

More Bad News

Bad News

Authors: Glasgow University Media Group
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The first volume, Bad News, published in 1976, exploded the illusion that television news in Britain, on whatever channel, is more objective, more trustworthy, more neutral than press reporting. Undertaking an exhaustive monitoring of all TV news broadcasts over the six months from January to June 1975, the authors took as their subject industrial news broadcasts. Their analysis showed that TV news 'favours' certain individuals by giving them more time and status. But beyond merely denying the neutrality of the news, their findings gave a new insight into the picture of industrial society that TV news constructs.

More Bad News is the second volume and develops the analytic methods and findings of Bad News through a series of case studies of television news coverage. It argues that much of what passes as balanced and factual news reporting is produced from a highly partial viewpoint.

The authors focus on three main levels of activity, examining their material in terms of the story, the language and the visuals. The story concerns the bulletin presentations of the British economy in crisis, and its thematic linkage with the social contract during the first four months of 1975. In analysing the structure of news language, features such as the use of headlines, the organization of talk within the news item, and the use of reported speech are all examined, the vocabulary of industrial news talk being investigated in detail. The final part of the study deals with the visual organization of the news, looking at the flow of visual presentation, the rules for opening and ending sequences, and the visual rules governing interviewing.

The Group's analysis shows how special status and credibility is given to some sectional interests and opinions, particularly the economic views of the Treasury. As the book unpacks each level of routine news coverage, a picture emerges which the authors maintain has the surface appearance of neutrality and balance, but is in fact highly partial and restricted.

Both Bad News and More Bad News are available from MacMillan.

Taken from the flyleaf.

Peter Davis' Film View of South Africa: An American Review

The White Laager (1977) 58 min. Prod. by P Davis and United Nations
Generations of Resistance (1980). 52 min. Produced by Peter Davis
The Nuclear File (1979) 54 min. Produced by Peter Davis

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