

Horse Race Model of Communication

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Abstract : Mass media play a significant role in democratic societies. The Political Economy of the Mass Media postulates that elite media interlock with other institutional sectors in ownership, and editorial management effectively circumscribing their ability to remain analytically detached from other dominant institutional sectors. The production of meaning in news discourse is not valued neutral, but part of a larger process of presenting a hegemonic understanding of the world to audiences as the “production of consent.” The horse race model argues that “the raw material of news” pressures six bands that ultimately shape the news audiences receive. The six bands are as follows: Crown piece (raw material), brow band (professionalism), throat latch (gatekeeper), a bit (construction), nose band (perception), and reins (ownership). The horse race model suggests that media ultimately serve to “manufacture consent” for a range of self-serving elite opinion options. These bands determine what events are deemed newsworthy, how they are covered, where they are placed within the media and how much coverage they receive. Highly descriptive in nature, the horse race model of communication is concerned with the question of whether media can be seen to play a hegemonic role in the society oriented towards legitimization, hegemonic pressures and ideological construction.

Keywords : hegemonic pressures, horse race, ideological construction, six bands

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