

# Truth, Justice, and the American Media

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# Agenda

- Rise in Information
  - Manufactured Consent
  - Social Construction
  - 3 areas of course
    - Ownership
    - Bias
    - Ads
  - Course outline
- 
- Why?
- How?

# Need for Media Literacy

- Rise of amount of information
- Access to information is not like it was historically
- Automatic Pilot/Fatigue
- We think we are informed
- More choices; more control; same places
- Faulty beliefs

# Manufactured consent

- Noam Chomsky and Walter Lippmann
  - Specialized elite
  - Bewildered herd
  - Spectator democracy
  - We don't really have free choice (media plays big part in manufactured consent)

# Social Construction

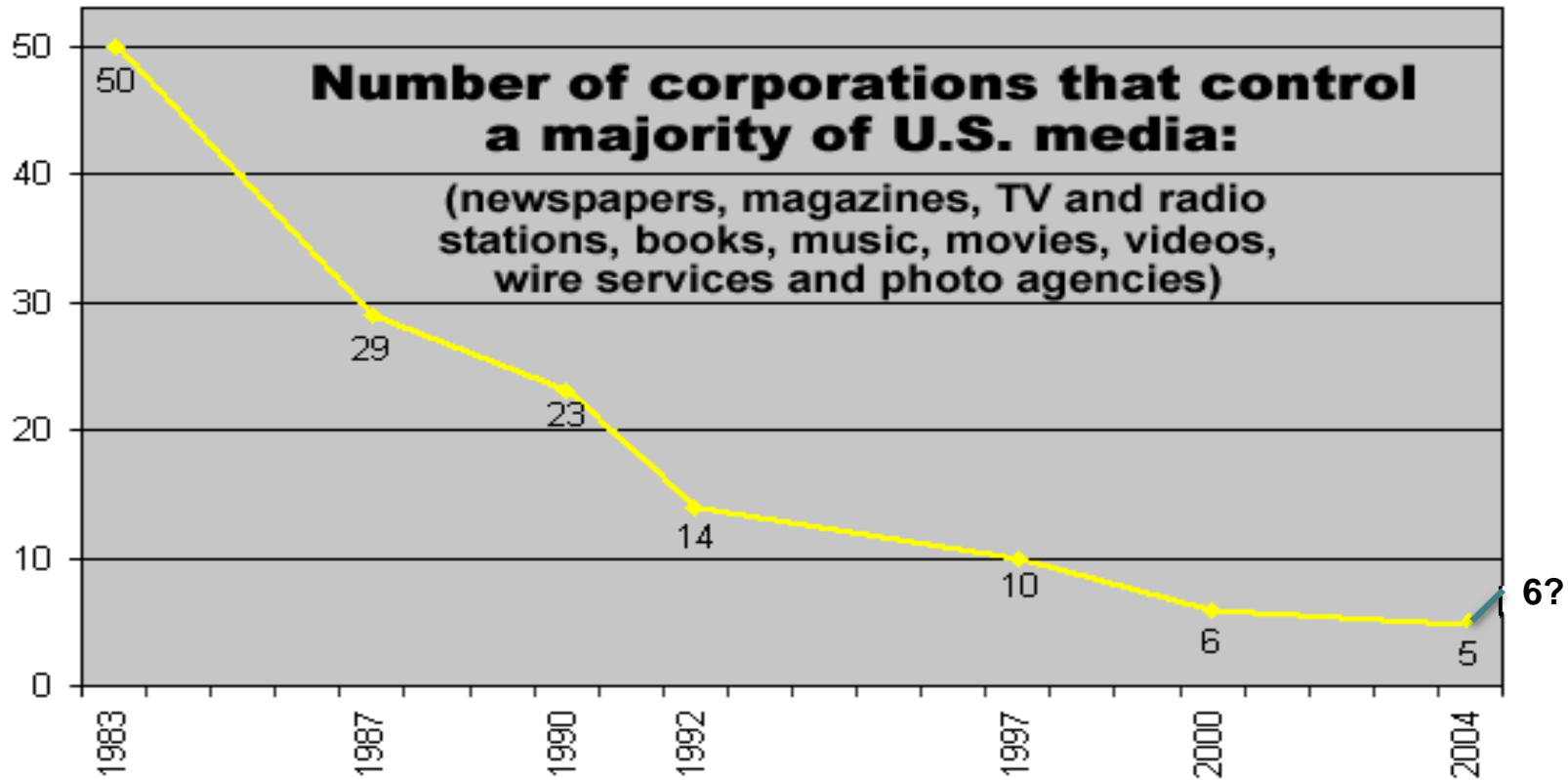
- “Radio, television, film and other products of the media culture provide materials out of which we forge our very identities, our sense of selfhood; our notion of what it means to be male or female; our sense of class, of ethnicity and race....Media spectacles demonstrate who has power and who is powerless, who is allowed to exercise force and violence and who is not.”

▫ Douglas Kellner, *Media Culture*, 1995, p.24

# Media Ownership

- *“The function of the press in society is to inform, but its role is to make money.” -- A.J. Liebling (as quoted in Altschull, p. 262).*

# Media ownership



Source: <http://www.corporations.org/media/>

Time Warner, Disney, Viacom, NewsCorp, Bertelsmann, GE/Vivendi

Best source for this is <http://www.cjr.org/resources/>

# Media Ownership

- 1500 daily newspapers in U.S. but about 290 newspaper owners
- Newspaper chains control about 75 percent of all newspaper circulation (Blethen, 2005).
- 99 % of contemporary daily papers were a monopoly in their own cities (Bagdikian, 2004) .
- 4of the largest 10 U.S. cities have multiple papers (New York, Detroit, Los Angeles and Chicago). Boston and Washington D.C. have 2 major dailies.
- London has 12 daily papers, Tokyo has 31 and Paris has 33.

# Media Ownership

- “The global commercial-media system is radical in that it will respect no tradition or custom, on balance, if it stands in the way of profits. But ultimately it is politically conservative, because the media giants are significant beneficiaries of the current social structure around the world, and any upheaval in property or social relations – particularly to the extent that it reduces the power of business – is not in their interest” (pp.13-14).

-- McChesney (1999)

# Bias

- American Bias
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qt2Knm9bFbQ>
- Male bias/ White bias – The norm?  
What shows do we watch? Who are main characters?  
What roles are there on the show? Who are our  
TV/movie heroes? Comic Book and cartoon heroes? Do  
media images help us understand how the world works?

# Representation on TV

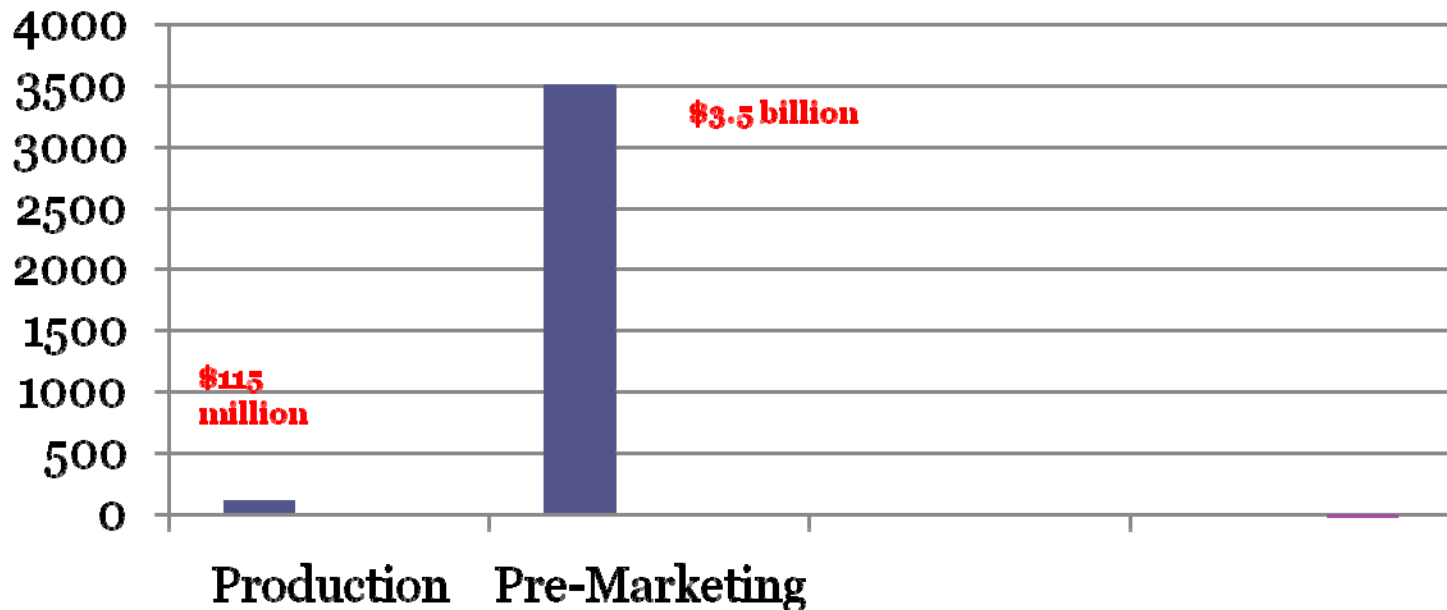
- Gerbner – 1980s 19,642 speaking parts
  - Women less than 1/3 of prime time roles
  - Senior citizens less than 3%
- TV 2008
  - Latinos: 3.8% of Fall 2008 lineup (15% of pop.)
  - Whites: well over 80% in lineup (66% of pop.)
  - Only minority “anchor” of Fall 2008 show is a cartoon character (white voice)

# Advertising & Product Placement



# Advertising & Product Placement

## Star Wars – Phantom Menace



Source: *Behind the Screens* (Media Education Fdn.)

# The course

- Media literate
- Factual info v. social info
- Meaning Matching v. Meaning construction
- Blogs
- Videos
- Projects
  - Internet searches
  - Product Placement
  - Ownership
  - Final Project