

peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Importance of Freedom of the Press

Freedom of the press (media) is indispensable to the proper functioning of our Republic. A free press is intended to bring to light corruption, injustice, dishonesty, wrongs of every kind and description in all corners of the world. It enables the people to know whether their system of justice is being administered honorably and impartially, as it must be if it is to retain respect. The free press may also be helpful to an accused in dispelling false, distorted or wild charges that would otherwise provoke hasty and irresponsible action. It may arouse public sympathy and may provide information by which law enforcement agencies may track down and apprehend criminals. Most important, when the press is free from censorship and suppression, it tends to assure the telling of the truth—an eternal bulwark against tyranny and dictatorship.

Never before has it been so important to have independent, honest voices and sources of information. We are – as a society – inundated and overwhelmed with a flood of information from a wide array of sources, but these sources of information, by and large, serve the powerful interests and individuals that own them. The main sources of information, for both public and official consumption, include the mainstream media, alternative media, academia and think tanks.

The mainstream media is the most obvious in its inherent bias and manipulation. The mainstream media is owned directly by large multinational corporations, and through their boards of directors are connected with a plethora of other major global corporations and elite interests.

"Our liberty depends upon the freedom of the press"

<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/jefferson/jefffed.html>

Eighteenth-century political philosophers concerned themselves with the balance between the restrictions needed to make a government function and the individual liberties guaranteed by that government. Jefferson's efforts to protect individual rights including freedom of the press were persistent, pivotal, and not always successful. Jefferson was a staunch advocate of freedom of the press, asserting in a January 28, 1786, letter to James Currie (1745-1807), a Virginia physician and frequent correspondent during Jefferson's residence in France: "our liberty depends on the freedom of the press, and that cannot be limited without being lost."

First Amendment to the United States Constitution

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people

Corporate News Media

[From Monopoly Media Manipulation by Michael Parenti](#)

The corporate news media reflects the dominant ideology in their reporting and commentary. At the same time, they leave the impression that they are free and independent, capable of balanced coverage and objective commentary. They claim that occasional inaccuracies occur in news coverage because of innocent error and production problems such as deadline pressures, budgetary restraints, and the difficulty of reducing a complex story into a concise report. Furthermore, it's impossible to report everything, hence selectivity is needed. What principles of selectivity are involved?

Suppression by Omission

Some critics complain that the press is overly invasive. In fact, it is more often muted and evasive. More insidious than the sensationalistic hype is the artful avoidance. Sometimes the suppression includes not just vital details but the entire story itself, even ones of major import.

Attack and Destroy the Target

When omission proves to be an insufficient mode of censorship and a story somehow begins to reach larger publics, the press moves from artful avoidance to frontal assault in order to discredit the story.

Labeling

Mainstream media people seek to "mold" our perception of a subject with a positive or negative label. Some positive ones are: "stability," "the president's firm leadership," "a strong defense," and "a healthy economy." Indeed, not many

Americans would want instability, wobbly presidential leadership, a weak defense, and a sick economy. The label defines the subject without having to deal with actual particulars that might lead us to a different conclusion.

Some common negative labels are: "leftist guerrillas," "Islamic terrorists," "conspiracy theories," "inner-city gangs," and "civil disturbances."

Preemptive Assumption

Frequently the media accept as given the very policy position that needs to be critically examined. Whenever the White House proposes an increase in military spending, press discussion is limited to how much more spending is needed, how much updating of weaponry; are we doing enough or need we do still more? No media exposure is given to those who hotly contest the already gargantuan arms budget in its totality. It is assumed that U.S. forces must be deployed around the world, and that hundreds of billions must be spent each year on this global military system.

Likewise with media discussion of Social Security "reform," a euphemism for the privatization and eventual abolition of a program that is working well. The media preemptively assume the very dubious position that needs to be debated: that the program, is in danger of insolvency (in thirty years) and therefore in need of drastic overhauling today. But from existing press coverage you would not know this — and most Americans do not.

Face-Value Transmission

Many labels are fabricated not by news media but by officialdom. U.S. governmental and corporate leaders talk about “our global leadership,” “national security,” “free markets,” and “globalization” when what they mean is “All Power to the Transnationals.” The media uncritically and dutifully accept these official views, transmitting them to wider publics without any noticeable critical comment regarding the actual content of the policy. Face-value transmission has characterized the press’s performance in almost every area of domestic and foreign policy.

Slighting of Content

One has to marvel at how the corporate news media can give so much emphasis to surface happenings, to style and process, and so little to the substantive issues at stake. A glaring example is the way elections are covered. The political campaign is reduced to a horse race: Who will run? Who will get the nomination? Who will win the election? News commentators sound like theater critics as they hold forth on how this or that candidate projected a positive image, came across effectively, and had a good rapport with the audience. The actual issues are accorded scant attention, and the democratic dialogue that is supposed to accompany a contest for public office rarely is heard through the surface din.

Media pundits often talk about the “larger picture.” In fact, their ability or willingness to link immediate events and issues to larger social relations is almost nonexistent.

False Balancing

In accordance with the canons of good journalism, the press is supposed to tap competing sources to get both sides of an issue. In fact, both sides are seldom accorded equal prominence. Furthermore, both sides of a story are not usually all sides. The whole left-progressive and radical portion of the opinion spectrum is amputated from the visible body politic.

Follow-up Avoidance

When confronted with an unexpectedly dissident response, media hosts quickly change the subject, or break for a commercial, or inject an identifying announcement: “We are talking with [whomever].” The purpose is to avoid going any further into a politically forbidden topic no matter how much the unexpected response might seem to need a follow-up query.

Framing

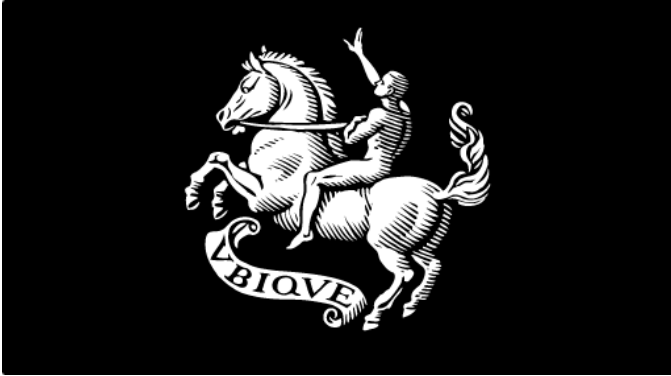
The most effective propaganda relies on framing rather than on falsehood. By bending the truth rather than breaking it, using emphasis and other auxiliary embellishments, communicators can create a desired impression without resorting to explicit advocacy and without departing too far from the appearance of objectivity. Framing is achieved in the way the news is packaged, the amount of exposure, the placement (front page or buried within, lead story or last), the tone of presentation (sympathetic or slighting), the headlines and photographs, and, in the case of broadcast media, the accompanying visual and auditory effects.

Many things are reported in the news but few are explained. If we are to believe the media, stuff just happens. Consider “globalization,” a pet label that the press presents as a natural and inevitable development. In fact, globalization is a deliberate contrivance of multinational interests to undermine democratic sovereignty throughout the world. International “free trade” agreements set up international trade councils that are elected by no one, are accountable to no one, operate in secrecy without conflict of interest restrictions, and with the power to overrule just about all labor, consumer, and environmental laws, and all public services and regulations in all signatory nations. What we actually are experiencing with GATT, NAFTA, FTAA, GATS, and the WTO is deglobalization, an ever greater concentration of politico-economic power in the hands of an international investor class, a global coup d'etat that divests the peoples of the world of any trace of protective democratic input.

The media never asks why things happen the way they do. Social problems are rarely associated with the politico-economic forces that create them. So we are taught to truncate our own critical thinking. Imagine if we attempted something different. Suppose we report, as is seldom reported, that the harshly exploitative labor conditions existing in so many countries generally has the backing of their respective military forces. Suppose further that we cross another line and note that these rightwing military forces are fully supported by the U.S. national security state. Then suppose we cross that most serious line of all and instead of just deploring this fact we also ask why successive U.S.

administrations have involved themselves in such unsavory pursuits throughout the world. Suppose we conclude that the whole phenomenon is consistent with a dedication to making the world safe for free-market corporate capitalism, as measured by the kinds of countries that are helped and the kinds that are attacked. Such an analysis almost certainly would not be printed anywhere except in a few select radical publications. We crossed too many lines. Because we tried to explain the particular situation (bad labor conditions) in terms of a larger set of social relations (corporate class power), our presentation would be rejected out of hand as “Marxist” — which indeed it is, as is much of reality itself.

In sum, the news media’s daily performance under what is called “democratic capitalism” is not a failure but a skillfully evasive success. We often hear that the press “got it wrong” or “dropped the ball” on this or that story. In fact, the media do their job remarkably well. Media people have a trained incapacity for the whole truth. Their job is not to inform but disinform, not to advance democratic discourse but to dilute and mute it. Their task is to give every appearance of being conscientiously concerned about events of the day, saying so much while meaning so little, offering so many calories with so few nutrients. When we understand this, we move from a liberal complaint about the press's sloppy performance to a radical analysis of how the media maintain the dominant paradigm with much craft and craftiness.



Who Really Determines What You Will Or Will Not See On TV Or Read In The Newspaper?

<http://www.whoownsthenews.com/>

In the early years of our democracy the "free press" was all that stood between greedy corporate interests, government corruption and you and I. While many newspapers were controlled by wealthy individuals such as William Randolph Hearst, who influenced the content of the news in his papers, a kind of journalistic "Hippocratic oath" seemed to prevail across the country as reporters and publishers at small papers usually chose to pursue the truth in reporting.

Local papers, TV stations and radio outlets were owned mostly by local individuals with an interest in their community. That began to change as a powerful institution known as the Council On Foreign Relations gained power and the trend toward total corporate media control rapidly accelerated during the Bush era with media consolidation.

Suddenly the old rule that one corporation could not own all of the town's news outlets was gone. Companies like Clear Channel Communications suddenly began to buy up every radio station, TV outlet and newspaper in major markets, effectively controlling everything that people read, watched and heard. The pattern of media consolidation has increased during the last eight years to the point

that now only a few corporations control the news that we watch.

Just like the quote above, he who owns the media, controls the media. With such powerful platforms they are able to drown out independent media and control public opinion and government policy. There can be no freedom without freedom of the press and there can be no freedom of the press if only a few powerful corporations are allowed to own it.

What Liberal or Right Wing Media? It's Just Corporate Media.

Who really controls the media? Is the so called "liberal media" that the right complains about controlled by Hollywood and liberal special interests? Is Fox News controlled by the Republican Party? If you believe any of these generalizations you are dead wrong and the truth will shock you.

Major multinational corporations, Middle Eastern sovereign wealth funds and Saudi Princes, all hell bent on protecting their own interests, choose what you will see on the nightly news and trick you into believing it is unbiased reporting. As we see below all the major news outlets, regardless of what they make you believe, contributed heavily to George W. Bush in both 2000 and 2004 so any argument that they are controlled by liberals evaporates. In this case they all supported the candidate that promised to allow consolidation of multiple media companies.

The very news stories that you are fed by the mainstream media are manipulated to mirror the public relations campaigns of companies that operate nuclear plants, sprawling theme parks that gobble up wetlands, defense contractors, oil companies and even Saudi Princes. Remember the old "Outer Limits" TV shows where the announcer says "We control everything you see and hear, the vertical, the horizontal," etc? The corporate controlled news media controls all you see and hear.

Here are the top twenty media corporations in the U.S. according to mediaowners.com All but two of the following, #18 and #19 are not members of the Council On Foreign Relations.

1. Time Warner Inc.
2. Walt Disney Company
3. Viacom Inc.
4. News Corporation
5. CBS Corporation
6. Cox Enterprises
7. NBC Universal
8. Gannett Company, Inc.
9. Clear Channel Communications Inc.
10. Advance Publications, Inc.
11. Tribune Company
12. McGraw-Hill Companies
13. Hearst Corporation
14. Washington Post Company
15. The New York Times Company
16. E.W. Scripps Co.
17. McClatchy Company
18. Thomson Corporation
19. Freedom Communications, Inc.
20. A&E Television Networks

The Council On Foreign Relations and What It Has To Do With Corporate Control Of The News

<http://www.whoownsthenews.com/>

What do Dan Rather, Barbara Walters, Jim Lehrer, Rupert Murdoch, Tom Brokaw and the late William F. Buckley have in common? They are all members of the CFR, The Council On Foreign Relations. The stated goal of the CFR is to manipulate the News to bring about a new world order or corporate control of everything. This is not some weird conspiracy theory, it is stated in their original charter. Who else belongs to the CFR, Disney's Michael Eisner and ABC's Thomas Murphy, Tom Johnson, CEO of CNN, Time Warner's Gerald Levine, and many, many more

media CEO's who have merged their empires under the CFR's guidance.

Here is a good video that traces the history of news media manipulation by large corporations in the U.S by buying up newspapers and using institutions such as the Council On Foreign Relations to shape U.S. policy and public opinion.

Who owns the media?

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v= GfZnd2GWgk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GfZnd2GWgk)