in.

(supplied by PEJ)



ASK: What neighborhood?  
Why does it matter?



Back to that report on electronic games. It was paid for by a competitor of Apple, which is we she ran down the iPod and talked up lame out-of-date games. When she was called on it, this is what the fake reporter said about her work.

How did it get on the air?

It's called a VNR, (Video News Release)

PR firms write and film ready-to-run television stories about a client's product.

Say it's a candy company. The package includes interesting video of candy being made. Interviews with employees. A script with lots of good history and financial data on the candy industry and current trends.

This is sent to TV news directors. If they like it, they'll use the video and maybe even the script.

Here's how Alton Miller, a PR professor from Chicago and former Public Relations Director for the Mayor of Chicago describes it:

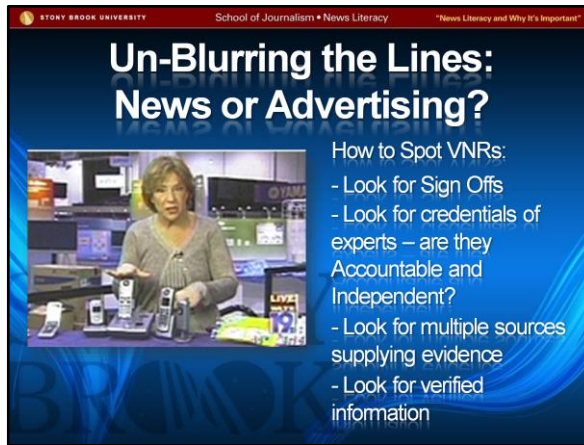
*"The whole idea is that you're making it easy for the TV station to do a thorough, visually-interesting report without having to invest their own resources -- a camera crew to come visit the candy factory -- to illustrate it."*

What's missing from a story like this?

Who was Raskin working for?

Apple's rivals.





Back to the Christmas Toys report...

Here's how you would unblur that report.

Promotion can look a lot like news...

Revisiting the Video News Release.

UNBLURRING THE LINES IN VIDEO REPORTS (say  
"VIA" holding up 3 fingers)

**V**...Is the information verified?

**I**...Whose payroll is the Expert on? Is he or she independent?

**A**...Look for Sign Offs (accountability) Who will answer if the information is false.

Will one company or product benefit from the report? (Particular problem in local television reporting on medical news. Major sponsor hospital is the default source)



Have you seen these Web Reports on Acai (Ah-Sigh-Yee) Berry Diets?

Ask: What neighborhood are you in?

Consumer organizations like the Better Business Bureau and Consumer Reports observe that many Acai Berry juice pages like this include fraudulent claims of an Oprah Winfrey endorsement. In addition, news-like web reports like this, designed to look like they come from independent news organizations, often use near-identical language and claims (Lost 2 Dress Sizes, etc.)

Reading this introduction and conclusion from one such “Investigation,” what are your clues?

*(Lecturer read excerpt) “With all the media coverage, you probably already know that the acai berry has become one of the most popular and controversial health supplements in the world...(and it goes on for pages)*

*“CONCLUSION: Now that we have **went** through most of the key points of the controversy, it is time to weigh in on the score and make a conclusion. If you stay away from free trials and don't expect them to melt off 30 pounds of fat without exercise, the acai berry is 100% legitimate.”*

Alongside one Acai web News Report we scrutinized last week were dozens of advertisements for Acai Berry products and the “reporter” discloses that he gets paid every time a reader clicks on one of the web ads alongside the “report.”



Several years ago, it was learned that Wal-Mart was paying bloggers to write good things about products and prices at WalMar.

Was this revealed? No. What are some of the steps you can take as a news consumer to be aware of what neighborhood you are in?

Look for accountability.

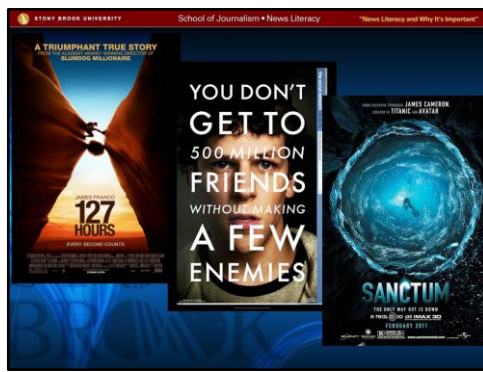
Demand names, credentials and affiliations.

The Ethics Code of the Society of Professional Journalists has a strict standard: *“Distinguish news from advertising and shun hybrids that blur the lines between the two.”*

As of December 1, 2009, the Federal Trade Commission required bloggers, and prominent Tweeters and Facebookers to reveal any arrangements under which they are paid for posting specific content. If you receive gifts, money or any other type of compensation from a product manufacturer or service provider you have to disclose it. Ditto if you post criticisms of your employer’s competitors. ASK: Why should this be Public Policy?



Be aware that the neat and tidy lines of the Grid can get blurred, sometimes on purpose and with intent to deceive...  
It is easy to get fooled, as the acai berry ads and vid  
Plenty of people get confused about movies and TV movies, too.



ANIMATION: “127 Hours” poster fades in first, then social network, then sanctum. No clicks needed

(These are three current releases in the theater)  
(Do the descriptions in a big stagey voice)

“A triumphant True Story...” about Aron Ralston, who cut his own arm off after getting pinned by a boulder.

The real story of Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg’s billion dollar idea.

The movie based on the real life exploits of cave divers Andrew Wight, Frank McGuire and his son Josh, who get trapped diving in the Esa-Ala caves in the South Pacific. Left with minimal supplies, the group must find their way out of the caves through flooded caves and dangerous cliff-like climbs...

So, what are these films?

Journalism?

Documentary film?

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## Un-Blurring the Lines: News vs. Entertainment

'Based on Fact'  
'Inspired By a True Story'

If it has actors, if it has the word 'drama' in its description, if it is produced by the entertainment division – it's not news, it's *entertainment*.

Unblur the lines by using your grid...your taxonomy. Where's the VIA?

If it has actors in it and the word drama in its description it is entertainment, not news.

Watch for the disclaimers, i.e. "based on facts" or "docu-drama"

If it is produced by the entertainment division of a television network or cable company, it is not news.

In the Information Neighborhoods, there's news and then there's everything else.



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# The Blurring of the Lines: There is news About Entertainment



Charlie to Porn Stars -- I'm Now CLOSED for Business

2/5/2011 1:00 AM PST by TMZ Staff [Like](#) [252](#)

Charlie Sheen has been texting several porn stars since he began treatment in his rehab program -- but TMZ has learned his messages are clear ... the party is OVER.

**EXCLUSIVE**



Among the messages Charlie has sent -- "Please lose the number, we are closed ... please drive through ... thank you."

Is TMZ News?

## THE BLURRING OF THE LINES: INFOTAINMENT (News vs. Publicity)

Is TMZ journalism?

Even though it's about entertainment, does that mean it itself falls in the entertainment category?

Or is it just a specialty show?

Where's the VIA?



Slide starts with Douglas cover. Click fades away Douglas, brings in rest of slide

This is information that Diverts or even Connects us, but is it news? Is there VIA

Is there a journalistic rationale for this story?

... other than to promote or enhance the subject of the story?

In this case, Tiger Woods' ex-wife Elin Nordgren, right after the divorce was final, was given the questions in advance and sent back written answers (Because her English isn't natural yet, People Magazine noted)

It's a QnA story, with no independent comments or verification other than a quote from Tiger saying he and Elin are committed to working to prevent the divorce from harming their children.

There is betting already over sales of this copy: did it outsell the pictures of Brangelina's kids, of Sandra Bullock's cover?

What are the pressures on independence when a famous face on the cover can guarantee 2 million magazines will be sold? We'll return to that question in 2 weeks...

Where is the VIA?



ANIMATION: Screen shot of raw spill footage fades in first, then Reuters story.

Here's another kind of blurriness.

The same situation can generate information from all the neighborhoods.

The reason we're pounding that word, Taxonomy, into your heads is this: you know from Lecture 1 the dimensions of the information Tsunami that washes over you every day. It's tempting to ignore all of it...But you need reliable information to make decisions, take action and make judgments for your family, career and community. So let's look at information about the Gulf Oil Spill in the major Information Neighborhoods.

This live underwater video of the oil gushing into the gulf was, for a time last summer, one of the most popular items on the Internet. BP's live feed was viewed about 300,000 times per day and more than a million people watched it via "spill cam" on various websites.

ASK: what neighborhood is the spill cam?

ASK: What neighborhood is this report on BP's handling of economic damages claims.

ASK: Why does it matter?



While we're on the subject of the BP Blowout, I wanted to show you what J-School students did during winter break. They went looking for the missing oil and the impacts of the spill ...Is it Journalism or Not?



NEWS FELLOW: LINK (INSERT) VIDEO TO THIS SLIDE AND  
SELECT "START AUTOMATICALLY"  
LECTURER: CLICK NOW TO LAUNCH one of BP's ads  
(only about :30)



**AFTER VIDEO:** Today, you'll start using a new set of critical thinking skills that will help you make a logical evaluation: what is reliable and what is spin. What is Journalism, in other words. A secondary benefit is that you'll start to develop a vocabulary to use in pushing journalists to uphold standards.





Another way to clarify your neighborhood is to look at who is speaking (or writing) to you. Not all of the reports you see or read are legitimate news. They fall into other categories, created by non-journalists for other reasons. What makes someone a journalist is the values they uphold in their work:

Verification

Independence

Accountability

Let's look at some people in the news.



ANIMATION: Assange fades in with slide. Click brings in Huffington, next click Beck, next click Oprah

Wikileaks founder **Julian Paul Assange** says Wikileaks has released more classified documents than the rest of the world press combined: *“How is it that a team of five people has managed to release to the public more suppressed information, at that level, than the rest of the world press combined? It's disgraceful.”*

Verifies the material he broadcasts? Independent of affiliations? Accountable? Is he a journalist? Why does it matter?

**Glenn Beck's** Fox TV talk show has captured as many as 3 million viewers, although his audience has dropped in half since last summer. He is the author of six New York Times best-selling books, five of which debuted at #1. Supporters call him a defender of the Constitution and defender of traditional conservative values. Critics say he is a dangerous peddler of conspiracy theories who never corrects factual errors that are pointed out to him.

Verifies the material he broadcasts? Independent of affiliations? Accountable to whom?

Is he a journalist? Why does it matter?

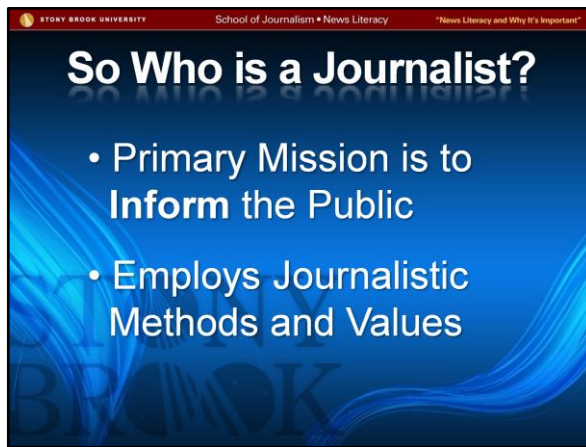
**Arianna Huffington** is a Greek-American author (12 books on topics from Picasso to American politics) who co-founded the progressive news website The Huffington Post. Launched in 2005 as an alternative to conservative websites like the Drudge Report, Huffington Post hosts bloggers who obsess over politics, media, business, entertainment, living, style, the green movement, world news, and comedy. She employs a small staff of reporters, but most of the material on the site is commentary on other publications' reporting. (HuffPo sold to AOL last week for \$350 M)

Verifies material before publication?

Independent of affiliations? Accountable to whom? Is she a journalist? Why does it matter?

At the age of 19, **Oprah Winfrey** became the youngest person and the first African-American woman to anchor the news in Nashville, Tennessee. She moved on to Baltimore, then Chicago, then jumped to talk shows where she is the queen: 24 consecutive seasons as the top-rated talk show in the country, with 8 million viewers a day. She cries with her guests, arranges surprise gifts for her audience and endorses books and candidates.

Is Oprah a journalist? Verifies material before publication? Independent of affiliations? Accountable to whom?



The Bedrock commitment of a journalist is to Seek Truth and Report it. Their primary mission is to inform by collecting and presenting information according to standards that define journalism.

You will see many examples this semester of people who wish to wear the mantle of journalism, but refuse to submit to the collar that restricts journalists from some parts of life everyone else takes for granted, like political activism, public expressions of opinions, etc.

(Here are the key components of the code of ethics that binds journalists across the country: *“Journalists seek the truth and should be honest, fair and courageous in gathering, reporting and interpreting information.”*)

# So Who is a Journalist?

- Subjects work to verification
- Makes a conscious effort to maintain independence
- Accountable: Stands behind work

- *“Journalists should be free of obligation to any interest other than the public’s right to know.*
- *Journalists are accountable to their readers, listeners, viewers and each other.*
- *Journalism is a discipline of verification, not the mere recording of one point of view or another.”*

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# Is Jon Stewart a Journalist?



The Daily Show Hosts Al Gore

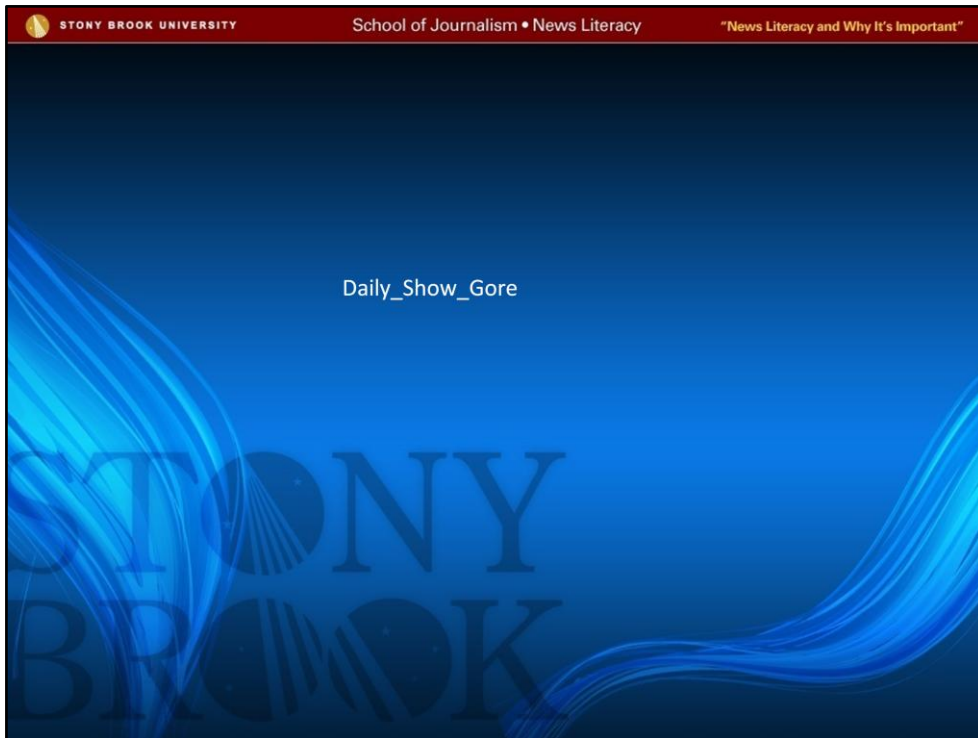
Which brings us back to the Daily Show. Host Jon Stewart interviews newsmakers and the subject of every show is either news events or the coverage of those events.

Most of it is about politics and government and diplomacy...

Is the Daily Show your source of news?

Is it Journalism?

LECTURER: CLICK NOW TO LAUNCH Gore's egregious up-sucking VIDEO (3:33)



NEWS FELLOW: LINK (INSERT) VIDEO TO THIS SLIDE  
AND SELECT "START AUTOMATICALLY"



## The Daily Show: Newscast or Not?



Re-ask: Is Jon Stewart a Journalist?  
Is the Daily Show Journalism?  
Why does it matter?  
Is it actionable information?

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**A TAXONOMY OF INFORMATION NEIGHBORHOODS**

	JOURNALISM	ENTERTAINMENT	PROMOTION	PROPAGANDA	RAW INFORMATION
GOAL					
METHODS					
PRACTITIONERS					
OUTCOME					

Taxonomy: a classification system

Between now and recitation, you are assigned to fill in the elements of this grid according to your understanding of the differences between these information neighborhoods.

Then in recitation, you'll turn it in ON PAPER and go through the chart with your classmates to cement these distinctions in your mind.



What’s the Mnemonic device that we use to distinguish journalism from other information?

- Verification:** evidence that establishes or confirms the accuracy or truth of something.
- Independence:** freedom from the control, influence, or support of interested parties.
- Accountability:** Responsible or answerable for your work.



Just a reminder of the first step to news literacy...pay attention to where you are getting your information. Some neighborhoods are safer than others.

# Assignments all due at Recitation

1. News Quizzes For Credit Start This Week
2. Taxonomy of Information Neighborhoods: Fill in your blank Taxonomy chart and hand it in at recitation.
3. Is You Tube News? Watch the 3 videos as assigned on Blackboard and write a short paper explaining where they fit on the Taxonomy Grid, based on VIA.