

Professor Sut Jhally

University of Massachusetts

Lecture 2:

The Factory In The Living Room: How Television Exploits It's Audience

In generating a discussion of Television and it's ability to exploit an audience, it is imperative to begin with in asking the right questions. It is believed most tempting to suggest that T.V. is media and a resource for sending 'messages'. This, according Professor Jhally, is not the right thought process understanding how such means of exploitation begins. The rationale behind media and it's internal ability is in beginning to interpret media and it's culture's economic and industrial value(s).

In both, the business commercial television and newspaper business, we find income potential in how many advertisers they attract and how much each is willing to pay for it's information distribution. It is a marketing tool which promotes, teaches, and informs the public regarding various products and services. The messages from promotors are buried within it's context as there is interaction between text and our interpretation of it. We look for the items or services in community and formulate a sense of expectation of or from it.

In fact, it is suggested that it is the advertisers who truly own the public airways. For instance, thirty minutes of programming and advertising is in a 22/8 minute split. That is twenty minutes of programs disrupted by commercials whose time is split into units collectively equivalent to the eight allocated paid for minutes. The cost and urgency of advertising makes it almost impossible to lose money in T.V. as it is a conscious selling business having concrete time and productive activity in 'watching'. Advertisers, in turn, are the real customers of media as they are buying their audience. If people had not become dedicated 'watchers', over the years since it's inception, there'd be nothing to sell.

As stated earlier within the video lecture: "Messages are a 'tool' of organization"

1. Logic of the commercial system : message, what's being left out, excluded systematically are absences

Industrial Capitalism began in the early years out of class conflicts of : wages, conditions, length of work day and weekend's free or off duty

The decision against this was to 'work harder' and not 'longer' in extracting the maximum value from them [the worker] in the 'reorganization' of the worker



Likewise:

Time for commercials has increased over 20 years

Split up commercials time into shorter units: from 60 to 30 to 15 secs and shorter

Consequence is that the messages are more fragmented

2. Re-organize audience a long demographic lines : realization of time (1) and audiences (2)

3. Intro onto new technologies [created with panic]

Remote control [switch channels, workers have to much control]

VCR [tape, fast forward and through commercials]

Digital video recorder (TIVO) [30 sec skip ads button on remote control. Fast forward]

People Meter [nelson rating device in 'time' check ability]

One example of how this device of 'messages' in media as television is viable is in the effects it has upon the lives of children. The researchers suggest that advertisers have turned kids to use as lobbyist against their parents as they influence commercial decisions. Children tend to 'pester their parents' as a result of viewing brand in product advertisements. It is deemed as systematic child abuse and hence commercial media is abusive.

Through messaging use, marketers have build a wedge between kids and parents, created more debt and cut them off from community. Children suffer from a serious industrial disease [consumer involvement] of : anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, and psycho-sematic conditions. The become of the 'possession and money' orientation structure mindset. They care most about the brands as found with designer jeans, in gaming, or tennis shoes.

This is also the result of television being allowed to become the 'babysitter' as parents are content with kids watching long hours of shows and movies. It enables an in-house freedom and quiet. It is a 'collusive' strategy whereas no one is innocent and turning the t.v. off is generally not a functional response to the problem.

*Discovery of other dirty habits[dc], this professor may offer us through his many works and accessible online videos: Sutjhally.com

*This is not the opinion of SharonGreer but is in review of the lecture as presented online.