

News, Propaganda, and Ideology: Differing Views

Herman and Chomsky's Five Filters

1. Size, ownership, and profit orientation
2. Advertising as "license to do business"
3. Sourcing: Officials and Experts
4. Flak and the Enforcers
5. Anti-communism (anti-terrorism?)

Questions about the propaganda model

- What about times when the media are critical of power?
- Does Chomsky think ordinary people are too dumb to figure all this out, that they're dupes of the system?
- Schudson: News is "subtle cultural influence on human affairs, not an overt force controlling society."

An alternate theory: Ideology as Cultural Common Sense

- The problems with the notion of false consciousness
- epistemological problem: assumes a singular truth, and that most people are dupes ("social dupe theory")
- political: do you really want to say that everyone who disagrees with you is stupid?

- Instead: Ideology as a culture's common sense
- Ideology as maps of meaning that order everyday experience, that create the "taken-for-granted"
- Neither true nor false, but connected to social relations and power

Implications

- There are no non-ideological understandings, only better or worse ideologies
- Ideological analysis needs to be directed at oneself as well as others
- The analysis of ideology is a continuous process of asking questions about the common sense assumptions, of both others and our own everyday thought.

How to do Ideological Analysis

- Look for patterns that are repeated and meaningful
- Figure out the point of view from which those patterns make sense
- Look to see if there is a relation between those patterns and social structure and power