



Slide on the screen while students enter

In the beginning was the word...



Reporters described what happened

From the Colonial period, Americans relied on the printed word to learn what was happening in their country and abroad.

In print, reporters observe and inquire and then describe their findings. You rely on their skill and their ethics to learn the truth.

Then, in the 1880s, there was light...

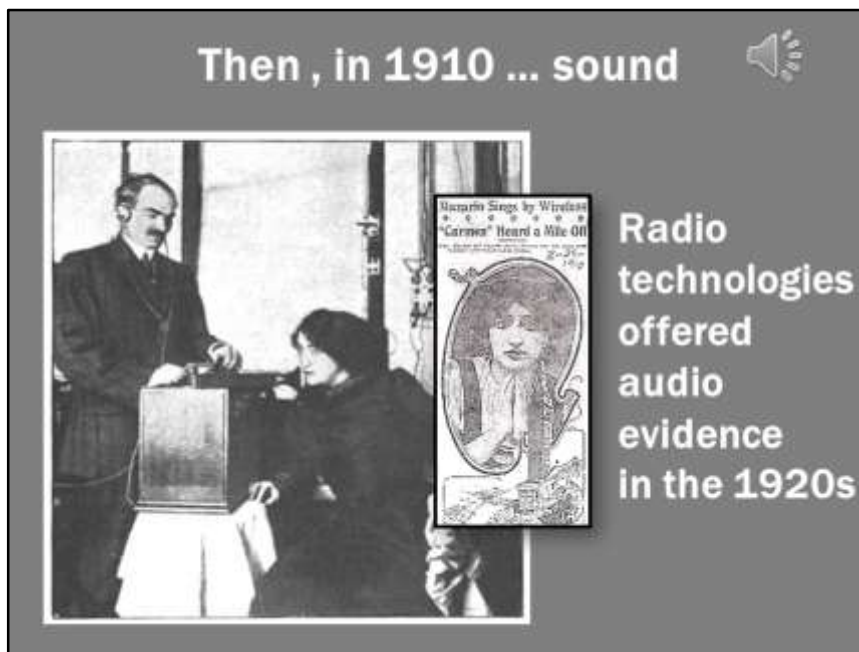


First direct "half-tone" photo reproduced in an American daily newspaper, documenting a New York shantytown, 1880, The Daily Graphic

Printers could offer photographic evidence

In 1880, The Daily Graphic published the first “half-tone” print of a photograph in an American daily newspaper. Before that day, photographs had to be reproduced by an artist or engraver. The half-tone process printed photos exactly as they had been taken.

It revolutionized news, giving us direct evidence from the scene, through the lens, to the newspaper page.



**ANIMATION/MEDIA: TO ILLUSTRATE EARLY, PRIMITIVE AUDIO, A BBC RECORDING LECTURER MUST CLICK START BUTTON ON THE SPEAKER/AUDIO ICON TO START THE AUDIO PLAYBACK**

On January 13, 1910, the first public radio broadcast was an experimental transmission of a live Metropolitan Opera House performance of several famous opera singers.

**CLICK: STARTS EARLY BBC EXPERIMENTS WITH SOUND RECORDING FOR NEWS**

By the 1920s, the BBC and American firms were collecting sound in the streets for use in news broadcasts.

Then, in the 1950s, we got all three

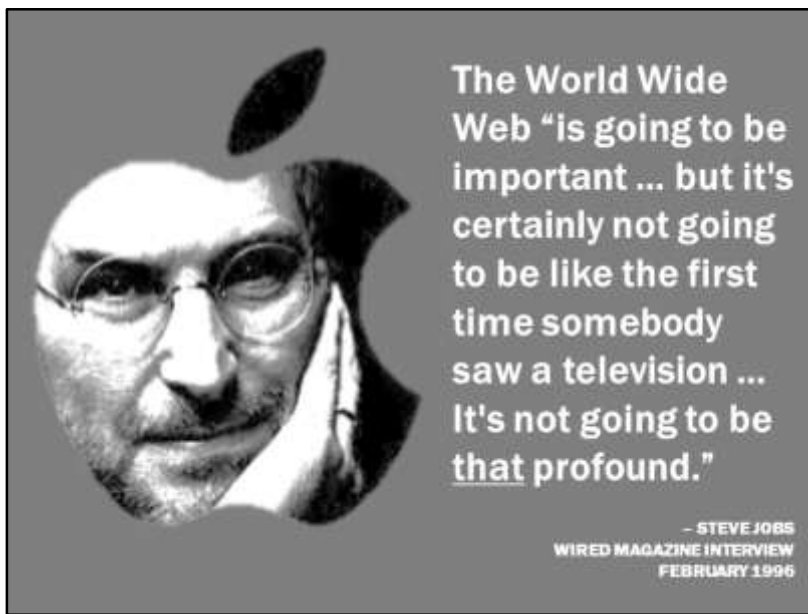
Newmontage.wmv

Television made us witnesses

By 1947, Philo Farnsworth's invention, the radio wave transmission of moving images, had been refined to the point it was ready to challenge radio, which had the kind of household penetration (82%) that made it universal.

TV broadcast began in a little studio above Grand Central Terminal and Americans soon discovered the power of live images.

Whereas photos had, since the Civil War, made you a witness to historic artifacts too distant to see, now actual historic events unfolded in your living room. You became a co-witness along with those on the scene.



We take TV – YouTube – for granted.

But Steve Jobs, who grasped the significance of the Web far better than most, had a sense of history and context.

The Web is big, but nothing like TV was, he noted. Imagine you're living in Nebraska and it's the first time you have seen and heard a movie of real, and traumatic, events that occurred far away. TV was mindblowing and our addiction to YouTube and Vine and our screens proves him right.

Moving pictures with sound is one of the most important technologies of all time.

So, how do we deconstruct TV news to make the best use of it?



Housekeeping,  
announcements & notes

Washington Post Walter Reed investigation



What can you conclude?



## Last week's Quick Quiz

1. **CONTEXT** is the background information that puts the latest news developments in perspective.
2. **TRANSPARENCY** is when reporters make clear what they know, how they know it, what they don't know and why they don't.

### Your questions and comments ...

- ❖ "We put on so much emphasis on video and audio evidence ... but isn't it important to take into account the fact that with today's technology ... it's very simple to alter or falsify these?"  
— Rasheequr Rahman
- ❖ "How do stories even get published if their sources fail the IMVAIN criteria?"  
— Andrew Goldstein

## Your questions and comments ...



"Was the answer from someone who drew the picture of just the illustration having to do with context and the background information, with the hand making a C shape around a fist, a complete/correct answer?"  
— Taylor Riley

This question came from a student who was wondering about the exam-taker who drew the News Literacy gang sign for context on an exam ... The answer, of course, is no, it's not sufficient. But it will help remember the concept. For those who missed it last week, the animation shows how one hand – the fist (first click) – represents the news at the heart of the story and the second (next click) shows the context (hand shaped like a C – for Context) wrapped around the kernel of news.



# COUNTDOWN TO TEST 2

**THIS WEEK** in recitation,  
emphasizing lectures 7-12  
(Power of Images through Deconstructing TV news).  
Same format: 10 questions, 100 possible points.

Use this slide for Wednesday recitations.

## After this lecture, you should be able to:

1. Begin practicing for the video portion of the Final Exam, evaluating reliability of video news reports in real time.
2. Use the IMVAIN test of source reliability on the fly.
3. Explain the burden TV's need for visual materials places on news consumers to diversify their news diet.
4. Articulate how the differing demands of broadcast, cable and online TV change the way each reports the news.
5. Explain, and notice the ethical and unethical uses of music and other added sounds in video news reports.

These are capstone skills of this course.

This slide intended for instructors as a focusing tool, but can be shared with students to prime them. Each lecture will include a slide like this with specific lecture outcomes that refer to course outcomes.

Here is what the syllabus declares students will be able to do if they successfully complete the course:

1. Analyze key elements of news reports - weighing evidence, evaluating sources, noting context and transparency - to judge reliability.
2. Distinguish between journalism, opinion journalism and unsupported bloviation.
3. Identify and distinguish between news media bias and audience bias.
4. Blend personal scholarship and course materials to write forcefully about journalism standards and practices, fairness and bias, First Amendment issues and their individual Fourth Estate rights and responsibilities.
5. Use examples from each day's news to demonstrate critical thinking about civic engagement.
6. Place the impact of social media and digital technologies in their historical context.

# Wanted

Best News Literacy  
**final essay**

## REWARD

One semester's in-state tuition  
(about \$2,800)

Watch this space for the essay prompt!

## Preparing for the final exam: This online exercise is the best way to study

The screenshot shows the Poynter News University website. The header includes the logo and navigation tabs for Home, Courses, Resources, and Tools for Educators. The main content area features an article titled "Watching TV News: How To Be a Smarter Viewer" with a sub-header "Course Overview". The article text discusses the importance of watching TV news as a smart viewer and includes a list of learning objectives. A "Course Overview" sidebar on the right provides additional details about the course, including a "Course Load" section and a "Course Overview" section.

This screenshot shows a document titled "Watching TV News: How To Be a Smarter Viewer" with a blue arrow pointing to a text box. The document contains text about the course and includes a blue arrow pointing to a text box.

This set of directions is in the "Reading Assignments" tab that takes you to our CourseLoad™ eReader. It's not a graded assignment, but it will prepare you for the final exam. You'll find two broken links ("Keep It Simple" and "Make It Look Good"). Just skip to the next exercises.

Students are sent to the Poynter NewsU site to prepare for the final exam. Any student who does NOT do this is jeopardizing their score. Students who spend a couple of hours on it will improve their score.

## How to deconstruct video news



### **ANIMATION: AUTOMATIC: IMAGE FROM OPENING SLIDE DISSOLVES INTO DECONSTRUCTED VIDEO CAMERA**

So...just as we've done last week in the Deconstruction Workbook, lets' focus on deconstructing news in its video form.

# DECONSTRUCTION IS DECONSTRUCTION

- 1) Summarize the main points: Do the promo and lead-in support the main points?
- 2) How close does the reporter come to opening the freezer? Is the evidence direct ?
- 3) Evaluate the reliability of the sources using I-M-V-A-I-N

Today we focus on Deconstruction. 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.



# DECONSTRUCTION IS DECONSTRUCTION

- 4) Does the reporter make his/her work transparent?
- 5) Does the reporter place the story in context?
- 6) Are the key questions answered?  


WHO? WHAT? WHERE? WHEN? WHY? HOW?
- 7) Is the story fair?

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## Deconstructing TV news



### Rating out KFC/Taco Bell

Let's look at this local TV News story.

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?
- ✓ How's the evidence
- ✓ the fairness
- ✓ the sources
- ✓ the context
- ✓ the transparency?
- ✓ Did they open the freezer?



RATSTACOBELL.WMV

(NEWS FELLOW LINK RATS VIDEO HERE)

Runs 2:33



## Deconstruction of rats story

**Direct evidence:** Live video of rats verifies their presence

**Context:** NYC health Department documents show inspection history and the scores are put in context.

**Sources:** Soto is named and identifies himself as someone who ate there that night, making him self-interested. But is he any more informed or authoritative than any of the other people on the street?

The other source is not named, uninformed – beyond having seen the same rats as everyone else. She may be independent, but she offers nothing but an assertion.

**Fairness and Transparency:** No, on both fronts. Reporter cites Health Dept website, but report does NOT give the consumer enough evidence to suggest who is at fault and why – and it doesn't say why that information is not in the report. There's no comment from KFC/Taco Bell and no explanation for its absence.

## Fairness, transparency and context

The New York Times  
nytimes.com

The restaurant's owner, ADF Fifth Operating Corporation, could not be reached for comment. Yum Brands Inc., the parent company of KFC and Taco Bell, issued a statement on Friday describing the incident as an isolated occurrence. The restaurant would not reopen until it had been sanitized and given a clean bill of health, the statement said.

On Friday, the company said that construction in the basement — which was being done to try to keep rats out — had “temporarily escalated the situation,” reports said.

### Inspector Is Out After Giving Rat-Infested Restaurant Passing Grade

3 DAYS  
LATER

By RAY RIVERA

The city yesterday removed from duty a health inspector who gave a passing grade to a KFC/Taco Bell restaurant in Greenwich Village one day before television cameras captured a swarm of rats scurrying about in the restaurant.

What you didn't learn from that TV report is the restaurant's side of the story. The New York Times story was transparent about its inability to reach the restaurant's owner, but achieved fairness by letting the parent company try to put the event in context. And then, if you followed the story, you learned a city health inspector had given the restaurant a passing grade the day before the incident.

**Question:** Was 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/global experience

TV 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 Man on the Moon, Newtown shooting, Marathon bombing)

## TV verifies powerfully



Seeing is believing


Here's a painful example of how devastatingly vivid TV can be in documenting/verifying the truth.

-During the Democratic Presidential Primary campaign, Candidate Hillary Clinton said she had superior foreign policy wisdom because, for instance, she risked being shot during a visit to Bosnia as First Lady.

CBS rewound old tape to check it out.

Here's the reality check.





HillaryBosnia.wmv

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

**Runtime 2:12**

**That's evidence that is hard to argue with.**

## Demand for visuals defines TV



The defining characteristic of TV news is that powerful witnessing effect.

Good for us.

Not always great for the reporter.




Reporter dangers.wmv

NEWS FELLOW: Please video here  
Runs 2:19

TV powerfully connects  
us to people



We started the semester talking about the primal human need for information that alerts, diverts and connects us. If a newsroom sets out to educate the public about autism, one facet of that may be to forge a powerful audience connection to an individual with autism. Here's CBS News' Steve Hartman demonstrating how powerfully TV can connect us to someone we've never met.



Basketball.wmv

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

Runtime 2:54

Are some stories not covered at all?  
No picture = no story?



Why did the stories about slave labor involved in the making of iPhones come out in newspapers and not on TV?

Because to tell a TV story, you have to have video, or at least photos.

China kept cameras out of those plants, so the only way to tell the story was with words, an important lesson.

Mix your media diet to ensure you're getting the full story.



Poll students to see if they know about the Royal Dutch Shell case

ASK:

Why have they heard so little about it?

Television cameras are not allowed inside the Supreme Court, for instance. That's fine for print reporters, but video journalists need moving pictures.

Returning to an idea from the beginning of lecture, it's important for you to remember that some important stories are not strongly visual.

If a TV producer can't find interesting, visual ways to tell complex stories? TV may not tell them at all.

## 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.



## Deconstruction project



Covering a hit-and-run trial

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.



Hit\_and\_Run.wmv

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

## Complexity and nuance in 1 minute, 47 seconds



## DECONSTRUCTING HIT & RUN

### EVALUATE THESE SOURCES:

MRS. CASINO: Mother of victim

MR. MORALES: Suspect

((EACH CLICK RAISES A QUESTION))

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?

Students should notice he's only released on bail, not exonerated. Both Morales and Casino misunderstand a bail hearing and reporter doesn't fix that with context.

Whose fault is it that we miss the important context and nuance: This is bail-only, not guilt/innocence.

## Shooting from the hip or on target?



Is 1:42 enough time for comprehensive reporting? If not, whose problem is that?

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.



Campusguns.wmv

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

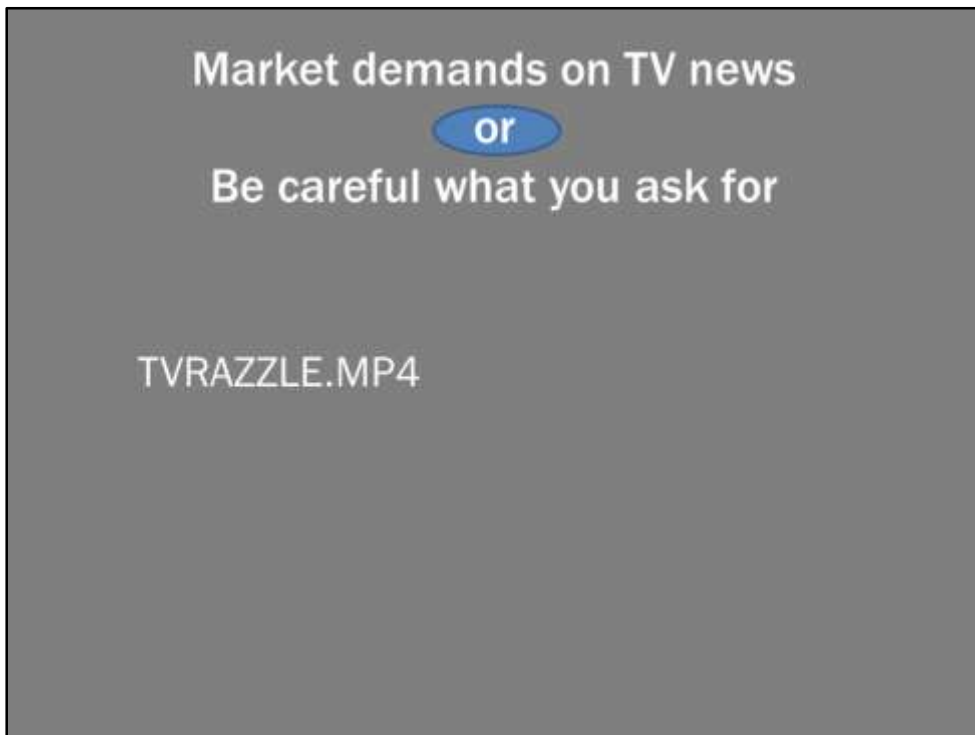
Professor Ron Holt

University of Cincinnati Police Chief Gene Ferrara

Student #1

Student #2

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?



(example of TV logo, sound marketing material)

**(Lecturer: play the role of TV Anchor for a few seconds as the dramatic music swells and booms and the gfx whirl)**

*“Welcome to News Literacy TV. I’m (say your name) and we have the top stories coming up on our broadcast....”*

John Stewart has made a career of mocking tv anchors and tv reporters.

But a lot of the way TV has evolved is a reflection of the audience as much as it is the powerful people who have shaped the TV news business.

Going forward, let’s make sure we understand some basic facts about TV News.

# Types of TV news reporting

➤ Breaking news



➤ Planned major events



➤ Taped stories for broadcasts



➤ Live reports



When you are evaluating TV, it may help to remember TV journalists are working to very different deadlines and with different resources, depending on the type of story they are producing for you.

1. **Breaking Stories** (Bloomberg orders evacuation ahead of Storm Sandy landfall) require portable gear, transport to the scene and a way to get the various clips and interviews edited in time for a scheduled news show.
2. **Planned Major Events** (Political Party Conventions, Olympics, Macy's Parade) The team knows long in advance where it's going to be and what's happening. Some material is prepared in advance and is mixed with live material. This combines all of TV's strengths.
3. **Taped Stories** (Michelle Miller's post-Sandy report from Breezy Point for CBS) Depending on the story, the team can have a day or a year to assemble all the pieces. It lacks the immediacy of live, but benefits from time to edit and polish and research.
4. **Live Reporting** (Anderson Cooper in Gaza during shelling) Though often hyped to make a mundane event seem newsy, live disaster and war reporting demands enormous physical risks and on-the spot judgment about what's verified and what's not





## **ANIMATION: CLICK1=SPIRAL WIPE OF MONEY, REVEALING NIELSEN LOGO**

Losing audience is hard on your pride, if you're the producer of a news show, but it can also cost you your job. Simply put, the more people watch, the more you can charge for the ads. The more people watch, the more likely cable operators are to add your show to their lineup.

You the audience decide what survives.

TV audiences are measured by Nielsen and other companies that tell TV station and network owners (and TV advertisers what) gets watched and what doesn't.

Every newsroom leader balances the mission of journalism with the need for a paying audience. But in TV, the ratings come every morning, not a couple of times per year.

**AND BY THE WAY, THE SAME IS TRUE ONLINE,**

MAYBE EVEN MORE SO

## Broadcast network news

- Big, national audience
- Rigid time slots
- Market bias: ratings influence story choice
- Limited time limits story selection
- Aging viewership (median age of 60)



In Lecture 5, we talked about the mission vs. the market and how that determines what is news. Today, let's think about the size of that market, but get a little more savvy about it.

Broadcast TV News runs during Regularly Scheduled Broadcasts on set Times and Days. They have Limited air-time for a Wide Range of Stories, although they are using streaming video to augment that time-crunched newscast.

Age can be seen through those adult diaper ads

# Big audience, big budget



This story from The Hollywood Reporter discusses how much it costs to produce an episode of 60 Minutes, which is the highest rated program on Television.

Profitable, serious, each episode usually features three segments.

Complicated stories from a war zone can cost up to \$200,000, compared to a mere \$3,000 for your run-of-the-mill network news story.

That's a lot of money to cover difficult stories in great depth.

But more than 12.7 million weekly viewers make that possible at 60 Minutes.

Local stations are network 'affiliates'



- Focus on local news, sports, weather
- Drivers: proximity, conflict, human interest
- Fierce competition
- Great economic pressures
- Separate news operations from network
- Market bias: If it bleeds, it leads

In general, news about your hometown is reported by a local tv station. Smaller audience means smaller budgets.

What's confusing is that station has signed what is called an "Affiliate Agreement" with one of the networks. This allows that station to air the nightly network news just before or after the local news report.

Local stations focus intensely on local crime, sports, weather. There's Fierce Competition for local ad dollars, for local viewers and because they serve a small area, their mission is completely different.

While the Network takes on big issues and big personalities, local news tends to emphasize crime while avoiding controversies that will irritate advertisers and viewers.

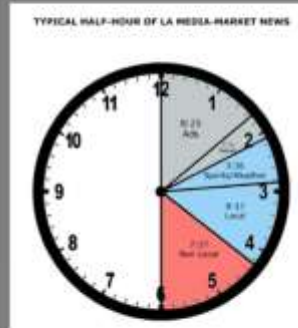
That local report is NOT produced by the same staff as the nightly news with Brian Williams, Scott Pelley or Diane Sawyer.

It doesn't come from the same building. And in the rest of the country, not even in the same state.

Students in the New York metropolitan area can be forgiven if they don't understand the difference, since WCBS shares a building with CBS Network news.

But in general it is a totally different operation, with separate staff, budgets, audiences and issues.

## Local TV news



**“If it bleeds, it leads”**

### **LOCAL STATIONS: IF IT BLEEDS IT LEADS**

Because their budgets are small and because you, the viewer, are addicted to crime stories, the industry saying about local TV News is “If it Bleeds, it Leads,” a decision-making rubric that keeps a lot of serious issues out of the news.

For instance, according to a University of Southern California study of local TV, A composite half-hour of LA local TV news contains 8:25 of ads; 2:10 of teasers (“stay with us –there’s a story you won’t want to miss”); 3:36 of sports and weather; and 15:44 for everything else. So besides sports and weather, only about half of a half-hour of news is news.

Local news takes up 8:17; non-local news gets 7:27.

## 24-hour news cable networks



CNN  
HeadlineNews.



TALK is a cheap way  
to fill all those hours



Here's where it gets tricky...

When cable came along, and then Web video, the nationwide audience of all age groups fell apart.

With more choices, viewers started to abandon the Big Three. News junkies fell in love with 'round the clock headline news on CNN and that spawned imitators and now you have a lot of different flavors of news.

So, while having the biggest audience is a good thing, a TV Corporation also wants the right audience: Not necessarily everybody, just the people with money and interests that are lucrative to advertisers.

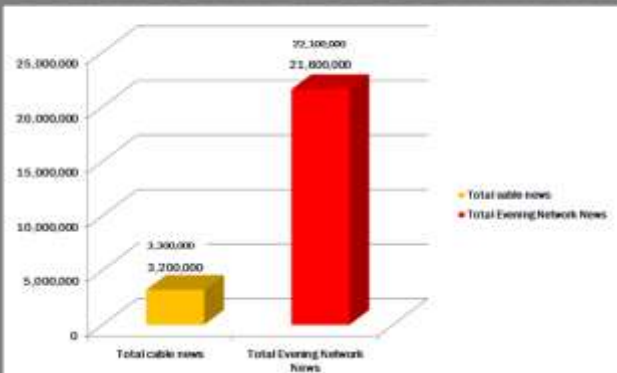
This is why the commercials are different during different news shows.

During morning news shows, the ads target women.

In the evening, the ads target older people.

That can also affect which stories get chosen, as each time-slot caters to its biggest audience.

## Little-known fact: Cable attracts a small fraction of the audience



It's important to take a moment here to remind ourselves that although the Big Three news networks: ABC, CBS and NBC have been steadily losing viewers for 30 years, cable news is still only a tiny fraction of the TV News audience. On any given night, the Big Three networks draw 22.1 million viewers while the combined audience for cable news is about 3.3 million.

What makes cable attractive to advertisers?

A younger audience. Marketers know that the habits and brand loyalties you develop between the ages of 17 and 21 tend to be lifelong. So Young eyeballs are particularly important. Advertisers are pretty sure you're too dumb to ask why insurance shoppers should trust a talking gekko. They just want to stamp that brand in your brain: Geico. Also, cable news viewers watch twice as long as network news viewers: 25 minutes as opposed to 12 on any given day.



## 24-hour demands define cable news

- Requires hundreds of stories per day
- Positive: Covers stories requiring lots of time
- Positive: Always able to cover significant "breaking news"
- Negative: Often emphasizes the sensational over the significant
- Negative: Relies heavily on controversy and talk

Relative to Network News, cable news attracts a small audience, but recently has a disproportionate amount of influence and impact on the "news cycle."

Cable has enormous amounts of airtime to fill.

### POSITIVE

- A. Provides coverage of stories requiring lots of time
- B. Capacity to cover significant "breaking news"

### NEGATIVE-

- A. Often emphasizes sensational over significant
- B. Reports "trivial" news: relies heavily on controversy and talk (which is inexpensive)



There's increasing competition in a new sphere called always-on online news. Unlike CNN and Al Jazeera, who have to compete for precious slots on local cable carriers, web-based news finds its audience without having to work through Optimum or Time Warner or other cable giants. 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.



In the Broadcast era, news consumers got one look at information as it went by because there was no rewind button.

And because the evening news was 30 minutes, with stories served up in a rigid order, it was a shallow medium for news. Stories were short, to match audience attention spans.

Now, though, TV on the web can be as long as it needs to be and deep archival resources can be offered alongside peppy video reports. But that advantage is only available if you bother to go looking for more than the summary reports on the evening broadcast.



Many web-based media outlets produce or collect news-like video content.

Sometimes these sites provide quality reporting that passes VIA, but often you can find yourself in the entertainment or publicity neighborhood.

Always make sure to ask yourself "What neighborhood am I in?"

## Questions unique to TV news

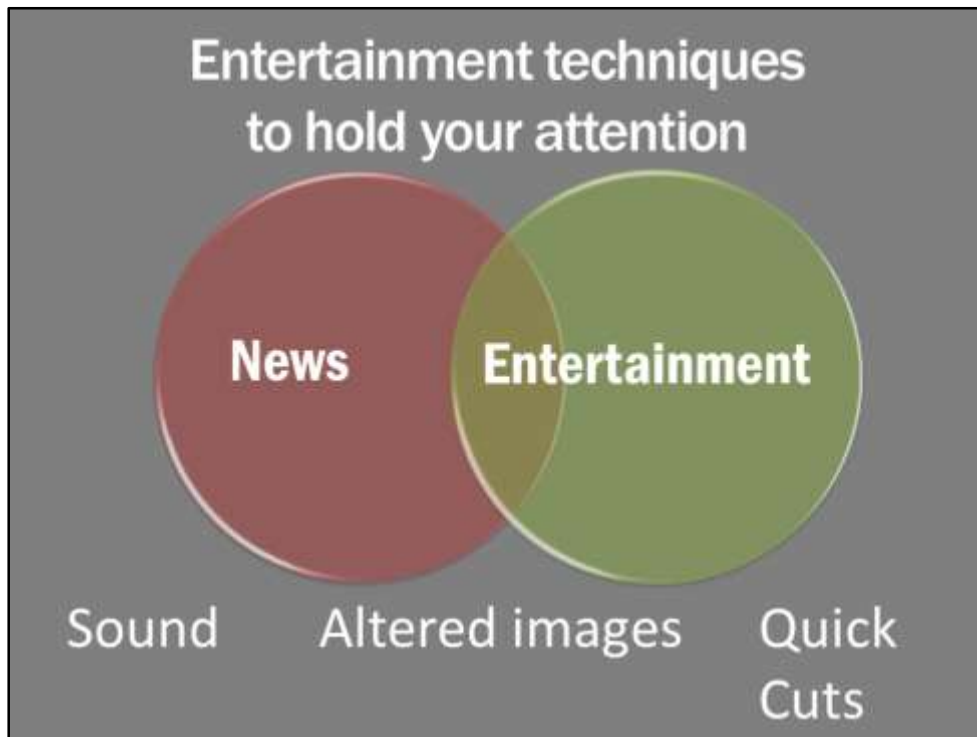
- Are you being manipulated by the speed of cuts or types of transitions?
- Is the sound added or altered?
- Is this story suited to TV's strengths?

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.

3. If this is not a story best-suited to TV, should you look for more reporting online?



Video news lives inside an entertainment medium and in some cases, uses entertainment techniques to keep your attention.

In the worst instances, the techniques manipulate your feelings or make it hard for you to reach a neutral understanding.

But in other cases, the video editor is merely working with the audience she or he has: using the visual and sonic vocabulary that will keep you engaged in an important story.

Did the editing change the meaning  
or just keep you watching?

**quickedit.wmv**

(News Fellow insert video here.)

What do you think, is this an appropriate way to edit this report on the shootings in Binghamton?

(Click to run the “BAM, BAM, BAM, BAM” editing example.)



Same story all three times?

Mom Goes to War Montage.mp4

**NEWS FELLOW: INSERT ABOVE-MENTIONED VIDEO HERE**

**(Lecturer: This is a piece produced by the Poynter Institute that demonstrates the impact of music on meaning. Each of the clips is identical, but the first two have music and the third has nat sound.)**

We're going to watch three short videos that are similar and think about how small changes make a difference in a TV report.

After each video, we'll take a short break, during which you'll write down what you learned from that version of the report.

After the third is done, we'll talk about the differences.

After video #1 ASK: Is this deployment good for her son? Write what you think.

After video #2 ASK: Is this deployment good for the boy? Write what you think. What shots or quotes got cut from this version?

After video #3 ASK: What's the impact of deployment on a family? Write what you think. What shots or quotes got cut from this version?

(If you're lucky, students will think certain soundbites or shots were cut. If they jump right on the music changes, then focus on that.)

Which of these pieces is most sympathetic to the mom...to the son...to the military?

How did your understanding of the meaning of this report change, from version to version?

The savvy TV viewer's  
vital skill is...



ANIMATION: CLICK 1= THE WORD "LISTEN" IS REVEALED.

It may seem a little counter-intuitive, because TV is so visual, but when watching TV, your hearing may be your most important sense.

The point of the exercise we just conducted is to demonstrate to you the impact music, added-in music, has on the meaning of a piece.

The National Press Photographers Association's code of ethics forbids the introduction of any sound that was not recorded with the video.

Similarly, CBS and other top-ranked broadcast outlets forbid the addition of music that didn't exist.

At CBS, in fact, the rule has long been that if there's music in a report, the video should include a shot of the source of the music, whether it's a band or some electronic device.

## Deconstruction project



FEMA trailers making residents sick?

Here is a meatier story. There's too little TV like this but we show it to you to encourage your taste for 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.

Should you be concerned?

FEMA\_Trailer.wmv

(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)
- Bureaucrat: (source of drama material)
- 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
- Air tester: Reporter is opening the freezer by doing test himself

## Deconstruction project

CBS EVENING NEWS with SCOTT PELLEY

By SARAH FITZPATRICK CBS NEWS | April 27, 2014 7:49 PM

### Companies to pay \$14.8M in FEMA trailer settlement



Five years later, 21 companies that built the trailers agreed to a \$14.8 million class action settlement

**Look for the winners**

- Clearly seeks out multiple named sources in a controversy
- Uses production techniques to add understanding
- Transparently conducts independent investigation
- Emphasizes first-hand accounts and direct evidence
- Combines social media information with live sources
- Uses context to build a comprehensive report

**(Animation: each click brings one up.)**

To help you prepare for the final exam, we built an online class in TV deconstruction. When you go to this class to prepare, you'll be working with a 35-year veteran of broadcast news, Marcy McGinnis. She was the Associate Dean of the School of Journalism at Stony Brook and is now back in the business as Sr. Vice President/Newsgathering at Al Jazeera America. From her inside view on tv news, she sorted out these helpful rules for TV viewers.

Look for WINNERS:

- Excellent reporting seeks out all points of view
- Excellent editing of natural sound and non-staged video serves clarity and does not manipulate you.
- Excellent reporters seek independent verification
- First hand sources and direct evidence help you seek the truth
- Social media is only one source of information
- Context is essential to developing a comprehensive understanding.





## Beware of the “sinners”

- Manipulate viewers with language and production techniques
- Show and refer to only one point of view
- Do little or no independent reporting , fail to transparently describe their reporting steps
- Offer no eyewitness accounts or vague sourcing
- Use leading questions: *“Isn’t it amazing that...”*

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

Looping back to the beginning of the lecture: 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! Will the questions push a source to one answer?

## Deconstruction project



Now, let's watch a local news report on a 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"

Sources:

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
- ✓ Has the sound been altered, or music added?
  - ✓ Is this a story well-suited to TV's strengths (it is)
  - ✓ How about that hand-cuff sound? Enhanced?
  - ✓ What can you conclude?
  - ✓ Is this reporter demonstrating independence from the police? What trade-off did she make for access?
  - ✓ Are you being manipulated by editing techniques?
  - ✓ How many times did they use the shot of the "hooker" officer in hot pants? (Next slide counts them)

## How many short-shorts shots?



Operation gotcha screen grabs of the hooker shots.

Animation automatically reels them off. Those tight shorts get shown 24 times.

## To get the most from TV news

- Be active, not passive: Keep your brain engaged.
- Supplement TV news with web, radio and print news.
- Understand TV's limitations and rely on its strengths.

We leave you with these ideas:

BE actively involved—pay attention

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

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

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

## The Quick Quiz

1. True or False: Background music mixed into a TV news report in the editing process has no effect on the reliability and fairness of the report.
2. What kinds of news are you likely not to know about if you only consume TV news and not radio, online text or print news?
3. Write a question we can answer to clarify today's lesson ... or a comment that will help us improve our work.

**EMAIL OR HAND THE ANSWERS  
TO YOUR RECITATION INSTRUCTOR**

Note, they are to bring the Deconstruction Guide to Recitation, as well.



hus endeth the Lesson...





NEWS FELLOW: INSERT VIDEO ABOVE, SET TO START ON CLICK, **NOT** AUTOMATICALLY. **ANIMATION: THE RED AND YELLOW FLAGS WAVE AUTOMATICALLY, THEN STOP** (Lecturer: This slide works with the video or without. If using video, stop at 00:41, where he gives the promo.)

In auto-racing, the marshal waves a red flag when there's a disaster. Drivers must stop to avoid a wreck. A yellow flag means drivers can proceed, but with caution.

We're fortunate this week to have an excellent example of the importance of V.I.A. (EMPHASIZE THAT "Via" = VIA) in deciding what you can conclude from a news report. By paying attention to those three simple characteristics of reliable news reporting, you can be your own marshal, deciding if the story is safe, requires caution, or is a disaster.

If you were watching the CBS News on Oct. 27, you heard Anchor Scott Pelley promote a 60 Minutes report that claimed to have the first eye-witness account of what happened during the 2012 attack on the U.S. consulate in Benghazi, Libya, in which Ambassador Chris Stevens was killed.

60 Minutes is widely considered the highest-quality TV news show on the air. It has a reputation for courage AND for scrupulous reporting. So it was a big deal when people started challenging the truthfulness of the key source in this story, who called himself Morgan Jones.

To be plain: there were no red flags you could have spotted to warn you the story had weak sourcing.

But there were yellow flags. Let's review how focusing on V.I.A. would have helped you to conclude, that you should be cautious

about this information.



NEWS FELLOW: INSERT VIDEO ABOVE, SET TO START ON CLICK, **NOT** AUTOMATICALLY. **ANIMATION: THE YELLOW FLAG WAVES AUTOMATICALLY, THEN STOPS**

(Lecturer: This slide works with the video or without.)

At the outset, reporter Lara Logan notes this story emerges from the center of a political scrum. The facts are contested and efforts are being made to muddy the issue, or to use it as a political club by members of Congress and other partisans.

That's the first yellow flag. Caution: this Benghazi situation is being argued over from

the left and right. Verification will be hard.



NEWS FELLOW: INSERT VIDEO ABOVE, SET TO START ON CLICK, **NOT** AUTOMATICALLY.

**ANIMATION: THE YELLOW FLAG WAVES AUTOMATICALLY, THEN STOPS**

(Lecturer: This slide works with the video or without.)

The prime source for this story, the security guard who witnessed the attack, cannot verify that he was there. No one saw him. No one heard him. Plus, he is using an assumed name, so he can't be held accountable if he is lying.

That's your second yellow flag. Certainly CBS checks its sources carefully, but his claims of what happened cannot be corroborated. You've got verification and accountability issues.



NEWS FELLOW: INSERT VIDEO ABOVE, SET TO START ON CLICK, **NOT** AUTOMATICALLY.

**ANIMATION: THE YELLOW FLAG WAVES AUTOMATICALLY, THEN STOPS**

(Lecturer: This slide works with the video or without.)

Late in the story, we learn that the unnamed, uncorroborated source, Morgan Jones, is peddling a book, which means his self-interest may powerfully motivate him to juice up his story.

That's your third yellow flag. Now you've got independence issues.

Worse yet, it turns out Jones' book is being published by Simon & Schuster, a company owned by CBS. So, 60 Minutes has a direct stake in promoting Jones' account.

# News Literacy Lessons Via Today's News



60 Minutes 11/10/13 - Lara Logan issues a correction on a story 60 Minutes broadcast on Oct. 27 about t(1).mp4

60 Minutes 11/10/13 - Lara Logan issues a correction on a story 60 Minutes broadcast on Oct. 27 about t(1).mp4

*"On Thursday night, when we discovered the account he gave the FBI was different than what he told us, we realized we'd been misled and it was a mistake to include him in our report."*

-Reporter Lara Logan

NEWS FELLOW: INSERT VIDEO ABOVE, SET TO START ON CLICK, **NOT** AUTOMATICALLY.

(Lecturer: This slide works with the video or without.)

Worse yet, it turns out Jones' book is being published by Simon & Schuster, a company owned by CBS. So, 60 Minutes has a direct stake in promoting Jones' account.

The fundamental elements of the Benghazi story are not changed: that it was a skilled, pre-planned attack and that no help was sent. But the part of the story touted by CBS, an exclusive inside-the-operation source...is discredited.

One final element of VIA: CBS corrected its report and apologized, both on its morning show and on 60Minutes. It's that impulse to put the truth above ego that is the core of the A in VIA: a reliable news outlet takes responsibility for what it produces, even when that's painful.



# 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?

## Sound Changes Perceptions



Next week, when we are deconstructing TV News, we'll ask you to rely heavily on your ears, noting if music has been added to news reports to influence your perception of the images as they stream by.