

Course Exercise #2

Question 1

CBS Evening News is a news program run by the CBS News, a television network based in the United States, and that airs in the evening of every day (CBS News, 2020). The primary source of revenue for CBS Evening News is funding from CBS Corporation. CBS Corporation is a diversified media organization that runs four divisions, namely; entertainment, cable networks, publishing and local media. As a result, the revenue base of the company is stable and thus able to fund its programs like the CBS Evening News. Other general sources of revenue for the program are advertising fees and viewer's subscriptions. The mission of the news program is to feature news reports, stories and interviews as well as cover all news events around the world.

Democracy now is an independent and non-profit organization that airs both local and international news to keep the listeners and viewers informed concerning various events. The mission of Democracy Now includes acting independently to provide daily news and providing its audience with access to global journalists and local leaders who may not feature in the United States corporate media (Democracy Now, 2020). In addition, Democracy Now does not accept funding from the government or sponsorship from corporate; neither does it charge advertising fees. The main sources of funding for the organization include donations from foundations like Park, Lannan and Ford. The general sources of revenue are viewers and listeners contributions.

The mission of the PBS NewsHour program is to accord its viewers with well-balanced, brilliant and deeper analysis and reporting of the most crucial international and national daily news (PBS News Hour, 2020). The news program also ensures that its viewers have a better apprehension of the presented issues to allow them to make more informed conclusions. The

news program airs on the evening of every day. The main source of revenue for this news program is from public sources, while its general sources of funding are financial support from foundations, individuals and corporations. Public sources of funding include media funds given by the government for government advertisements.

The Special Report with Bret Baier is a news program that airs on Fox News Channel at 6 pm from Monday to Friday (Fox News, 2020). The primary mission of the news program is to have an in-depth focus on the day's political news in America. Another mission of the news program is to accord its viewers with professional reporting and deeper analysis of the events that make each day. The main sources of funding for the news program are corporation funding and money channeled to the corporation by its shareholders. One of the general sources of funding for the news program is advertising fees. The news programs run several adverts, both from the private and public sector.

The type of journalism depicted in these news programs is ambient. In the words of Alfred Hermida, a renowned media scholar for digital news as well as an author, ambient journalism is the one that involves gathering and conveying news information that is collected from intelligent sources (Lewis & Zamith, 2017). Ambient journalism has gained momentum owing to the increased emergence of social media platforms are reliable sources of information. The four news programs are available in social media platforms like You Tube and Instagram where viewers can follow them for reliable information.

Question 2

Both news programs covered a variety of news ranging from the COVID-19 pandemic to the United States political environment. Notably, the CBS Evening News aired news ranging

from the COVID-19 pandemic, the US voting to the death of Justice Ruth Bader, who succumbed to cancer (CBS News, 2020). The topics in both news programs were covered with their headlines first and then a breakdown either from the anchors or reporters. The style of CBS Evening News program involves live airing in studios and ground coverage and reporting. The Democracy Now news program covered news such as President Trump demeaning the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's directive on the value of wearing masks to combat the pandemic, and the controversial appointment of a renowned rebel of climate change to a senior position at the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration by President Trump.

The news covered in the PBS News Hour program on that day included the US presidential candidates, Joe Biden and the incumbent President Trump making campaign stopovers in Minnesota, President Trump banning the use of social media apps from China, especially TikTok, the Afghanistan quest for peace and recognizing the COVID-19 victims and the unrelenting health professionals (PBS News Hour, 2020). The news covered in the Special Report with Bret Baier included the campaign tour of President Trump and presidential aspirant, Joe Biden, to Minnesota, a judge in Michigan who allowed votes postmarked by the eve of an election, the awaited presidential debate between Trump and Biden, President Trump banning Chinese applications like WeChat and TikTok. The Democracy Now news was different from those aired by the rest of the news programs since these other news programs covered similar news of the presidential campaigns of Trump and Biden, the COVID-19 pandemic and the US ban of Chinese applications like WeChat and TikTok.

The news coverage for the 4 news programs involved a news anchor airing the news live in the various studios. The news anchor for CBS Evening News was Norah O'Donnell, the news anchor for the Democracy Now news was Amy Goodman, the news anchor for the PBS NewsHour

program was Judy Woodruff, while the news anchor for the Special Report with Bret Baier was Bret Baier (Democracy Now, 2020). One of the reporters of the CBS News Program is Paula Reid. Besides, the news programs were different in that some had reporters while others did not have. For example, the Democracy Now show did not have reporters, while others like the PBS NewsHour and Special Report with Bret Baier. The reporters in the PBS NewsHour included Fred De Lazaro and William Brangham, while the reporters in Special Report with Bret Baier were John Roberts and Peter Doocy. Overall, the programs are organized in a timeframe of around 1 hour, and both programs involved interviews with various personalities either in the studios or outside the studios.

The learning material that relates to these videos is the theory of collective activity. Collective activity theory argues that effective journalism is the result of joint efforts between various individuals (Lewis & Zamith, 2017). The theory also holds that there is a plethora of activities that must be conducted and coordinated to ensure that viewers get the most attracting and credible news. In the journalism field, there is coordination of various stakeholders such as news editors, camera persons and news reporters. Some of the activities that facilitate effective airing of news include news coverage, reporting and editing.

Question 3

The revenue model of the 4 news programs plays a critical role in the selection, emphasis and style of each of the programs. For example, the revenue model of CBS Evening News is stable enough to ensure live airing and coverage of news events, ground reporting of events and holding of interviews both at the studios and outside (CBS News, 2020). The Special Report with Bret Baier that aired on the Fox News Channel had ground coverage and interviews with a

panel in the studio, and this was greatly influenced by the diverse revenue base of the corporation. The business portfolio of Fox comprises of television, film and cable programming. Therefore, the corporation has a profound financial base. As a result, the corporation is highly improved in its broadcasting services. Notably, Fox News Channel is able to have live coverage of events in various locations, pay reporters and photographers to cover and report such events as well as hold interviews both in and outside their studios. Fox News Channel is able to cover for the salaries, transport fees and modern technology coverage and reporting tools, thereby making it more appealing in the eyes of a wide range of viewers. Fox News Channel was also able to emphasize the big day's events in the evening news on the Special Report with Bret Baier program.

Democracy Now, on the other hand, relies on donations from given foundations like Park, Lannan and Ford and contributions from viewers and listeners (Democracy Now, 2020). Therefore, the platform does not have a reliable revenue source because the foundations may become bankrupt, while the viewers and listeners may sometimes decide not to make the contributions. As a result, the show may not be able to make wide coverage of highly-costly events, may not afford modern reporting or coverage tools and may not afford sufficient salaries and transport fees for sufficient employees like news reporters. In addition, the news program is not able to afford for news coverage in international countries. On September 18, the majority of the news channels focused on the presidential campaigns between president Trump and aspirant Biden in Minnesota (PBS News Hour, 2020). Financially stable news organizations covered and aired the live proceedings of the campaigns. However, Democracy Now neither covered the events live, nor did it report the news, and this may be attributed to its financial inability to afford the live coverage and reporting.

Additionally, PBS NewsHour is financially stable, and thus it was able to afford the financing of the live coverage and reporting of the day's big events, Trump and Biden's presidential campaigns in Minnesota. Because of being financially viable, the news organization was able to pay photographers and reporters to cover and report the live events. Besides, the news was emphasized in that day's evening news.

The 4 news programs have also taken advantage of data journalism to increase their competitiveness in the field of journalism. Data journalism involves availing journalism data to the public in a transparent and more interactive way (Lewis & Zamith, 2017). In addition, conventions have been prevalent among these news programs. Conventions encompass the use of social media platforms as key avenues for data collection and sharing.

Question 4

I think a viewer's understanding of what is happening in society may differ depending on the newscast they trust or watch most. For example, a newscast that brings to the attention of its viewers live events or news from different parts of the globe is likely to keep them more updated. Similarly, a newscast that does not air current news is likely to make its viewers lag behind in terms of understanding because they may not know current happenings in different parts of the country as well as globally. For example, PBS NewsHour and Special Report with Bret Baier are likely to make their viewers high updated on current news because they air current news, including live coverage of events. CBS Evening News is also likely to keep its viewers updated by bringing current news. For instance, in the featured news, the program updated its viewers on current news like the death of Justice Ruth Bader alongside the US voting that is underway.

Democracy Now, on the other hand, is not likely to keep its viewers updated on current happenings because it does not seem to air current news (CBS News, 2020). For instance, on that day, it seemed that the current news of the day was Trump and Biden's presidential campaigns in Minnesota and the US ban of Chinese applications, TikTok and WeChat. PBS NewsHour and Special Report with Bret Baier aired this news, while Democracy Now did not air them. Therefore, the viewers of PBS NewsHour and Special Report with Bret Baier were updated on the day's happenings, unlike those of Democracy Now. The world is dynamic, and many events are happening every day (Fox News, 2020). There are also many events happening here in the United States, including the hot political climate and the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, it would be prudent for news agencies to keep their viewers updated by covering and airing current events.

Elizabeth Becker, one of the most famous journalists in Britain hints that effective journalism is the result of collaboration between various stakeholders (Lewis & Zamith, 2017). It is such collaboration that results in airing of quality and current news that make viewers updated on current issues, and thus enable them to make decisions. According to journalism theorists, the objective of effective journalism is to suffice viewers and listeners with sufficient news information and thus allowing the viewers and listeners an opportunity to make final decisions, and this is in line with the mission of these news programs (Lewis & Zamith, 2017). The 4 news programs are determined to provide sufficient and credible news information to their viewers.

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