

**NEWS
LITERACY
KEY
LESSONS**

TO HELP YOU PREPARE
FOR THE SECOND TEST

THE
POWER
OF IMAGES
CAN BE SEEN
EVERY DAY
IN ITS IMPACT
ON NEWS
JUDGMENT



President Barack Obama shakes hands with students before speaking at Pathways in Technology Early College High School in Brooklyn.

Touting P-TECH

■ President Obama wants more like Brooklyn school

■ Urges Congress to invest in education, research

BY PAUL LAROCK AND EMILY NOD
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President Barack Obama called on Congress yesterday to increase investments in hi-tech education initiatives, like the Brooklyn high school from where he spoke.

"The question isn't just how much more we can cut," said Obama, who was joined by Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo, Mayor Michael Bloomberg and Democratic mayoral nominee Bill de Blasio at the Pathways in Technology Early College High School, known as P-TECH.

"It should be how many more schools like P-TECH we

can create," Obama said. In his appearance at the 2-year-old high school, Obama revisited a theme of his State of the Union address this year.

In that speech, he cited cooperation between New York City public schools, the City University of New York and IBM that has allowed hundreds of P-TECH students to simultaneously earn high school diplomas and associate degrees in computers or engineering — putting them in a better position to quickly get well-paying jobs.

About 370 students were enrolled in the Brooklyn school's inaugural class that began in September 2011. Officials said they expect that to grow to between 400 and 450 students by next fall.

"This is a ticket into the middle class, and it's available to everyone who is willing to work for it," Obama told the crowd of about 600 people at the cam-

pus. "That's what public education is supposed to do."

Obama said the federal government is working to connect 99 percent of American students to high-speed Internet at their schools within the next five years. But he said Congress needed to work with him to fund other educational investments.

He pitched closing corporate tax "loopholes" to raise the needed revenue. He said other countries were gaining ground in producing the educated workforce necessary for today's global economy.

"If you think education's expensive, wait until you see how much ignorance costs," Obama said, referring to the recent government shutdown, which he said took billions of dollars out of the economy. "Don't tell me we can afford to shut down the government and we can't afford to invest in our education systems."

In his 25-minute address, Obama also urged Congress to invest in more scientific research, roads and infrastructure, which he said would help create more middle class jobs.

Earlier, Obama quipped that Brooklyn, where he once lived, had exploded in popularity and vitality in the decades after he departed.

"When I was living here, Brooklyn was cool — but not this cool," he said.

Also last night, Obama spoke at a Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee fundraiser and was scheduled to attend a Democratic National Committee fundraiser.

At the DCCC fundraiser at an Upper East Side residence, Obama contrasted the optimism he said he saw at P-TECH with the recent government shutdown, calling the partisan clash an "episode that stressed Washington's dysfunction."

U.S.-IRANIAN CITIZEN CHARGED IN MISSILE PLOT

BY JOHN HEY
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Federal prosecutors in Manhattan announced yesterday that they have been secretly holding a man with dual U.S. and Iranian citizenship for seven months on charges of plotting to acquire missiles for the government of Iran.

Raza Olangian, according to a newly unsealed indictment, was extradited from Estonia in March on charges that, from his base of operations in Tehran, he tried to acquire 200 surface-to-air missiles and aircraft parts through a contact who was a U.S. informant.

Prosecutors said Olangian worked with Iranian officials in 2007 to try to acquire 100 SAM missiles, and surfaced again in early 2012 trying to get "UGLA-5" missiles — handheld, portable weapons that can be fired by a single person at aircraft.

A criminal complaint said Olangian was naturalized in the United States in 1999, goes by the name Ray Avardian and lives in Los Gatos, Calif., where he is in the United States. Arrested in Estonia last October, he was secretly arraigned and assigned a lawyer in federal court in Manhattan in late March.

His current lawyer, Leo Garaburo, said he was retained by Olangian's family a month ago. "We're prepared to defend against the charges in the indictment," Garaburo said.

In secretly recorded calls and in a videoconference, the government alleged, Olangian described plans to smuggle the missiles into Iran and remotely target an Iranian SAM.

Olangian faces up to 90 years in prison on conspiracy and other charges. He will make a public court appearance on Nov. 13, officials said.

PHOTO BY AP/WIDEWORLD; COURTESY OF P-TECH

The hungry eye

ONLINE

- Readers' eyes first seek navigational aids (story lists and teasers)
- Readers' eyes spend more time on photos than text
- Readers retain more from items that include graphics/photos



The hungry eye

PRINT

- Readers enter print pages through photos
- Only 25% of text is looked at

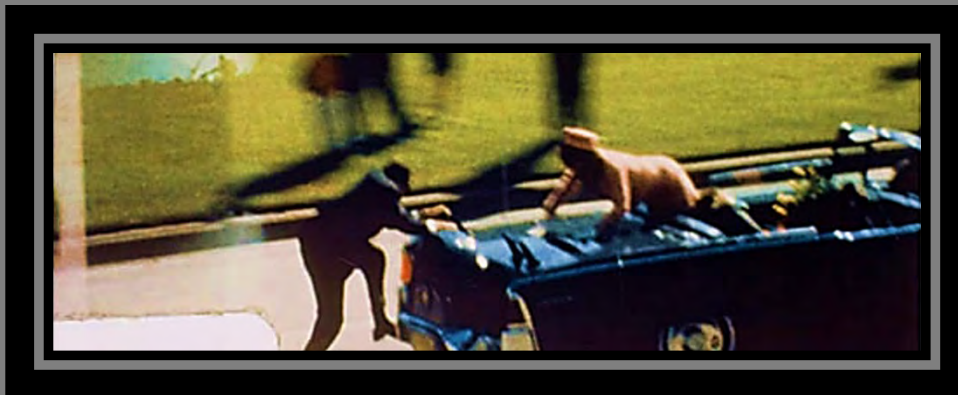


Image-testing skills and tools



Ethical photos ‘Open the Freezer’

A photo credit declares who is accountable for the integrity of the image. The caption provides detail that can be crosschecked and provides the context that makes a depiction “faithful” to the truth.



How can you tell?

Again with the language and labeling!

- Check photo credits
- Check photo captions
- Note: “file photo” (how old is it?)
- **Look for these words:**

PHOTO ENHANCEMENT”

DIGITAL PHOTO MANIPULATION

COMPOSITE PHOTO

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION



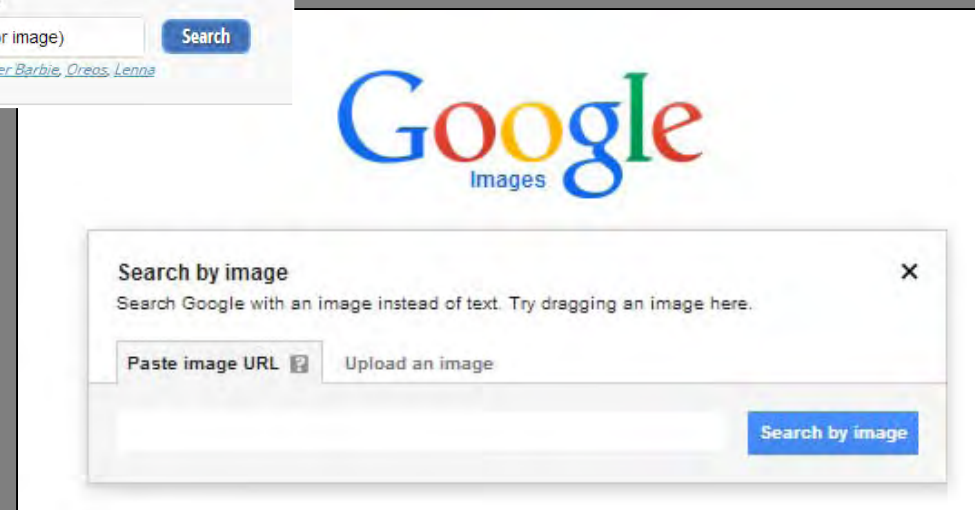
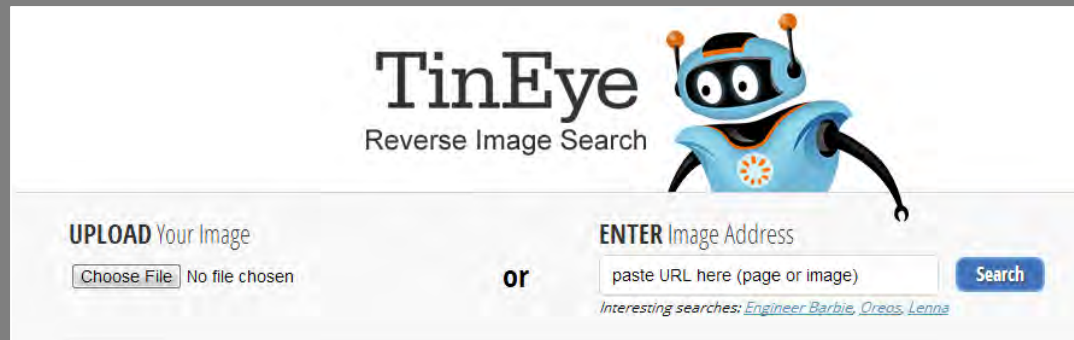
Caption

Credit

Manish Swarup/Associated Press

Jampa Yeshe, a Tibetan protester self-immolated in New Delhi, ahead of Chinese President Hu Jintao's visit to India, March 26, 2012.

How can you be sure?

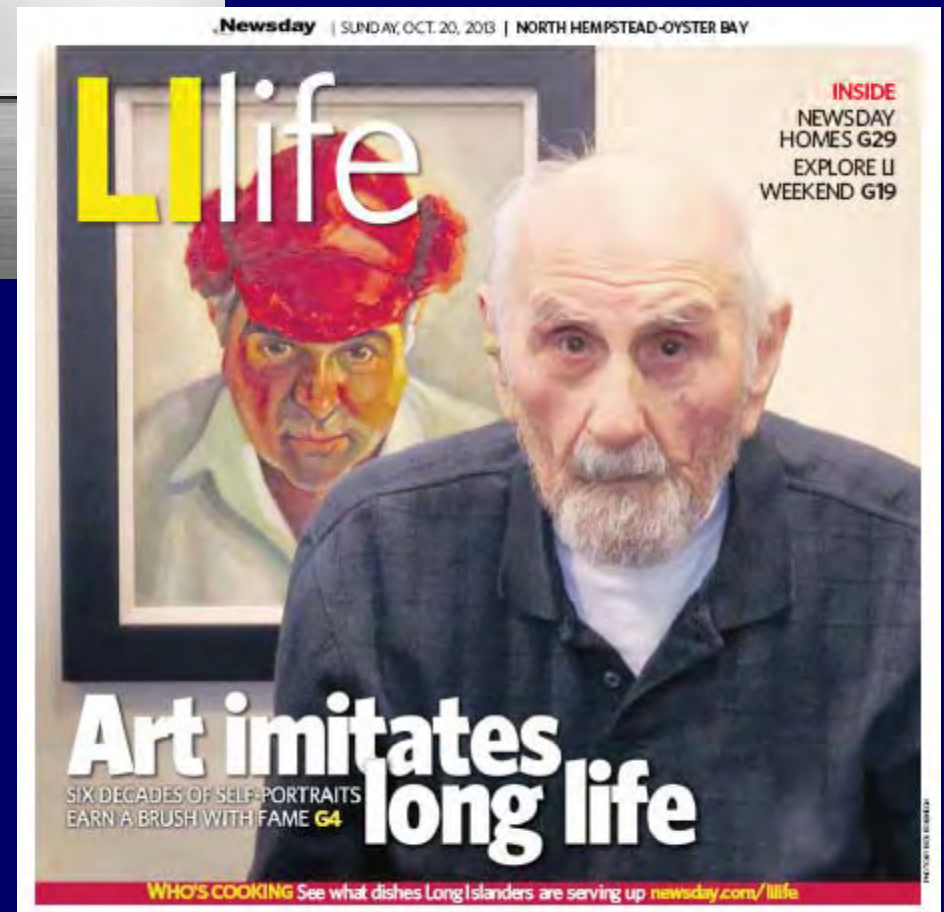


Two simple tools – Tin Eye and Google Images – can at least tell you who else is using the same image



**HOW ARE
THESE TWO
DIFFERENT?**

**BOTH ARE
POSED, BUT
ONLY ONE IS
DECEIVING THE
READER**



After this lecture, you should be able to:

- 1. Explain how photos and recorded sound serve as powerful verification of journalistic truth, aiding the news consumer's search for reliable information.**
- 2. Explain how the same photos and recorded sound can trigger strong emotional responses without adding to your understanding.**
- 3. Use journalistic methods and questions to test the reliability of photos and recorded sound.**
- 4. Explain the burden social media creators and participants bear when they use these powerful tools.**

Fairness, balance and bias



Whose truth do you trust?

Three questions today




- How do we know if a news report is fair?
- How do we know if a news outlet is biased?
- What's the difference between news media bias and audience bias?

What is

FAIRNESS?

Definition of **fairness**

Main Entry: **1fair** 

Pronunciation: \ 'fer \

Function: *adjective*

Etymology: Middle English *fager*, *fair*, from Old English *fæger*; akin to Old High German *fagar* beautiful

Date: before 12th century

**Marked by impartiality and honesty.
Free from self-interest, prejudice, or
favoritism. Being fair *to the evidence.***

Finding **fairness**

- **Fair play**
- **Fair language**
- **Fair presentation**

Fair play

- **Obvious effort to include relevant perspectives**
- **People, organizations get to respond to negative charges**



Fair language


- “Right-to-Life” vs. “Anti-Abortion”
- “Pro-Choice” vs. “Abortion rights advocate”
- “Ruthless” vs. “Tough”
- “Admitted” vs. “Said”
- “Gay marriage” vs. “Marriage equality”

Fair Presentation



- **Avoids prejudicial photos**
- **Presents photos and other visuals that are appropriate to the report**

Definition of **balance**

Main Entry: **¹bal·ance** 

Pronunciation: \ˈbɑ-lən(t)s\

Function: *noun*

Etymology: Middle English, from Anglo-French, from Vulgar Latin **bilancia*, from Late Latin *bilanc-*, *bilanx* having two scalepans, from Latin *bi-* + *lanc-*, *lanx* plate

Date: 13th century


**Equality between the totals
of two (or more) sides of an account.
Balance is a quantitative measurement.**

Can providing **balance** be **unfair**?



Should Holocaust deniers get equal time?

Definition of **bias**

Main Entry: **¹bi·as** 

Pronunciation: \ˈbī-əs\

Function: *noun*

Etymology: Middle French *biais*

Date: 1530

A predisposition that distorts your ability to fairly weigh the evidence and prevents you from reaching a fair or accurate judgment.

The News Literacy definition

Bias:
a pattern
of unfairness

How to spot bias

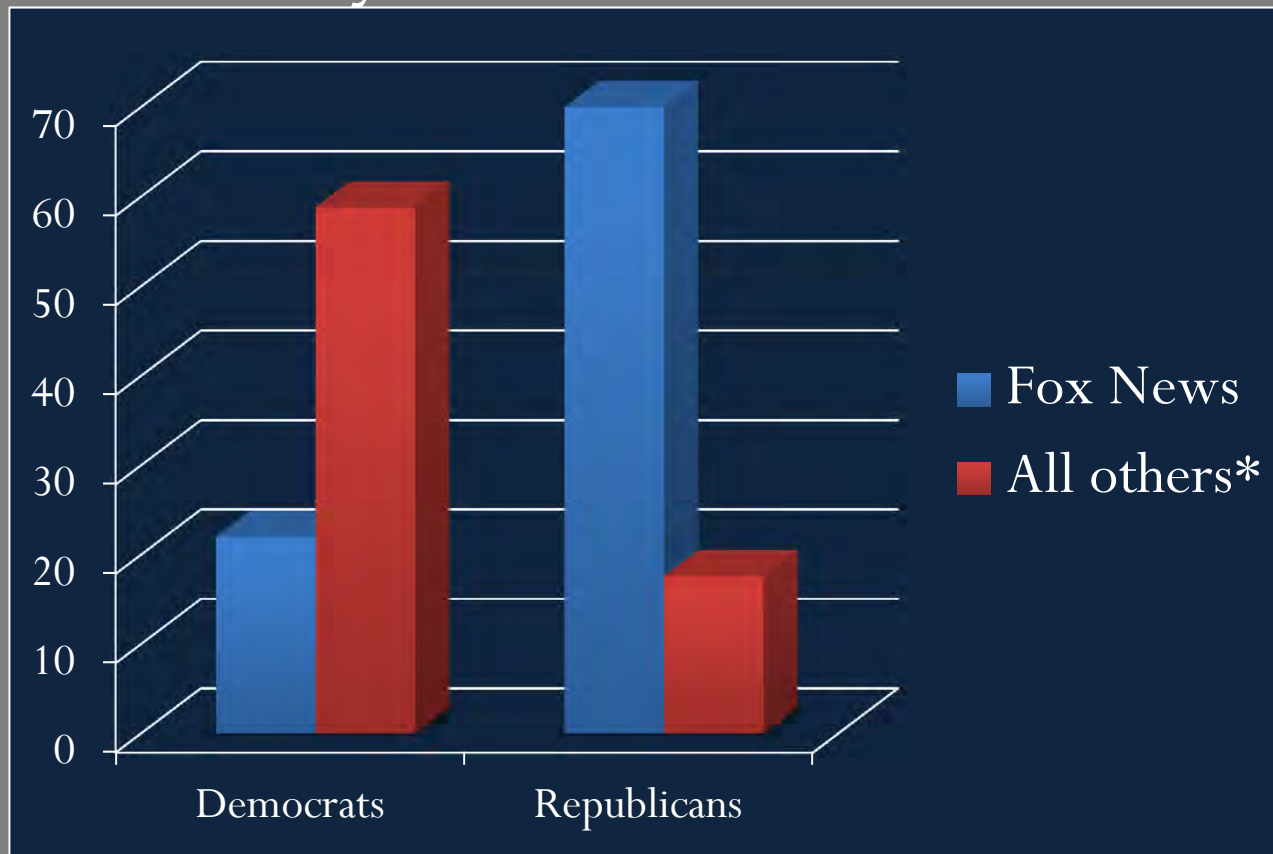
- Look for evidence of a pattern of unfairness over time
- Compare a variety of news outlets, especially when searching for bias by omission
- Take note of the self-interest of those alleging bias



Media bias? Audience bias?



Who do you trust?



* All others: PBS, NBC, MSNBC, CBS, CNN, ABC

Coping with cognitive dissonance

SELECTIVE DISTORTION AND RETENTION

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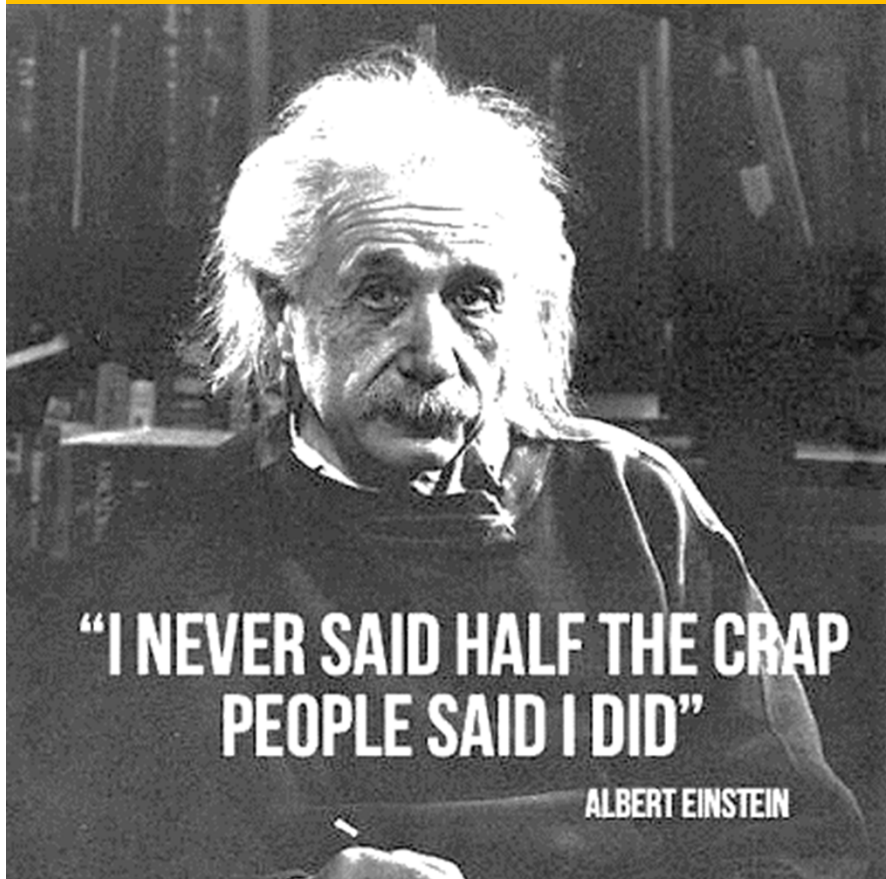


"YEAH, BUT HE ONLY HEARS WHAT
HE WANTS TO HEAR."

**People distort
(or forget)
incoming
information that
disagrees with
their point of view.**

Coping with cognitive dissonance

SOURCE AMNESIA



**The information
is retained, but we
forget if we heard it
from CBS News
or some wacko on
talk radio.**

Coping with cognitive dissonance

CONFIRMATION BIAS



Catholic News Service

Islamic Finance *news*

We pursue
information
that confirms
our point of
view.

KEY LESSONS ON BIAS

Are there examples of unfair news stories?

Absolutely

Is unfairness an automatic sign of bias?

No

Can a news outlet exhibit bias?

Yes, but it's easier to allege than to prove

Is the *perception* of bias as dangerous as bias itself?

Yes

KEY LESSONS ON BIAS

✓ Bias is a Pattern. Not an event.

✓ Your Mind May Not Be Open, After All.

Beware of **confirmation bias**, our tendency to believe information that conforms with what we have heard and believe, and **cognitive dissonance**, which leads us to disbelieve information that does not.

Together, they produce **audience bias** and the tendency of news consumers to seek out news outlets that confirm their beliefs and opinions.

After this lecture, you should be able to:

- 1. Distinguish balance from fairness and news media bias from audience bias.**
- 2. Explain why unexamined public acceptance of charges of news media bias might be unhealthy in a democracy.**
- 3. Use specific events and examples to illustrate news media bias and audience bias.**
- 4. Explain the difference between news judgment (a professional mindset characterized by attention to drivers, mission and market in selecting stories) and news media bias (unethical pursuit of political or social goals)**
- 5. Explain Cognitive Dissonance AND several coping mechanisms we use to reduce the discomfort it causes.**

A journalist's first obligation is to the

TRUTH

But it isn't as easy as you think.

Three BIG questions today

➤ **What is TRUTH?**

➤ **How does VERIFICATION work?**

➤ **Why does it sometimes FAIL?**

truth

is what *really* happened,
or the way the world *really* is.



**DEFINING TERMS
WITH PRECISION**



THE PROCESS OF SUPPORTING
ASSERTIONS WITH EVIDENCE IS
verification

Journalism and science



Like scientists, journalists strive for a pragmatic truth
that helps explain the world
and helps you function day to day

What is journalism's goal?

"...the best obtainable version of the truth."

**Bob Woodward
and Carl Bernstein at
Stony Brook University
on Oct. 16, 2014**



Journalistic truth is **provisional**

pro·vi·sion·al

/prəˈvɪʒənəl/ 

Adjective

Arranged or existing for the present, possibly to be changed later.

Noun

A provisional postage stamp.

Synonyms

temporary - interim - provisory - tentative - temporal

Today's evidence may be trumped
by tomorrow's discoveries

What is scientific truth?

A.K.A scientific theory



A statement of
probability
proportional to
the **evidence**.

It changes as the **evidence** changes.

Journalism and science

THEY SHARE AN ETHIC OF **PEER REVIEW**



EXPERT PEER REVIEWERS

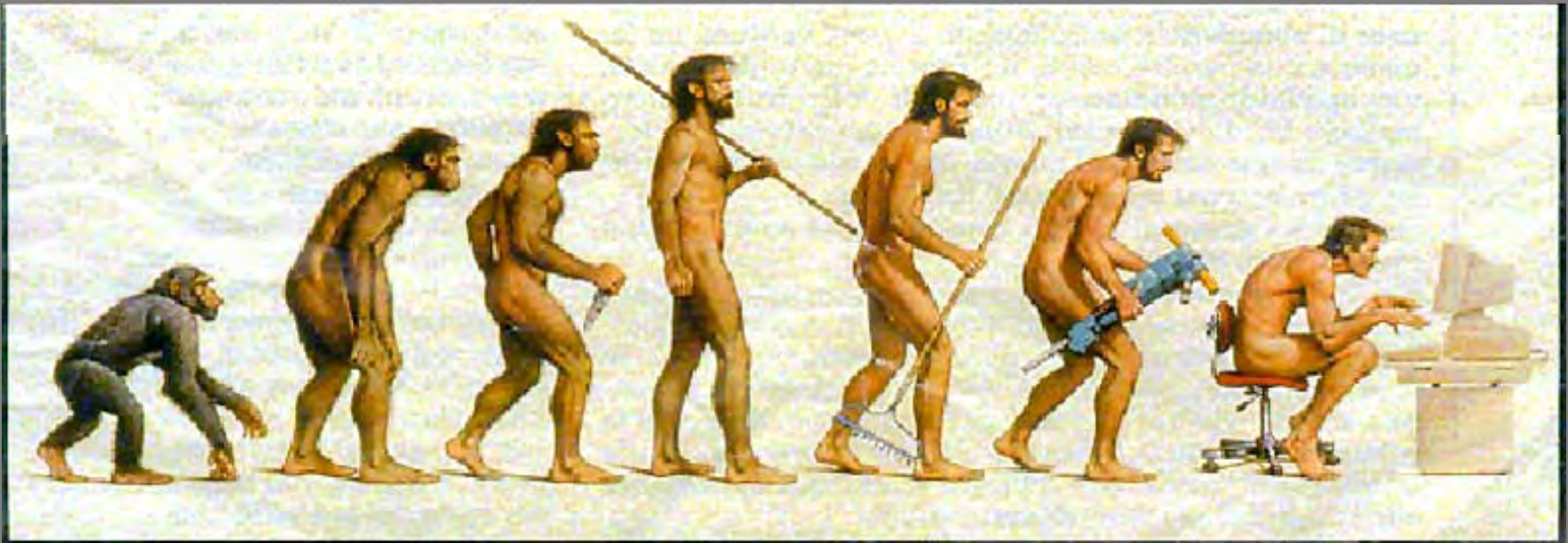
VS.

EDITORS AND COMPETITORS



Journalism and science

THEY SHARE A **PRAGMATIC VIEW**

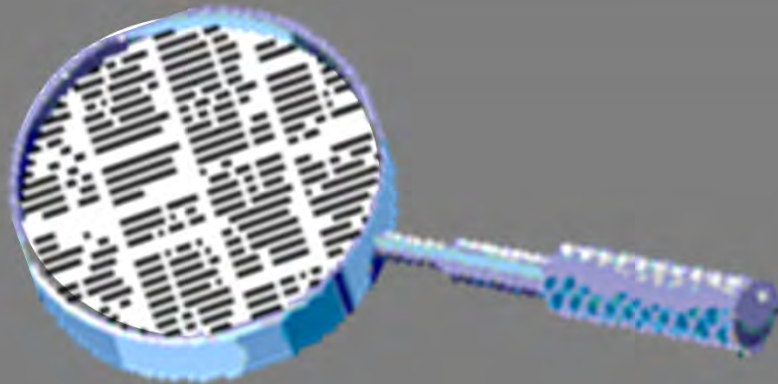


Journalists and scientists do not believe
in absolute truth.
What we call “truth” changes
as evidence accumulates.

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a brown and black patterned sweater, has a shocked expression with wide eyes and her hands covering her mouth. The background is white with several black puzzle pieces scattered around. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

**FOLLOW THE
STORY OVER
TIME**

**The
burden
is on you**



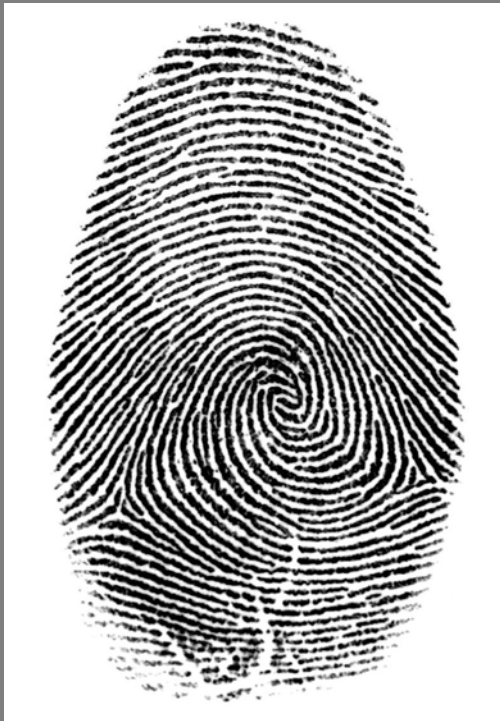
The discipline of verification

- ✓ **Journalists gather, assess, and weigh evidence**
- ✓ **Place evidence in the big picture (context)**
- ✓ **Explain how they know...(and what they don't know)***

*** This is called "Transparency."**

Seeking truth

When searching for the truth,
not all evidence is equal



DIRECT EVIDENCE



INDIRECT EVIDENCE

Seeking truth

Journalistic verification using
a hierarchy of **direct** evidence

VIDEO, AUDIO AND PHOTOS

DOCUMENTS AND RECORDS

**JOURNALIST EYEWITNESS
ACCOUNT**

**OBSERVER
EYEWITNESS
ACCOUNT**

Seeking truth

Journalistic verification using
indirect evidence

The hierarchy isn't as naturally clear,
so in no particular order . . .

- ✓ **Accounts from spokesmen**
(i.e. lawyer, press secretary, written press release)
- ✓ **Expert reconstructions**
- ✓ **Hearsay testimony (secondhand or worse)**
- ✓ **Computer models**
- ✓ **Inferences from evidence**

How do you know what's true?

- 1. Consider all the evidence together.**
- 2. Note which evidence is direct, which is indirect.**
- 3. Note if relevant evidence is missing.**
- 4. Note irrelevant evidence that's in the way.**
- 5. If evidence is contradictory, weigh its origins. Is it direct? What is the source of it? Ask critical questions and assign relative weight to each piece of evidence.**
- 6. Remember journalistic truth is the best obtainable truth at this time. It will change as new evidence accumulates. But to avoid paralysis, we draw conclusions all the time, based on skillful analysis of the evidence provided to us.**

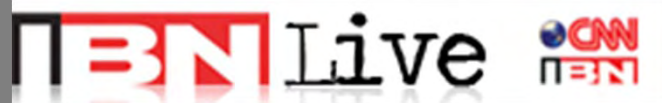
WHY THE VERIFICATION PROCESS CAN FAIL

- ✓ Journalists **rush** to get the story first, jump the gun
- ✓ Facing deadline, some journalists get **sloppy** or provide incomplete reports

WHY THE VERIFICATION PROCESS CAN FAIL

- ✓ People (sources) give reporters incorrect information... or outright **lie**.
- ✓ Verification is very **difficult**, even when sources are helpful

WHY THE VERIFICATION PROCESS CAN FAIL



Spending long hours surfing the Web leads to depression

TECH, Posted on Feb 18, 2013 at 03:55pm IST

Press Trust of India

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- ✓ Correlation is analyzed as causation ... Misuse of evidence

Journalist as eyewitness:

Katrina's body count could reach 10,000

*Bodies found piled
in freezer at
Convention Center*

Brian Thevenot
Staff writer

Arkansas National Guardsman Mikel Brooks stepped through the food service entrance of the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center Monday, flipped on the light at the end of his machine gun, and started pointing out bodies.

"Don't step in that blood - it's contaminated," he said. "That one with his arm sticking up in the air, he's an old man."

Then he shined the light on the smaller human figure under the white sheet next to the elderly man.

"That's a kid," he said. "There's another one in the freezer, a 7-year-old with her throat cut."

He moved on, walking quickly through the darkness, pulling his camouflage shirt to his face to screen out the overwhelming odor.

"There's an old woman," he said, pointing to a wheelchair covered by a sheet. "I escorted her in myself. And that old man got bludgeoned to death," he said of the body lying on the floor next to the wheelchair.

Brooks and several other Guardsmen said they had seen



CONVENTION CENTER: ATF Senior Special Agent Dave Millen of the Special Response Team walks past one of many bodies found inside the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center on Monday. Millen, along with the New Orleans Police Department SWAT team, searched the building for anyone left following the mass evacuation of refugees.

Staff photo by Alex Brandon

Always ask:
Did the reporter
open the freezer?

What if You Demand Verification?



Code of Ethics

Society of News-Literate Citizens

1. Ask: Did the reporter open the freezer?
2. Truth is provisional, so follow the story

After this lecture, you should be able to:

1. Define provisional truth and explain the burden on the news consumer that results from truth's provisional nature.
2. Explain the process by which journalists verify facts and compare/contrast it with other truth-seeking enterprises such as science and justice.
3. Explain how the journalistic verification process breaks down.
4. Use specific events and examples to illustrate the types of evidence news consumers should insist upon, summarized in the phrase "Open the Freezer."

These skills relate to course outcomes 1 & 4



SAYS
WHO?

These are outlets



These are **sources**



A student locked down inside a classroom told CNN by phone that the shooting began in the cafeteria.



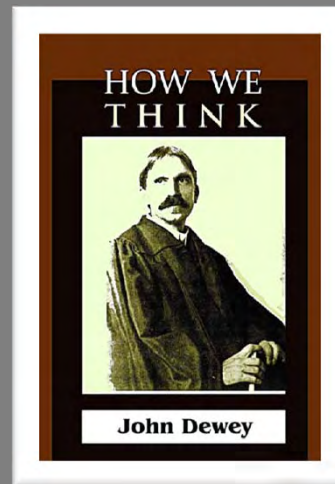
"We have to rethink how we address infection control," **CDC Director Tom Frieden** said Monday.

Officer Kenneth Healey and three on-duty colleagues were posing for a picture when a hatchet-wielding man charged at them "unprovoked," according to **Police Commissioner Bill Bratton**.



"The statement of me dating a sex offender is totally untrue," **family matriarch "Mama June" Shannon** said.

Evaluating sources Is all about **critical thinking**



Dictionary.com's 21st Century Lexicon

Main Entry: critical thinking
Part of Speech: *n*
Definition: the mental process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating information to reach an answer or conclusion

Dictionary.com's 21st Century Lexicon
Copyright © 2003-2012 Dictionary.com, LLC



Common sense source evaluation

- ✓ Who is this source?
- ✓ How would this person know about this?
- ✓ Is anyone else telling the same story?
- ✓ Is this person providing evidence or just making assertions?
- ✓ Does this source have a dog in the fight?

(Don't copy these. Wait for the mnemonic device)

I-M-V-A-I-N

A SYSTEM FOR EVALUATING THE RELIABILITY OF SOURCES

Independent sources are better than self-interested sources

Multiple sources are better than single sources

Sources who **V**erify with evidence are better than sources who assert

Authoritative/**I**nformed sources are better than uninformed sources

Named sources are better than unnamed sources

Judging the reliability of sources

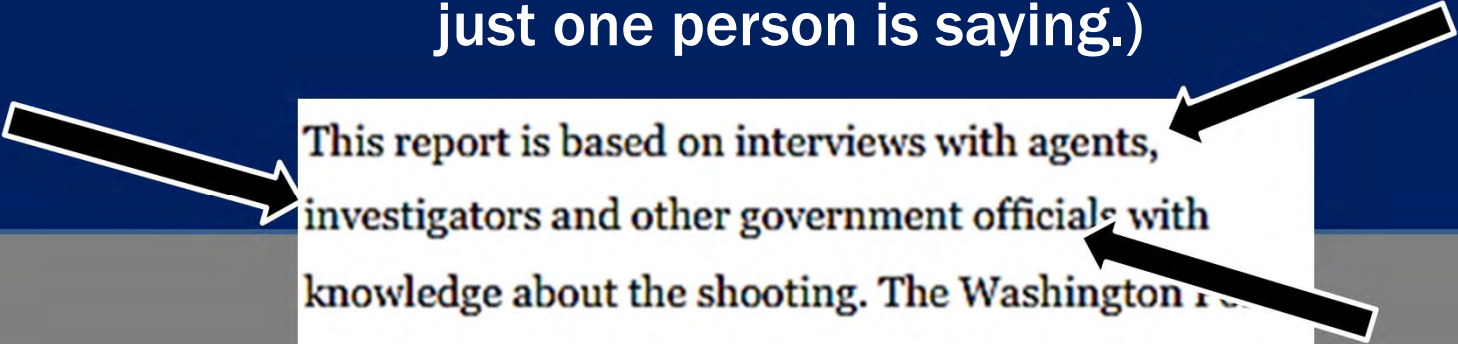
Independent sources
are better than **self-interested** sources

(Does this source have anything to gain by withholding information or making misleading statements? If there is a conflict, the most reliable sources have no stake in the outcome. Independent experts, for example, are less likely to mislead us than partisans.)

Judging the reliability of sources

Multiple sources
are better than **single** sources

(Information coming from multiple sources
is usually more reliable than something
just one person is saying.)



This report is based on interviews with agents, investigators and other government officials with knowledge about the shooting. The Washington Post also reviewed hundreds of pages of documents, including transcripts of interviews with officers on duty that night, and listened to audio recordings of in-the-moment law enforcement radio transmissions.

Judging the reliability of sources

Sources who **V**erify
with evidence are better than
sources who **assert**

(Sources who back up what they say with facts
are more valuable than
ones who make unverifiable accusations
or offer opinions, inferences or
hunches without corroboration.)

Judging the reliability of sources

Authoritative / **I**nformed
sources are better than
uninformed sources

(Sources who know what they're talking about
are always more valuable
than sources who don't
have the credentials
or information to speak knowledgeably
about a subject.)

Judging the reliability of sources

Named sources
are better than
unnamed sources

(Sources who are fully identified
and speak on the record
are accountable for what they say.

The chief problem with anonymous source is
how little readers have to go on
as they try to assess reliability.)

Evaluating anonymous sources

TRANSPARENCY

"The draft legislation is better than nothing. But it does not solve the underlying problems,"
said the company official, who requested anonymity because of the political sensitivity of
the comments.

CHARACTERIZATION

Law enforcement sources told NBC News

CORROBORATION

These are just some examples of a growing jihadi movement in Boston that one moderate Boston Muslim who spoke to TheBlaze TV's *For the Record* and was identified only as "Khaleed" called a "disease." Several other Muslim sources described a "criminal" growing recruitment and anti-

The News Literacy source evaluation rubric in exams

	1 Not at all	2 Somewhat	3 A great deal
Independent	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Multiple	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Verifies	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Authoritative or Informed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Named	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Rate Moore on a scale of 1-3, with 1 being unreliable, 2 being somewhat reliable and 3 being very reliable. AND explain your rating in two or three sentences.

Moore's comments are a mix of unverifiable assertions and solid facts.

**The “explain” box is where you reflect
nuances when the choice isn’t clear cut.**

After this lecture, you should be able to ...

1. Articulate the difference between a news outlet and a news source.
2. Use the IMVAIN criteria to evaluate sources in news stories.
3. Justify reasons for differential ratings of sources' credibility based on IMVAIN analysis.
4. Use specific examples to illustrate the difference between a source who asserts and one who provides verifiable evidence.
5. Use a three-part test to judge the reliability of anonymous sources.

Deconstruction



Using News Literacy concepts to analyze the components of a news report to dispassionately judge its reliability.

Deconstructing to judge reliability

Step 1

Summarize the main points, comparing headline to the story

Step 2

Did the reporter open the freezer? Is the evidence direct or indirect?

Step 3

Evaluate the sources using IMVAIN

Step 4

Does the reporter make his/her work transparent?

Step 5

Does the reporter place the facts, the story, in context?


Step 6

Are the key questions answered? (Who-What-When-Where-Why-How)

Step 7

Is the story fair? Is balance called for? What about fair play and language?

Key definitions

Main Entry: **con·text** 

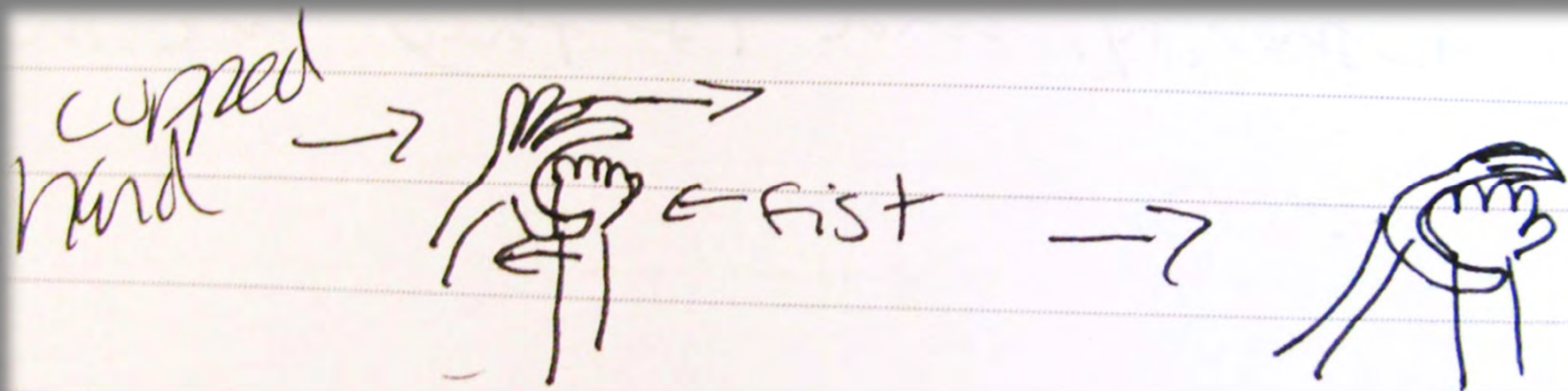
Pronunciation: \ˈkän-,ˈtekst\

Function: *noun*

CONTEXT

Facts that surround an event
or elements of a news story
and provide meaning or significance

CONTEXT



Key definitions

Main Entry: **trans·par·en·cy** 

Pronunciation: \tran(t)s-'per-ən(t)-sē\

Function: *noun*

Inflected Form(s): *plural* **trans·par·en·cies**

Date: 1591

TRANSPARENCY

When reporters make clear
what they know, how they know it,
what they don't know
and why they don't know it.

TRANSPARENCY

It's being open about methods

Shipment Travel History		
Select time zone: Local Scan Time		
All shipment travel activity is displayed in local time for the location		
Date/Time	Activity	Location
Details		
Oct 18, 2011 4:42 PM	Delivered	Lindenhurst, NY
Oct 18, 2011 4:34 AM	On FedEx vehicle for delivery	HOLBROOK, NY
Oct 18, 2011 4:30 AM	At local FedEx facility	HOLBROOK, NY
Oct 17, 2011 8:13 PM	Departed FedEx location	KEASBEY, NJ
Oct 17, 2011 3:54 PM	Arrived at FedEx location	KEASBEY, NJ
Oct 15, 2011 7:32 AM	Departed FedEx location	KERNERSVILLE, NC
Oct 15, 2011 2:36 AM	Arrived at FedEx location	KERNERSVILLE, NC
Oct 14, 2011 9:37 PM	Left FedEx origin facility	DURHAM, NC
Oct 14, 2011 8:28 PM	Arrived at FedEx location	DURHAM, NC
Oct 14, 2011 6:14 PM	Picked up	DURHAM, NC
Oct 14, 2011 5:43 PM	Shipment information sent to FedEx	

- “Could not be reached”
- “Requested anonymity because she feared losing her job”
- “A reporter attempted to contact the family at home, but no one came to the door.”
- “The information could not be independently verified.”

TRANSPARENCY

Corrections are institutional transparency

The New York Times

Corrections

OBITUARIES

An obituary on Sept. 20 about Hiroshi Yamauchi, the longtime president of Nintendo, included a quotation from a 1988 New York Times article that inaccurately described the Nintendo video game Super Mario Bros. 2. The brothers Mario and Luigi, who appear in this and other Nintendo games, are plumbers, not janitors.



Test inferences for soundness

Main Entry: **¹ev·i·dence** 🗣️

Pronunciation: \ 'e-və-dən(t)s, -və-,den(t)s \

Function: *noun*

Date: 14th century

Main Entry: **in·fer·ence** 🗣️

Pronunciation: \ 'in-f(ə-)rən(t)s, -fərn(t)s \

Function: *noun*

Date: 1594

EVIDENCE

Information that proves or disproves something

INFERENCE

Taking information that is accepted as true
and then drawing a conclusion
that may or may not be valid

And the whole point is...

Is it actionable?

- Can you reach a conclusion?
- Can you take an action?
- Can you make a judgment?
- Should you share this information?

After this lecture, you should be able to:

1. Begin to apply key lessons of News Literacy in real time to find or identify reliable information.
2. Use the IMVAIN test of source reliability on the fly.
3. Distinguish, on the fly, between direct and indirect evidence and even spot-check if conclusions are logical.
4. Begin to correctly use the terms “Transparency” and “Context” to judge the professionalism of news reporting.
5. Use the Deconstruction Workbook as a means to rehearse detailed and sophisticated judgment of news reports.

These are the capstone skills of this course, encompassing all 6 outcomes promised by the syllabus.


Deconstructing video news



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

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?

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

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

Types of TV news reporting

➤ Breaking news



➤ Planned major events



➤ Taped stories for broadcasts



➤ Live reports



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)

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

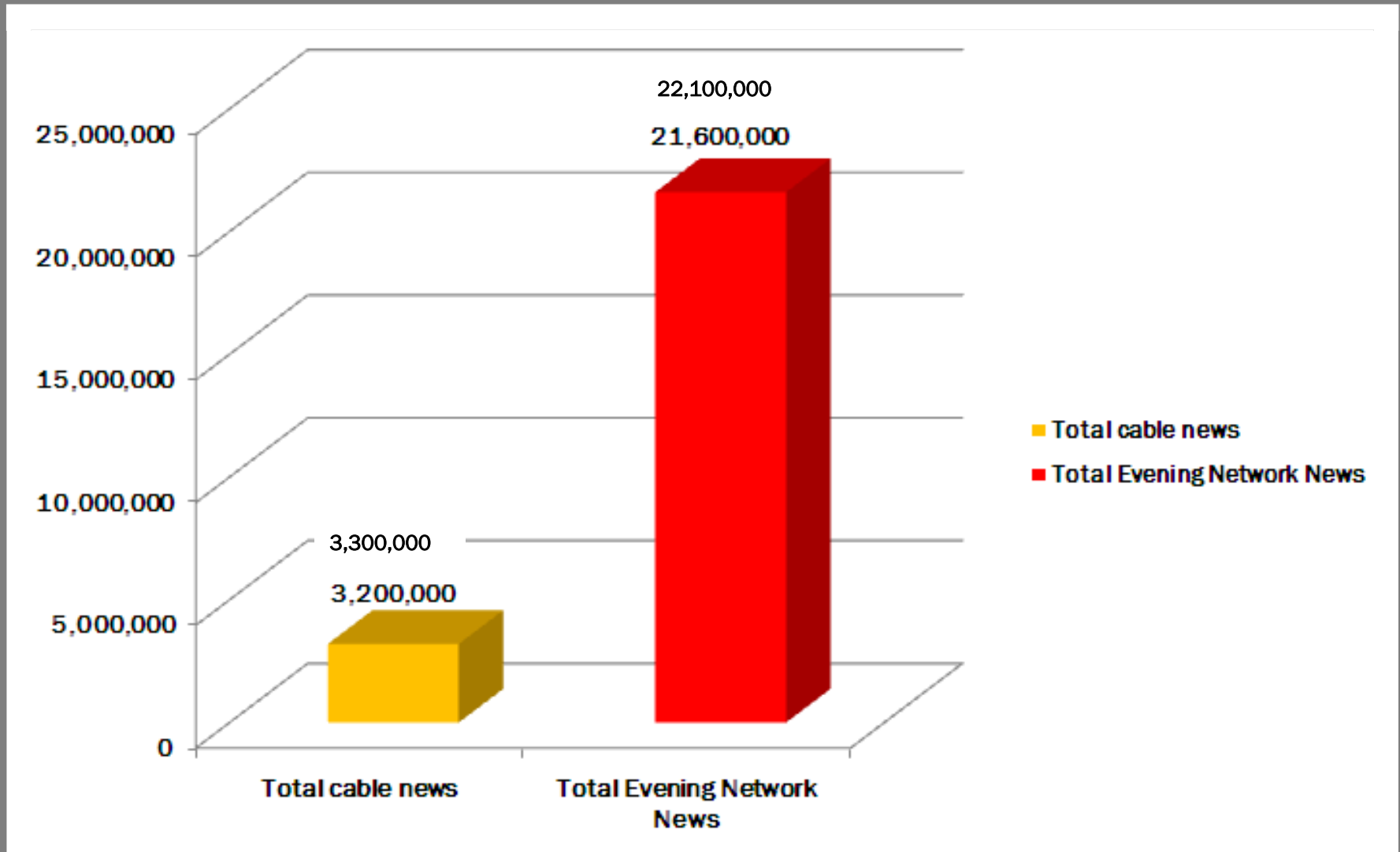
24-hour news cable networks



TALK is a cheap way
to fill all those hours



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



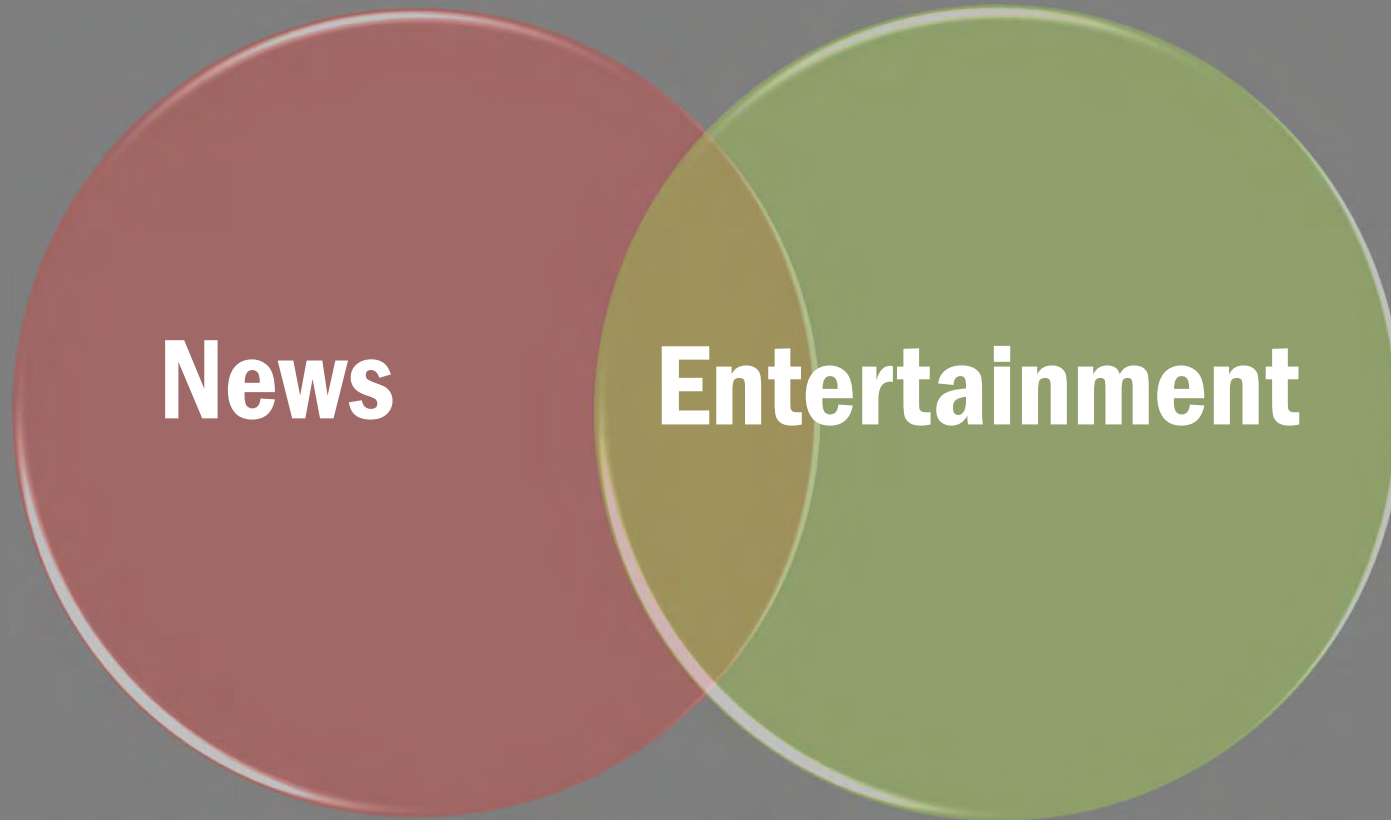
24-hour demands define cable news

- 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

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?

Entertainment techniques to hold your attention



Sound

Altered images

Quick
Cuts



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



Beware of the “sinners”

- Show and refer to only one point of view
- Use language and or production techniques to manipulate
- 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...”*



AND NOWHERE ARE IMAGES MORE POWERFUL THAN ON TV.

Television's reach and immediacy make it a great way to follow breaking stories with strong visuals. But its dependence on images and the pressures of the entertainment medium in which it exists cause it to avoid or handle poorly important stories that are complex or don't have compelling images.

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



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.**

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.