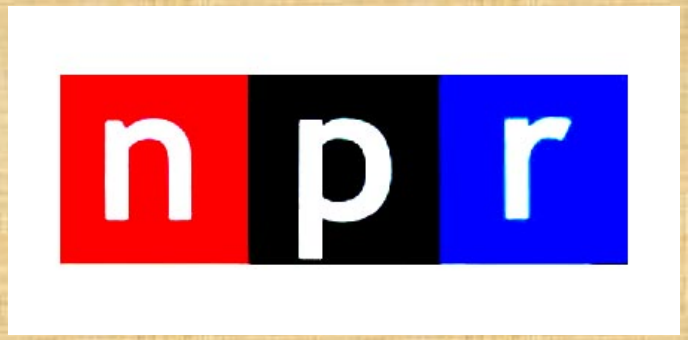












The Media and Politics:

Constant Evolution

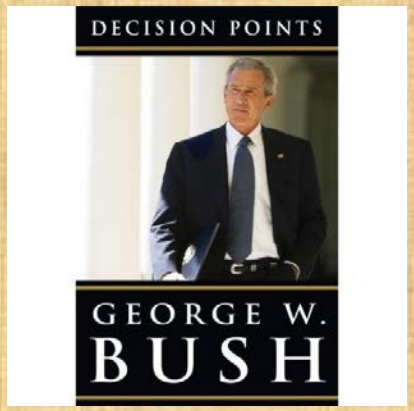
Media ARE Plural

- From the word “medium” = way of delivering information
- Different outlets
- Different formats
- Different audiences
- All of this affects the content

Format I – Books and Magazines

Books:

- Very small (but influential) audience
- Doesn't reach as many people
- Much more in-depth



Magazines/Journals:

- Narrow audience, but larger than books
- Newsweeklies have a larger "activist" base



Format II – TV & Newspapers

TV:

- Mass media – Large audience
- Power of imagery
- Recent years = rise of cable news cycle (24 hours a day)
- “narrowcasting”
- “Talking Heads”



Newspapers

- Few national newspapers
- Collectively, large audience, but readership has been shrinking rapidly
- Many local newspapers are dying out



Format III – Radio and Internet

Radio:

- Homogenization of programming
- News content is rare; mostly, tidbits of information
- Exception = National Public Radio (NPR)
- Talk radio



Internet:

- More people turning to the web for their news
- Especially, young people
- Political blogging
- “narrowcasting” becomes “slivercasting”



Roles of the Media

- What is “newsworthy”?
- Media as political “watchdogs”
- Carl Bernstein & Bob Woodward (Watergate Story)
- Media as a “4th branch” of gov’t
- Can help set the agenda
- Ultimately, the media is a business
- They want to make money!
- Selling ads, getting viewership/readership



Media Today

- The media uses politicians and insiders for info and vice versa (ongoing relationship)
- Access – leaks, background sources, trial balloons
- Politicians will do press releases
- Hold media events/news conferences
- Image manipulation



Free & Critical Press

- 1st Amendment – Freedom of the Press
- Public has a right to know
- Pentagon Papers in 1971
- *New York Times v. Sullivan* (1964)
- Limited scope of libel
- Had to show "actual malice"
- Extended to any "public figure" in *Hustler Magazine v. Falwell* (1987)



The Future

- Many newspapers are dying out
- Small, independent papers have been bought out
- People turning to the internet
- Dependence on TV and political blogs for their info
- Many worry that serious journalism has taken a real hit