manufacturing consent

manufacturing consent is a concept that has shaped the way experts, media analysts, and the public understand the power of mass communication and its role in influencing public opinion. This article provides a comprehensive exploration of manufacturing consent, tracing its origins, theoretical foundations, and practical applications in today's media landscape. Readers will gain insight into how media outlets, governments, and corporations use various tools and strategies to shape narratives, control information, and build societal consensus. The article also examines the implications of manufactured consent for democracy, social behavior, and critical thinking, offering a balanced view of both its benefits and challenges. You'll discover historical examples, the mechanisms that drive consent manufacturing, and the ongoing debates surrounding media influence. Whether you are a student, professional, or simply curious about media dynamics, this guide will deepen your understanding and encourage thoughtful reflection on the topic.

- Understanding Manufacturing Consent: Definition and Origins
- Theoretical Frameworks and Key Contributors
- Mechanisms and Strategies of Consent Manufacturing
- Historical and Contemporary Examples
- Implications for Democracy and Society
- Challenges and Criticisms of Manufacturing Consent
- Conclusion: Reflecting on Media Influence and Public Opinion

Understanding Manufacturing Consent: Definition and Origins

Manufacturing consent refers to the process by which powerful institutions, particularly media organizations, shape public opinion and foster agreement with particular policies or perspectives. This concept gained prominence through scholarly work that highlighted how public consent is not always organic but can be systematically engineered. The term originated in the early 20th century, but it was popularized by Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky in their seminal work, which critiqued the mass media as a tool for propagating dominant ideologies.

At its core, manufacturing consent is about the subtle and overt ways in

which information is filtered, framed, and presented to guide populations toward specific conclusions. Instead of direct coercion, it relies on creating a general consensus through repetition, selective reporting, and narrative construction. Understanding this concept is crucial for recognizing the underlying forces that shape societal beliefs and attitudes.

Theoretical Frameworks and Key Contributors

Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky

The phrase "manufacturing consent" is most closely associated with Herman and Chomsky's analysis of media institutions. Their work outlines how mass media operates as a propaganda system that serves elite interests by controlling the flow of information. They argue that media organizations filter news through various mechanisms, ensuring that certain viewpoints are amplified while dissenting voices are marginalized.

Propaganda Model

The propaganda model proposed by Herman and Chomsky describes five filters through which media content is shaped:

- Ownership: Media concentration in the hands of a few large corporations influences content to align with corporate interests.
- Advertising: Dependence on advertising revenue can lead to the prioritization of content favorable to advertisers.
- Sourcing: Reliance on official sources often results in uncritical reporting of government or corporate viewpoints.
- Flak: Negative responses to media content can pressure organizations to conform to certain narratives.
- Ideology: Prevailing ideologies, such as anti-communism or nationalism, shape media coverage and public perception.

These filters interact to produce a media landscape that supports dominant power structures and limits critical examination.

Other Influential Thinkers

Beyond Herman and Chomsky, figures like Walter Lippmann and John Dewey have contributed to the understanding of consent manufacturing. Lippmann introduced the idea of "the manufacture of consent" in the context of public relations and democracy, highlighting the importance of shaping opinion through media and communication strategies.

Mechanisms and Strategies of Consent Manufacturing

Media Framing and Agenda Setting

Media framing refers to the way information is presented to the public, highlighting specific aspects while ignoring others. By choosing which stories to cover and how to report them, media outlets can shape the public's understanding of events and issues. Agenda setting goes hand in hand with framing, as it involves determining which topics are deemed important and worthy of attention.

Selective Reporting and Information Filtering

Selective reporting is a common strategy in manufacturing consent, where certain facts are emphasized, omitted, or distorted to fit a desired narrative. Information filtering occurs at multiple levels, from editorial decisions to the use of algorithms in digital platforms. This process ensures that the public is exposed to curated information, often aligned with the interests of influential actors.

Repetition and Message Amplification

Repetition is a powerful tool for solidifying public opinion. By consistently repeating key messages across various media channels, organizations can normalize particular viewpoints and make them seem like common sense. Message amplification is further enhanced through social media, where content can be rapidly shared and reinforced within echo chambers.

Historical and Contemporary Examples

War and Conflict Coverage

Coverage of wars and international conflicts often illustrates manufacturing consent in action. Media outlets may use selective imagery, language, and expert commentary to foster support for military interventions or to justify government policies. Historical examples include the coverage of the Vietnam War, the Gulf War, and more recent conflicts, where public opinion was shaped through orchestrated narratives.

Corporate Influence and Advertising

Corporations wield significant power in shaping media content, especially through advertising and sponsorship. News outlets may avoid reporting negatively on major advertisers or may promote products and services that align with their revenue streams. This dynamic can lead to the suppression of dissenting perspectives and the promotion of consumerist values.

Political Campaigns and Elections

Manufacturing consent is a central feature of modern political campaigns, where media strategies are carefully crafted to mobilize voters and build support for candidates. Techniques include targeted messaging, polling, and the use of persuasive narratives to frame opponents in a negative light. The interplay between media, public relations, and political interests demonstrates the complexity of consent manufacturing in democratic societies.

Implications for Democracy and Society

Public Opinion and Social Cohesion

The process of manufacturing consent has profound implications for democracy and the functioning of society. By shaping public opinion, media organizations and powerful actors can create a sense of social cohesion, aligning individuals with common goals and values. However, this can also lead to conformity and discourage critical thinking, making it difficult for alternative viewpoints to gain traction.

Critical Thinking and Media Literacy

The prevalence of manufactured consent highlights the importance of media literacy and critical thinking skills. Individuals must be able to analyze

sources, question narratives, and recognize biases in media coverage. Enhancing media literacy is vital for fostering informed citizens who can participate meaningfully in democratic processes.

Challenges and Criticisms of Manufacturing Consent

Ethical Considerations

Manufacturing consent raises significant ethical questions regarding the manipulation of information and public opinion. Critics argue that engineered consent undermines individual autonomy and democratic principles by limiting access to diverse viewpoints and stifling dissent.

Risks of Manipulation and Polarization

The strategies used to manufacture consent can also contribute to social polarization and the spread of misinformation. By promoting certain narratives and marginalizing others, media organizations may exacerbate divisions within society and erode trust in institutions.

Resistance and Alternative Media

Despite these challenges, alternative media outlets and grassroots movements have emerged to challenge manufactured consent. These organizations strive to provide independent reporting, amplify marginalized voices, and encourage public debate. Their efforts highlight the ongoing struggle for a more pluralistic and transparent media environment.

Conclusion: Reflecting on Media Influence and Public Opinion

Manufacturing consent remains a critical concept for understanding the relationship between media, power, and society. By examining its mechanisms, historical examples, and contemporary implications, readers can better appreciate the complexities of media influence and the importance of maintaining a diverse and independent information ecosystem. The ongoing debates and challenges associated with consent manufacturing underscore the need for vigilance, media literacy, and ethical considerations in navigating today's communication landscape.

Q: What does "manufacturing consent" mean in the context of media?

A: Manufacturing consent refers to the process by which media organizations and other powerful institutions shape public opinion and foster agreement with specific policies or viewpoints, often through selective reporting, framing, and repetition.

Q: Who popularized the concept of manufacturing consent?

A: The concept was popularized by Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky in their influential work analyzing the propaganda role of mass media in society.

Q: What are the five filters in the propaganda model?

A: The five filters are media ownership, advertising, sourcing of news, flak (negative feedback), and prevailing ideology, all of which work together to shape media content and public perception.

Q: How does media framing contribute to manufacturing consent?

A: Media framing involves presenting information in a particular way to emphasize certain aspects and downplay others, effectively guiding how audiences interpret events and issues.

Q: Can manufacturing consent be beneficial for society?

A: While manufacturing consent can promote social cohesion and support for collective goals, it can also suppress dissent and critical thinking, raising ethical concerns about manipulation.

Q: What role does advertising play in manufacturing consent?

A: Advertising influences which stories are covered and how they are presented, as media organizations may prioritize content favorable to advertisers and avoid negative coverage of major sponsors.

Q: Are there ways to resist the effects of manufactured consent?

A: Media literacy, critical thinking, and support for independent media outlets are effective ways to resist manufactured consent and promote a more diverse information landscape.

Q: How has social media impacted the process of manufacturing consent?

A: Social media amplifies messages rapidly and creates echo chambers, making it easier to reinforce specific narratives and influence public opinion on a large scale.

Q: What are some historical examples of manufacturing consent?

A: Examples include media coverage of the Vietnam War, the Gulf War, and major political campaigns, where public opinion was shaped through orchestrated narratives.

Q: Why is critical thinking important in relation to manufacturing consent?

A: Critical thinking enables individuals to analyze information, recognize biases, and question dominant narratives, helping to maintain a healthy and informed democracy.

Manufacturing Consent

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Manufacturing Consent: Understanding the Power of Media Manipulation

Introduction:

Have you ever felt a nagging unease about the information presented to you daily? A sense that something is...off? You're not alone. The concept of "manufacturing consent," a term coined by Noam Chomsky and Edward S. Herman, explores the insidious ways media shapes public opinion, often subtly steering us towards accepting policies and viewpoints that may not serve our best interests. This in-depth blog post will dissect this powerful concept, examining its mechanisms, real-world examples, and implications for navigating the modern information landscape. We'll delve into the critical analysis tools you need to become a more discerning consumer of news and information.

H2: The Propaganda Model: A Framework for Understanding Manufacturing Consent

Chomsky and Herman's Propaganda Model offers a framework for understanding how consent is manufactured. It posits that five filters shape the news we receive:

H3: Filter 1: Ownership and Profit Orientation

Media outlets are businesses. Their primary goal is profit, influencing what stories get covered, and how. Sensationalism often trumps substance, and stories that might threaten powerful advertisers or owners are often downplayed or ignored. This creates a bias inherent in the system itself.

H3: Filter 2: Advertising Revenue

The reliance on advertising revenue significantly impacts editorial decisions. News outlets need to cater to advertisers, limiting the coverage of topics that might alienate them. This self-censorship, while often subtle, shapes the narrative and limits the scope of critical reporting.

H3: Filter 3: Sourcing

News organizations heavily rely on official sources, particularly government and corporate entities. This reliance creates a dependence on information provided by those with vested interests, limiting the diversity of perspectives and potentially perpetuating biased narratives.

H3: Filter 4: Flak

"Flak" refers to negative responses to media coverage. Powerful institutions and individuals can exert pressure on media outlets through lawsuits, boycotts, and public criticism, discouraging critical reporting on sensitive topics. This pressure shapes what is deemed acceptable to report.

H3: Filter 5: Anti-Communism (and its modern equivalents)

Originally framed as anti-communism, this filter has evolved to encompass any ideology or movement perceived as threatening to established power structures. This filter allows for the demonization of dissenting voices and the justification of actions that might otherwise be criticized.

H2: Real-World Examples of Manufacturing Consent

The impact of these filters is evident in countless real-world examples:

The Iraq War: The lead-up to the Iraq War saw a significant amount of media coverage that framed the conflict as necessary for national security, often relying heavily on government sources. Critical voices were often marginalized, contributing to a public consensus supporting the war.

Climate Change Denial: The fossil fuel industry has actively engaged in campaigns to downplay the severity of climate change, influencing media coverage and creating public doubt about the scientific consensus. This has hampered effective action on this critical issue. Corporate Influence on Health Reporting: The pharmaceutical and food industries exert considerable influence on health reporting, often shaping narratives that benefit their products, even if this conflicts with public health interests.

H2: Developing Critical Media Literacy: Fighting Back Against Manufacturing Consent

The challenge is not to eliminate media influence but to become more discerning consumers of information. Developing critical media literacy involves:

Diversifying your news sources: Don't rely on a single news outlet. Seek diverse perspectives from various sources, including independent media and international news organizations. Identifying bias: Be aware of the potential biases of any news source, including ownership, advertising, and sourcing. Analyze the language used and the perspectives presented. Fact-checking: Verify information from multiple reputable sources before accepting it as truth. Utilize fact-checking websites and resources.

Seeking out dissenting voices: Actively seek out opinions and perspectives that challenge the dominant narrative. This allows for a more nuanced understanding of complex issues. Understanding the underlying power structures: Analyze who benefits from particular narratives and how those benefits might influence the information being presented.

H2: Conclusion:

Manufacturing consent is a powerful force shaping our understanding of the world. By understanding the mechanisms involved and developing critical media literacy skills, we can become more informed citizens, less susceptible to manipulation, and better equipped to participate in a truly democratic society. The fight against manufactured consent is a continuous process of questioning, analyzing, and seeking truth amidst a sea of information.

FAQs:

- 1. Is all media biased? While complete objectivity is difficult to achieve, some media outlets strive for greater impartiality than others. Understanding the potential biases of any source is crucial.
- 2. How can I identify propaganda? Look for emotional appeals, oversimplification, generalizations, omission of crucial facts, and reliance on questionable sources.
- 3. What role does social media play in manufacturing consent? Social media platforms, with their algorithms and echo chambers, can amplify existing biases and limit exposure to diverse viewpoints, contributing to the manufacturing of consent.
- 4. What is the difference between persuasion and propaganda? Persuasion aims to influence opinions through reasoned argument, while propaganda uses manipulation and deception to control public opinion.
- 5. Can individuals really make a difference in combating manufactured consent? Yes, by being

critical consumers of information, actively seeking diverse perspectives, and engaging in informed discussions, individuals can contribute significantly to creating a more informed and democratic society.

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manufacturing consent: Propaganda in the Information Age Alan MacLeod, 2019-04-24 Propaganda in the Information Age is a collaborative volume which updates Herman and Chomsky's propaganda model for the twenty-first-century media landscape and makes the case for the continuing relevance of their original ideas. It includes an exclusive interview with Noam Chomsky himself. 2018 marks 30 years since the publication of Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky's ground-breaking book Manufacturing Consent, which lifted the veil over how the mass media operate. The book's model presented five filters which all potentially newsworthy events must pass through before they reach our TV screens, smartphones or newspapers. In Propaganda in the Information Age, many of the world's leading media scholars, analysts and journalists use this model to explore the modern media world, covering some of the most pressing contemporary topics such as fake news, Cambridge Analytica, the Syrian Civil War and Russiagate. The collection also

acknowledges that in an increasingly globalized world, our media is increasingly globalized as well, with chapters exploring both Indian and African media. For students of Media Studies, Journalism, Communication and Sociology, Propaganda in the Information Age offers a fascinating introduction to the propaganda model and how it can be applied to our understanding not only of how media functions in corporate America, but across the world in the twenty-first century.

manufacturing consent: Understanding Media Propaganda in the 21st Century Simon Foley, 2021-09-02 First published in 1988, Herman and Chomsky's Manufacturing Consent remains the go-to book for those interested in understanding why the mainstream media act as vehicles for power-elite propaganda. The analytical heart of Manufacturing Consent lies in what it calls 'The Propaganda Model.' According to this model, there are five filters which all newsworthy stories have to pass through before reaching the public sphere. However, a lot has changed in the subsequent thirty-something years. Consequently, a key question that needs to be addressed is whether Manufacturing Consent is still fit for purpose. The conceit underpinning Understanding Media Propaganda in the 21st Century: Manufacturing Consent Revisited and Revised is that the election of Trump in 2016 constitutes the proverbial 'year zero' for fourth estate journalism. As a result of the 'journalistic' cultural revolution that ensued, it argues that the Propaganda Model needs to be overhauled if it is to retain its epistemological bona fides. To this end, this book is a radical—in the true critical sense of the word—intervention into the propaganda/fake news debate. For students (in the broadest sense of the term) of media studies, journalism, communication studies and sociology, it provides both a compelling critique of Herman and Chomsky's Propaganda Model, while at the same time proffering a new explanatory model to understand why MSM output typically replicates the 'stenographer for power' playbook.

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manufacturing consent: *Media Control* Noam Chomsky, 2011-01-04 Noam Chomsky's backpocket classic on wartime propaganda and opinion control begins by asserting two models of democracy—one in which the public actively participates, and one in which the public is manipulated and controlled. According to Chomsky, propaganda is to democracy as the bludgeon is to a totalitarian state, and the mass media is the primary vehicle for delivering propaganda in the United

States. From an examination of how Woodrow Wilson's Creel Commission succeeded, within six months, in turning a pacifist population into a hysterical, war-mongering population, to Bush Sr.'s war on Iraq, Chomsky examines how the mass media and public relations industries have been used as propaganda to generate public support for going to war. Chomsky further touches on how the modern public relations industry has been influenced by Walter Lippmann's theory of spectator democracy, in which the public is seen as a bewildered herd that needs to be directed, not empowered; and how the public relations industry in the United States focuses on controlling the public mind, and not on informing it. Media Control is an invaluable primer on the secret workings of disinformation in democratic societies.

manufacturing consent: The Propaganda Model Today Joan Pedro-Carañana, Daniel Broudy, Jeffery Klaehn, 2018-10-25 While the individual elements of the propaganda system (or filters) identified by the Propaganda Model (PM) – ownership, advertising, sources, flak and anti-communism – have previously been the focus of much scholarly attention, their systematisation in a model, empirical corroboration and historicisation have made the PM a useful tool for media analysis across cultural and geographical boundaries. Despite the wealth of scholarly research Herman and Chomsky's work has set into motion over the past decades, the PM has been subjected to marginalisation, poorly informed critiques and misrepresentations. Interestingly, while the PM enables researchers to form discerning predictions as regards corporate media performance, Herman and Chomsky had further predicted that the PM itself would meet with such marginalisation and contempt. In current theoretical and empirical studies of mass media performance, uses of the PM continue, nonetheless, to yield important insights into the workings of political and economic power in society, due in large measure to the model's considerable explanatory power.

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embarking on higher-level programmes within Manufacturing. Roger Timings is one of the UK's leading authors of textbooks on manufacturing and engineering.

manufacturing consent: Fundamentals of Laser Powder Bed Fusion of Metals Igor Yadroitsev, Ina Yadroitsava, Anton Du Plessis, Eric MacDonald, 2021-05-23 Laser powder bed fusion of metals is a technology that makes use of a laser beam to selectively melt metal powder layer-by-layer in order to fabricate complex geometries in high performance materials. The technology is currently transforming aerospace and biomedical manufacturing and its adoption is widening into other industries as well, including automotive, energy, and traditional manufacturing. With an increase in design freedom brought to bear by additive manufacturing, new opportunities are emerging for designs not possible previously and in material systems that now provide sufficient performance to be qualified in end-use mission-critical applications. After decades of research and development, laser powder bed fusion is now enabling a new era of digitally driven manufacturing. Fundamentals of Laser Powder Bed Fusion of Metals will provide the fundamental principles in a broad range of topics relating to metal laser powder bed fusion. The target audience includes new users, focusing on graduate and undergraduate students; however, this book can also serve as a reference for experienced users as well, including senior researchers and engineers in industry. The current best practices are discussed in detail, as well as the limitations, challenges, and potential research and commercial opportunities moving forward. - Presents laser powder bed fusion fundamentals, as well as their inherent challenges - Provides an up-to-date summary of this advancing technology and its potential - Provides a comprehensive textbook for universities, as well as a reference for industry - Acts as guick-reference guide

manufacturing consent: Manufacturing Hope and Despair Ricardo D. Stanton-Salazar, 2001 Relying on a wealth of ethnographic and statistical data, this groundbreaking volume documents the many constraints and social forces that prevent Mexican-origin adolescents from constructing the kinds of networks that provide access to important forms of social support. Special attention is paid to those forms of support privileged youth normally receive and working-class youth do not, such as expert guidance regarding college opportunities. The author also reveals how some working-class ethnic minority youth become the exception, weaving social webs that promote success in school as well as empowering forms of resiliency. In both cases, the role of social networks in shaping young people's chances is illuminated. "In this badly needed alternative to the individualism that pervades most debates about American education, Stanton-Salazar explores how Latino teenagers' lives are embedded within social networks from home, community, and school. This grand work shows how school programs can confound or can draw from the strengths of such networks to build better lives for all." -Bruce J. Biddle, Professor Emeritus of Psychology and Sociology, University of Missouri-Columbia "A beautifully written and inspiring book that announces a new generation of Mexican/Latino scholars. . . . This is a book which tells the tale about Mexican/Latino adolescents but, in reality, it is a book about how working-class adolescent life is socially constructed, defined, and elaborated in the United States. An eloquent rendering, indeed." —Carlos G. Vélez-Ibáñez, Presidential Chair in Anthropology, University of California, Riverside "Using creative theorizing and rigorous methodology, Manufacturing Hope and Despair illuminates brilliantly the supposed mystery of persistent race/class inequities in American society." —Walter R. Allen, Professor, University of California, Los Angeles

manufacturing consent: <u>Hate Inc</u> Matt Taibbi, 2021-03

manufacturing consent: The Manufacturing of Greta Thunberg Cory Morningstar, 2019-11-19 The manufacturing of Greta Thunberg - for consent: the political economy of the non-profit industrial complex We are introduced to the not-so accidental phenomena of Greta Thunberg, the current child prodigy and face of the youth climate change movement. The climate change is real message is reframed for public consumption and rolled out at an international level, using Greta and her global platform to sound the alarm on climate change. This climate emergency is likened to a house on fire, while urging the public to be serious, patriotic, empathetic and, of course, nonviolent. Not one sentence of the new strategy mentions the horrific impact militarism has on climate change. The

New Climate Economy being pushed by groups like Extinction Rebellion merely repackage our oppression into emergency mode. This urgency becomes global so that governments, NGOs and corporations will all direct immediate funding towards unlocking trillions of capital needed to save capitalism by further funding the new green imperialism. Today's youth are used and molded into market solutions to insulate a global elite. Celebrity-sponsored activism seeks to build a new industry in which NGOs, the media and corporate powers collude to get people to support the very industries we should be erasing from the planet. The planet's most powerful capitalists lie behind these youth-led movements for climate change, helping to manufacture consent for the fourth industrial revolution in an attempt to quell resistance to industrial civilisation.

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manufacturing consent: Consequences of Capitalism Noam Chomsky, Marv Waterstone, 2020-01-05 Is our common sense understanding of the world a reflection of the ruling class's demands of the larger society? If we are to challenge the capitalist structures that now threaten all life on the planet, Chomsky and Waterstone forcefully argue that we must look closely at the everyday tools we use to interpret the world. Consequences of Capitalism make the deep, often unseen connections between common sense and power. In making these linkages we see how the current hegemony keep social justice movements divided and marginalized. More importantly, we see how we overcome these divisions.

manufacturing consent: Power Without Responsibility James Curran, Jean Seaton, 1997 This book is a classic and authoritative introduction to the history, sociolgy, theory and politics of students and teachers of media and communication studies.

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manufacturing consent: Five Days Wes Moore, Erica L. Green, 2020 A kaleidoscopic account of five days in the life of a city on the edge, told through seven characters on the frontlines of the uprising that overtook Baltimore and riveted the world, from the New York Times bestselling author of The Other Wes Moore. When Freddie Gray was arrested for possessing an illegal knife in April 2015, he was, by eyewitness accounts that video evidence later confirmed, treated roughly as police loaded him into a vehicle. By the end of his trip in the police van, Gray was in a coma he would never recover from. In the wake of a long history of police abuse in Baltimore, this killing felt like a final straw--it led to a week of protests and then five days described alternately as a riot or an uprising that set the entire city on edge, and caught the nation's attention. Wes Moore is one of Baltimore's most famous sons--a Rhodes Scholar, bestselling author, decorated combat veteran, White House fellow, and current President of the Robin Hood Foundation. While attending Gray's funeral, he saw every strata of the city come together: grieving mothers; members of the city's wealthy elite;

activists; and the long-suffering citizens of Baltimore--all looking to comfort each other, but also looking for answers. Knowing that when they left the church, these factions would spread out to their own corners, but that the answers they were all looking for could only be found in the city as a whole, Moore--along with Pulitzer-winning coauthor Erica Green--tells the story of the Baltimore uprising. Through both his own observations, and through the eyes of other Baltimoreans: Partee, a conflicted black captain of the Baltimore Police Department; Jenny, a young white public defender who's drawn into the violent center of the uprising herself; Tawanda, a young black woman who'd spent a lonely year protesting the killing of her own brother by police; and John DeAngelo, scion of the city's most powerful family and owner of the Baltimore Orioles, who has to make choices of conscience he'd never before confronted. Each shifting point of view contributes to an engrossing, cacophonous account of one of the most consequential moments in our recent history--but also an essential cri de coeur about the deeper causes of the violence and the small seeds of hope planted in its aftermath.

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a unique mix of theoretical and empirical pieces, such as state and electoral politics, that address both classic issues in political sociology and more recent developments, such as globalization. With strong integration of race and gender throughout, this collection offers a coherent analysis of power that reflects the contributions of a variety of critical perspectives, including Marxism, feminism, critical race theory, postmodernism, and power structure theory.

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2011-07-06 A compelling indictment of the news media's role in covering up errors and deceptions (The New York Times Book Review) due to the underlying economics of publishing—from famed scholars Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky. With a new introduction. In this pathbreaking work, Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky show that, contrary to the usual image of the news media as cantankerous, obstinate, and ubiquitous in their search for truth and defense of justice, in their actual practice they defend the economic, social, and political agendas of the privileged groups that dominate domestic society, the state, and the global order. Based on a series of case studies—including the media's dichotomous treatment of "worthy" versus "unworthy" victims, "legitimizing" and "meaningless" Third World elections, and devastating critiques of media coverage of the U.S. wars against Indochina-Herman and Chomsky draw on decades of criticism and research to propose a Propaganda Model to explain the media's behavior and performance. Their new introduction updates the Propaganda Model and the earlier case studies, and it discusses several other applications. These include the manner in which the media covered the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement and subsequent Mexican financial meltdown of 1994-1995, the media's handling of the protests against the World Trade Organization, World Bank, and International Monetary Fund in 1999 and 2000, and the media's treatment of the chemical industry and its regulation. What emerges from this work is a powerful assessment of how propagandistic the U.S. mass media are, how they systematically fail to live up to their self-image as providers of the kind of information that people need to make sense of the world, and how we can understand their function in a radically new way.

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