

Features: the story so far...

Marcus O'Donnell Jour 202 2006

Type values purpose

TYPE	NEWS VALUE	ROLE	EXAMPLE
profile	prominence	entertain	<i>Good Weekend</i>
human drama	human interest	entertain	court cases
backgrounder	timeliness	first draft	North Korea crisis
news feature	timeliness	educate	Live8
calendar	timeliness	inform/remember	7/7 anniversary
investigation	consequence	watchdog	New Yorker
on-our-own	conflict	watchdog	<i>Aust:</i> Patrick White
trend	novelty	educate/first draft	women & sex toys
popular culture	timeliness	educate	Devil Wears Prada
how-to/lifestyle	human interest	inform	travel/diet
inspirational	human interest	entertain/inspire	Oprah stories



GREGORY CREWDSON

WHAT'S HAPPENING?



WHAT ARE THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE IMAGE?



WHAT IS THE EMOTIONAL TONE OF THE IMAGE?

Key Ps

- person
- place
- plot
- puzzle
- particularities

Myth & Journalism

- All news and feature stories are part of larger cultural stories
- Recognise the mythic dimensions
- But don't give into stereotypes
- Recognise the power of your work
- But get down from the soap box

Openers

Hennessey	Sumner & Miller	Ricketson
Surprise or shock	shock lead	surprise
Anecdote	anecdote	anecdotal
Atmosphere		
Argument by Analogy		summary
In this together	direct address	
Significant scene	scenario lead	descriptive
Quote	indirect quote	
Literary allusion		
Celebrity peg		
Cryptic/Intriguing	blind lead	suspense

Sumner & Millner's Structural Models

- Full Circle technique
- Chronology
- Scene by scene
- Person to person
- Problem and possible solutions
- Problem and possible causes
- Persuasion and Argumentation

It's all about the audience....

- Openers - engaging the audience
- Structure & technique - leading the audience through
- Myth - responding to audience culture

Audience

- Where theory and practice come together
- Audience is key to understanding the role of journalism in society
- Audience is key to the practice of effective journalism

Who is this aimed at?

- So would Mary ever want to become a youth leader? She thinks hard.
- "Hmm, not at the moment, I'll leave it up to God though!"
- "The best thing about being a Christian is that I have 100% assurance of where I'll spend eternity; in heaven with Jesus," Karen adds.
- As Karen said, "Only a life that knows Jesus knows true peace, purpose and meaning".

Make it believable

- Pick your quotes and approach to suit your audience
- Build up detailed characterisations of your sources so that whatever they say there is the possibility of "respectful disagreement"

Audience and Market

- Demographics
 - gender
 - age
 - socio-economic
 - geographical
- Areas of interest
- Style

Audience and Market

- journalism becoming increasingly market driven
- editors are concerned to provide good "advertising environments"

An audience checklist

- Who is this publication aimed at?
- Is it a general or specific audience?
- Does the publication have different sections
- What is the overall tone: funny/serious/hip/traditional?
- Are my examples right for this audience?
- Is my language right for this audience?
- Is my tone right for this audience?
- Have I used the right sources for this audience?
- What assumptions have I made about this audience?
- How much can I get away with here?

Challenging an audience

- Does this publication do challenging?
- Have I created a confrontational or persuasive tone?
- Have I made my sources believable?
- Have I given a balanced range of opinion?
- Accept the art of the possible

Don'ts and cautions

- Never patronise your audience
- Never abuse your audience
- Remember it's about them not about you
- Remember the audience knows more than you do
- It's about engagement not journalistic pyrotechnics