

JRN 101/103 News Literacy

Lecture 5: What IS news and who decides?

Lecturer's Overview

Opener: Mika's on-air protest (on MSNBC's "Morning Joe") against Paris Hilton arrest story

What makes some information news? This class examines news drivers, news values and how the news process works. What is the decision-making process that determines whether a story gets published or broadcast? Who decides? What are the classic drivers of news? How do editors and producers balance the interesting and the important? Along the way, we examine some provocative issues: Are news decisions driven by the profit motive or social responsibility? Is there too much bad news? Does the news media give us a skewed vision of the world?

News Matters: TK

Housekeeping:

- Remind students of impending Test #1
- Remind students of Iason Athanasiadis' talk

Lecture points:

- ✓ Recap genetic need for information that alerts, diverts, connects (and if time, it's worth discussing the "Pentagon's Hidden Hand" assignment, if you are collecting it at lecture.
- ✓ Four factors determine news: **Universal News Drivers, Editorial Judgment, Audience, Profits and Competition**
- ✓ LECTURERS CAREFULLY REVIEW DRIVERS. THEY HAVE BEEN REVISED
- ✓ Internet is changing how news is defined: raw metrics replacing editors
- ✓ What about that most common critique of news judgement: too much bad news?

Assignments:

1. In the News Literacy Digital Textbook, read "Chapter 10: Deciding what is News" from *Media Debates*. (IT IS LECTURER'S CALL WHETHER TO ASSIGN THE WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT)
2. GOOD NEWS/BAD NEWS writing assignment has been collapsed into Log #1 for this assignment.