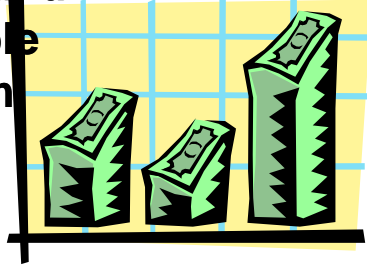


Corporate interests and responsible journalism



Libertarian theory

Similar to Enlightenment theory

Assumes people are rational and truth is discoverable in secular, empirical way

Knowledge can only be gained by experience and reflection on experience.

Knowledge isn't handed down from a higher authority

John Locke:

People control the government

People can remove a ruler who fails to secure the public good.

The ruler's authority is conditional rather than absolute.

The market place of ideas:

Differing ideas compete for our support

The market place is the media

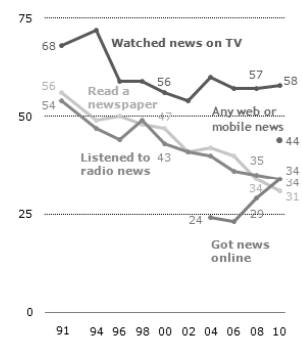
Reporters must remain fair and objective in order for all ideas to compete fairly

The People find a "shared" truth in the prevailing idea

Marketplace of ideas is shrinking

- Fewer competing newspapers
- Handful of corporations own almost all media

Where People Got News Yesterday



PEW RESEARCH CENTER June 8-28, 2010.

Who owns the broadcast media

Clear Channel: <http://www.cjr.org/resources/?c=clearchannel>

Viacom: <http://www.cjr.org/resources/?c=viacom>

Time Warner: <http://www.cjr.org/resources/?c=timewarner>

The Walt Disney Co: <http://www.cjr.org/resources/?c=disney>

General Electric: <http://www.cjr.org/resources/?c=ge>

News Corp.: <http://www.cjr.org/resources/?c=newscorp>

Source: Columbia Journalism Review

Cross ownership and conglomerates create conflict of interest problems

- corporation's loyalty to its stockholders
- vs.
- loyalty to a nation and its ideals
(human rights, democracy etc.)
- loyalty to the tenets of good journalism
(truth, fairness etc.)

Social Responsibility Theory

Media's responsibilities:

- > Provide a truthful and comprehensive account of the day's events in a context that gives them meaning
- > Serve as a forum for the exchange of content and criticism
- > Cover all of the diverse community
- > Present and clarify the community's goals and values
- > Provide full access to the day's events

Conflict of Interest Checklist*

Newspapers and broadcasters play a dual role in a community, as journalists and as corporate citizens.

While these roles are not mutually exclusive, media leaders must guard with vigilance their organizations' stewardship role in society.

* "Doing Ethics in Journalism"

They must also ensure that their primary obligation to the public is not eroded by other legitimate goals, such as:

- a quest for economic gain
- the interest of being a good corporate citizen
- the concern for their own employees
- the desire to be competitive in the marketplace

Ethical decision-making tools:

- **Communitarianism**
 - your obligations to your community
 - > deals with society-wide issues
 - > community's needs are more important than individual's needs

Ethical-decision-making tools:

- **The Veil of Ignorance**

- treat everyone equally and justice will prevail
- > we cover our eyes so we don't see differences in power wealth, education, responsibility etc.

Ethical-decision-making tools:

- **Bok, Clark, et al**

- How do I feel about the action?
- How will my actions affect others?
- What good would publication do?
- Can I justify this to other people, the public?
- Is there any other way to achieve the same goal that will not raise ethical issues?
- Does this decision fit the kind of journalism I believe in and how people should treat one another?

Ethical-decision-making tools:

Potter's Box

define
the
situation



define
the
values



chose
your
loyalties



define the
ethical
principles