

Case Study 1:
The Power of the News Image:
Port Arthur and the Virginia Tech. Massacre

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Exercises:

- Access two online or hard copy newspapers and find stories where the subject is violence or trauma and where photographs accompany the story.
- Access news images (either online or hard copy) from news media. Find examples of media stereotyping through the use of photographs.

For class discussion:

- Do the images relate well to the news texts accompanying the images? Do the images inform and add the public's knowledge on the topic in a significant way? Do you think the images were chosen for their shock value? Do you think they promote gratuitous violence? Do you think media censorship of the realities of war, violence and trauma are justified?
- Why is photography so powerful in perpetuating stereotypes? Do images promote positive as well as negative discrimination?

Websites:

- Poynter Online: www.poynter.org
- Dart Centre for Journalism and Trauma: www.dartcenter.org
- The Australian Press Council: www.presscouncil.org.au

Case Study 2: Magazines

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Exercises:

Either individually or as a group do a content analysis of the front pages of four different types of magazines – such as fashion, gossip, hobby, IT, sport, art, etc.

Questions:

- How does the layout grab the reader's attention?
- How is text used to convey messages? How are images and photographs used to convey messages?

Discussion:

Discuss either in a group discussion as the subject of an essay, discuss the use of layout, text and images as visual tools in the marketing of magazines. In what ways does the subject matter determine the layout style?

Websites:

- AUSC Annenberg (2008). Online Journalism Review: www.ojr.org
- ASME Magazine Publishers of America: (2008). Editorial Trends and Magazine Handbook 2007– 2008
[www.magazine.org/Editorial/Editorial Trends and Magazine Handbook](http://www.magazine.org/Editorial/Editorial_Trends_and_Magazine_Handbook)
- National Geographic: www.nationalgeographic.com
- Time: www.time.com/time/magazine
- Life: www.life.com
- Newsweek: www.newsweek.com

Case Study 3:
Media Narratives:
The 'Murdering Mother'

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Exercises:

Do a newspaper content analysis for a two-week period looking at profiles on men and women in sport, politics and business.

- Are there any differences in the way men and women are portrayed in these stories?
- Is the woman's maternal status mentioned in the article?
- Is the man's paternal status mentioned in the article?
- How much focus is given to the woman's marital and parental status?

Discuss your findings in a tutorial.

Websites:

- Sally Clark homepage: www.sallyclark.org.au

Case Study 4:
What's in a Name?
New Journalism, Literary Journalism
and Creative Nonfiction

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Exercises:

1. Do an interview for a news feature story. Write it up in both standard hard-news style and also in the style of Tom Wolfe's New Journalism. Use Wolfe's literary strategies as a guideline. When you have completed the exercise, as a tutorial group discuss the following questions:
 - How difficult was it to write from the subject's perspective?
 - Do you feel there are any ethical dilemmas in writing a piece of journalism from the viewpoint of the internal thoughts of your subject?
2. Find a conventional hard news story in a newspaper of your choice. Rewrite the story, and for the purpose of this exercise you are allowed literary licence to create atmosphere and setting. In a tutorial group analyse both stories and discuss the following questions: Do you think the story was strengthened or weakened by the change in style? What ethical dilemmas, if any, emerge when a journalist places him or herself in the story?

For class discussion:

Wolfe's New Journalism is distinctive for its use of four basic literary devices:

- Scene-by-scene construction with a spare back-story.
- Providing the reader with multiple points of view, not just the writers' point of view within the story. (See for example 'The First Tycoon of Teen').
- The use of extensive dialogue.
- Recording the minutia of people's lives, providing details of the verbal and nonverbal symbols which represent a character's lifestyle and create a representation of a person's 'status life'.

Websites:

- Hunter S. Thompson: King of Gonzo: www.gonzo.org
- The New New Journalism: www.newnewjournalism.com
- Tom Wolfe site: www.tomwolfe.com/bio.html

Case Study 5:
Chequebook Journalism and the
Changing Nature of Celebrity

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Exercises

1. Do a vox pop amongst your family and or friends asking them to remember an event they witnessed which was newsworthy (such as a natural disaster, a sporting final, a protest march, a pop concert). Then ask the following questions:
 - Would you willingly tell your personal account without financial incentives? If yes, then why? If no, then why not?
 - If you were offered a financial incentive would you feel obliged to embellish your story, to make it more newsworthy?
 - Would the amount of money you were offered make a difference to the way you would tell your story?
2. Have a look at the lifestyle pages of a weekend newspaper. Does the news organization state whether the journalist was given products or services gratis? (Free travel, restaurant meals, free accommodation etc). Does this affect the way you as a reader interpret the information provided in the article? Discuss your findings in a tutorial group.

Websites:

- MediaWise: www.mediawise.org.uk
- Poynter Online: www.poynter.org
- Australian Press Council
- Fifth Estate: Media Analysis by RMIT Journalism (2005):
www.fifthestate.rmit.edu.au