

White

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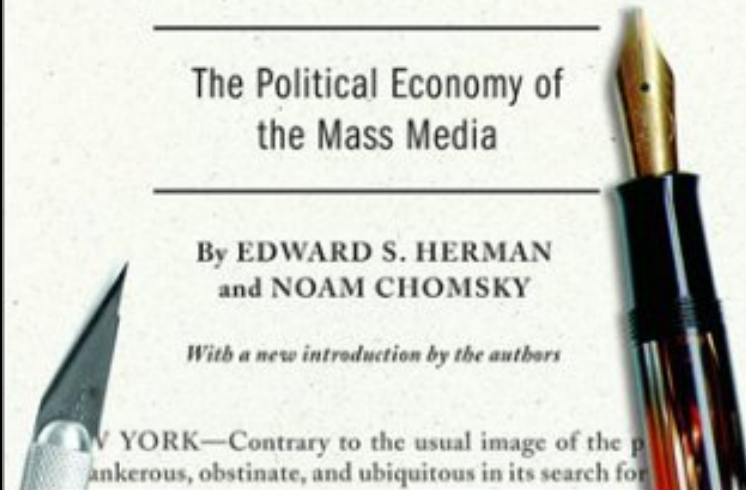
MANUFACTURING CONSENT

The Political Economy of
the Mass Media

By EDWARD S. HERMAN
and NOAM CHOMSKY

With a new introduction by the authors

NEW YORK—Contrary to the usual image of the p
ankerous, obstinate, and ubiquitous in its search for



Joana S. Cruz

PA 715: Politics of Policy Making and Implementation

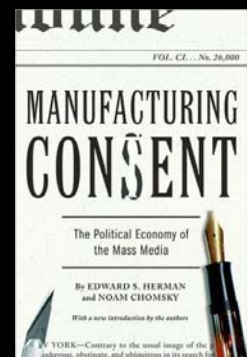
June 25, 2007

They who have put out the people's eyes, reproach them of their blindness.

John Milton

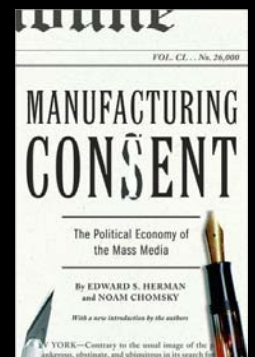
What is the Mainstream American Belief of the Mass Media's Purpose?

To enable and empower society to make meaningful decisions regarding the political process by obtaining and informing its public with information that is accurate and objective.



In *Manufacturing Consent: the Political Economy of the Mass Media*, Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky assert that the Mass Media have a different purpose:

To carry forth the interests and choices of the elite consensus through a propaganda model of communicating messages and symbols to the general public.



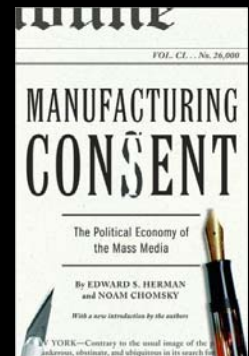
KEY CONCEPTS

The Mass Media – “[...] a system for communicating messages and symbols to the general [public]” (p. 1).

Propaganda Model – a theory that “focuses on the inequality of wealth and power and its multilevel effects on mass-media interest choices. It traces the routes by which money and power are able to filter out the news fit to print, marginalize dissent, and allow the government and dominant public interests to get their messages across to the public” (p. 2).

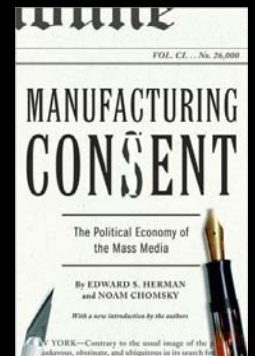
Worthy Victims – people abused in enemy states of the United States.

Unworthy Victims - people treated with equal or greater severity by its own government or by client states of the United States.



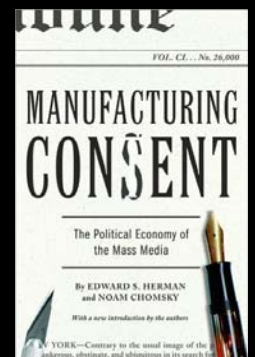
The 5 Filters of the Propaganda Model

- 1) The size, concentrated ownership, owner wealth, and profit orientation of the dominant mass-media firms;
- 2) Advertising as the primary income source of the mass media;
- 3) The reliance of the media on information provided by government business and 'experts' funded and approved by these primary sources and agents of power;
- 4) 'Flak' as a means of disciplining the media; and
- 5) 'Anti-communism' as a national religion and control mechanism.



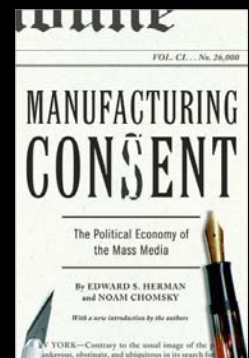
The Mass Media Treatment of Significant Political Events in US History (from the 1960's to pre 1988)

- US Involvement in Latin American Elections: The cases of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua
- US Involvement in the KGB-Bulgarian Plot to Kill the Pope
- US Involvement in the Indochina Wars: Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia



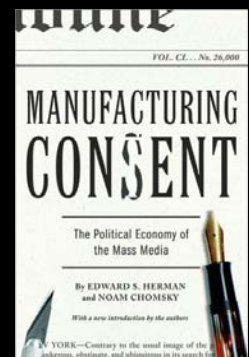
Filter #1: The size, concentrated ownership, owner wealth, and profit orientation of the dominant mass-media firms

- In the US, the evolution of the Mass Media in conjunction with market forces have generated a centralizing effect on the media companies of the United States.
- Start up costs of a new paper in New York City in 1851 was \$69,000; the public sale of the *St. Louis Democrat* in 1872 yielded \$456,000; and city newspapers were selling at from \$6 to \$18 million in the 1920's
- In contemporary times, the 29 largest media systems account for over 50% of newspapers and majority of other media outlets
- Due to the recent trend of takeovers or threats of take over, profitability as the focus for these companies



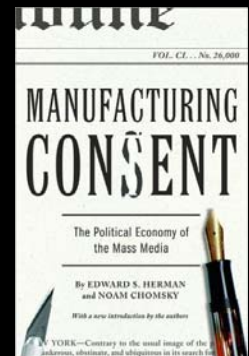
Filter#2: Advertising as the primary income source of the mass media

- Advertising is paid (sometimes free) communication through a medium in which the sponsor is identified and the message is controlled.
- Advertising revenue provides media companies with resources, above and beyond product sales, to invest in improvements which spur growth.
- The power of the advertisers over the media is that they are its patrons.
- H&C state that “an advertising-based media system will gradually increase advertising time and marginalize or eliminate altogether programming that has significant public-affairs content” (p.17).



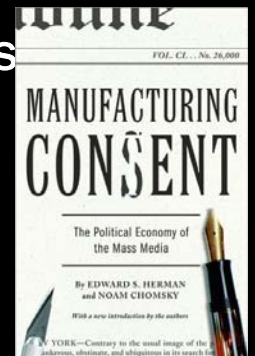
Filter#3: The reliance of the media on information provided by government business and 'experts' funded and approved by these primary sources and agents of power

- H&C state that “[t]he media are drawn into a symbiotic relationship with powerful institutions by economic necessity and reciprocity of interests” (p.18).
- The problem with this relationship: the loss of objective inquiry and the verifiability of messages circulated on the part of the media



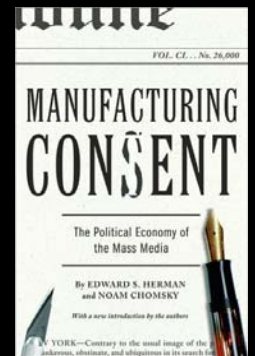
Filter#4: “Flak” as a means of disciplining the media

- Flak refers to the negative responses to a media statement or program
- If flak is produced on a large scale, it can be both uncomfortable and costly to the media
- If certain kinds of fact, position or program are thought likely to elicit flak, this prospect might be deterred
- H&C state that serious flak is a product of the growing resentment of the business sector of media criticism. Its purpose is to harass the media to conform to its corporate agenda and “ a hard-line, right-wing foreign policy” (p. 27)



Filter#5: Anti-communism' as a national religion and control mechanism

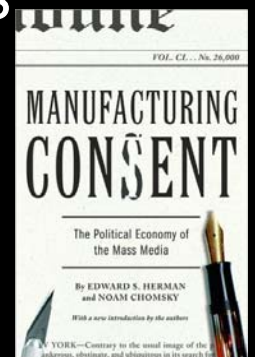
- Communism is an economic system characterized by the collective ownership of property and by the organization of labor for the common advantage of all members
- By the mass publicizing of the conflicts and abuses of Communist states, anti-communism has become a principle of Western ideology and the “enemy” to freedom in America and world-wide



The Mass Media Treatment of Significant Political Events in US History (from the 1960's to pre 1988)

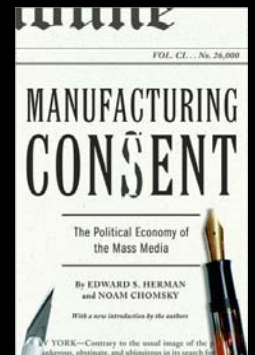
- US Involvement in Latin American Elections: The cases of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua
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IN THESE EVENTS, THERE WERE THOSE WHO WERE WORTHY AND THOSE WHO WERE UNWORTHY OF THE MASS MEDIA'S ATTENTION



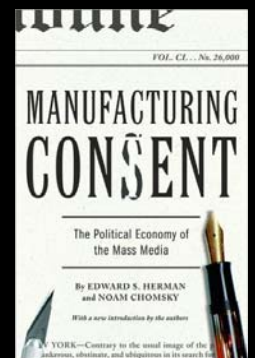
Who Are Those Deemed “Worthy”?

- Jerzy Popielusko,
- The Pope
- The Southern Vietnamese
- Victims of undemocratic Nicaragua
- Victims of Communist North Vietnam



Who Are Those Deemed “Unworthy”?

- The Hundred religious victims in Latin America including Father Rutilio Grande, Archbishop Oscar Romero
- Four US churchwomen – Maura Clarke, Jean Donovan, Ita Ford, and Dorothy Kazel
- The systematic murder of the Mutual Support Group
- The hundreds of thousands of innocent civilian victims of the US and US client states such as Guatemala, El Salvador, Indonesia, and the Khmer Rouge of Cambodia.



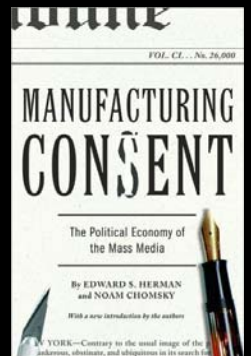
Questions to the Class:

How can we tell when the media favors one victim (worthy) over another (unworthy) ?

Why do you think this happens?

If Herman and Chomsky's theory is accurate, what are its implications?

What can we do to prevent elite control of the Mass Media? Any personal examples?



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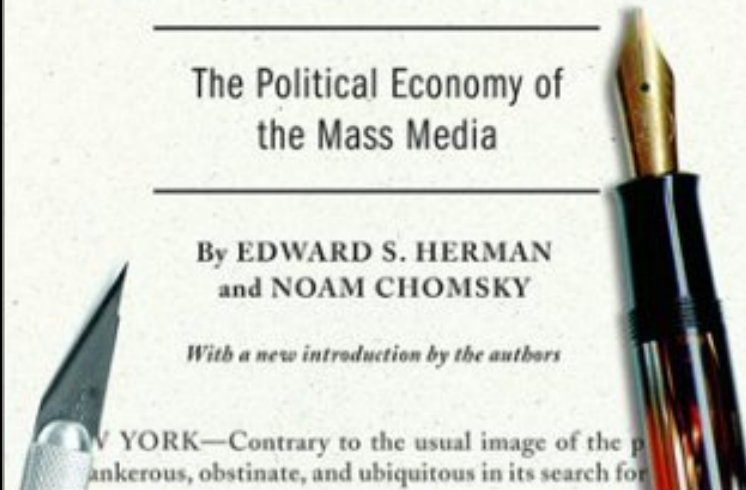
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