

Watching the Eye Witness News Notes

Jimmy Cagney's famous question: "What do you hear? What do you know?"

What we hear when we consume "the news" has only the most minimal relationship to what we know about anything.

Television has replaced newsprint as the primary source of information,

- Two-thirds of people use television as their only source of information.

Local news is the "infotainment monster" that ate the news industry

- Infotainment: "television or radio programs that treat factual material in an entertaining manner, as by including dramatic elements."

Local news was created in 1970 when a marketing whiz was hired by the industry to raise ratings by finding out what people wanted to see and hear (to attract people/make them want to watch.)

The Jeffersonian concept (public media should tell people what they "need to know") was not considered in local news. Neither was the intelligence or diversity of the audience.

"Wrap it up and sell it out"; Local News Strategy:

- Researchers gave a limited, embarrassingly dull list of choices of formats and subjects.
- Ignoring different groups might want different kinds of information and analysis.
- Ignoring that fact that individual viewers, of all kinds, might want and need different things at different times for different reasons.

Local news today is the single most profitable form of nonfiction television programming in the country and, for most stations/channels, the only thing they actually produce.

Local news is a euphemistical phenomenon: the substitution of an offensive, harsh, or blunt expression for one thought to be mild, indirect, or vague.

- (In other words Local news caused a phenomenon where they sugar coat the real news to audiences for higher ratings)
- Showing images of a false (wannabe) community (pseudo-community) called "America". Which can be compared to Disney world by how they portray it in