Comms201-Journalism Studies- Tutorial Outline- Week 12-Tabloidization, Sports Journalism Essay Preparation

Part 1: Tabloidization

Debate: In Thursday’s lecture, Annie addressed the two different attitudes towards Tabloid Journalism and the “Tabloidization” of the news media landscape. Under this umbrella we can also identify processes of “Celebrification,” “Militainment” and “Politainment.” While some criticize Tabloidization for “dumbing down” society, others provide a more supportive stance, considering how Tabloid Journalism might enhance and increase reader/viewer engagement.

You will be split into two groups and asked to prepare for a class debate. One group will be arguing against Tabloid News, while the second group will be arguing in support of it. You will be given 10-15 minutes to construct your argument, planning your key points and case studies/examples. Refer to your lecture notes and the readings. You will then nominate two people to speak on behalf of your group. One person will speak from one group, then one from the next group and so on. You will have to work hard to defend your argument! Your tutor will then decide on the winning group.

And: Discuss the central characteristics of satirical news with the mainstream news with an eye to terms like dialogic, the news cycle, politics and play.

Part 2: Sports Journalism

Sports journalism has often been referred to as the news media’s “toy department,” as well as a “fan club” as opposed to “the fourth estate.” Find one sports news item that contests this view and bring your example to class to discuss with your classmates and your tutor. Margaret stated that sports journalism is at its best when capable of seeing beneath the surface of events to reveal insights within the media/sport/society nexus. You want to consider how your item might be doing just that. Some things to consider are:

* The 5 W’s and the H. (Who, What, When, Where, Why, How).
* Language and style of headlines, inserts, captions.
* The visual content and its relationship to the text.
* Does the article exhibit sporting bodies having control over “their” commercial product?
* Does the article involve or speak to an interaction between athletes/sports personalities and their audiences via social media, effectively cutting out the middle- man?
* What is highlighted and what is omitted in the article and what issues might this raise?
* Does the article illuminate issues outside of “sport” so to speak? Are there elements of human rights/freedom of speech involved? What legal issues are addressed? Does the article speak to issues/debates concerning gender and sexuality?

Part 3: Final Essay Preparation- Choosing A Question (IF WE HAVE TIME)

# We will be workshopping your essays in the final tutorials (the weeks 12, and 13 in the University calendar). At this point, however, you should have looked at the questions and narrowed your choices down. For this tutorial, we ask you to pick a question and bring a rough brainstorm to show to your tutor. If you’re having trouble deciding between two questions, making a brainstorm for each may help you decide. At this point we’re not expecting you to have a full thesis statement (although you can work on this for the last tutorial), but you should brainstorm some key ideas that you would like to explore. The brainstorm can be in the form of bullet points, a mind-map, or whatever works best for you.

# Consider the following:

# What is the question asking of you?

# What is your stance? How do you feel about it?

# What draws you to the question? What do you find interesting?

# Are there any specific textual examples/case studies you would like to interrogate?

# Consider different sub-ideas beneath a core/overall idea.

# What sources/readings might you use?