

Diamond

The Media Show - The Changing Nature of the News 1985-1990

The Media Show is a lively analysis of one of the underreported major stories of our time: the growing power and influence of the media. In these essays and reports critic Edwin Diamond takes a hard look at the methods of the American media during a period of heightened competition and increased conglomeration, focusing on the way news stories are shaped, and sometimes distorted. Diamond first considers some of the consequences of the new order created by richer technologies and lowered aspirations. He explores the mixed results of this new system, including marked changes in American broadcasting as the networks downsize their expenditures to news and public affairs coverage. There is, he notes, often a serious conflict within networks between the public good and the bottom line, a conflict that the news media generally chooses not to examine. Diamond then scrutinizes the role of style and personality on television. Next he turns to specific examples of television coverage of the defining topics of the late 1980s and early 1990s, including the arrival of cable technology and CNN, which changed the way wars and crises are covered; how some members of the media practiced "unsafe journalism" in their reports on AIDS; the role the media assumed as the "moral police" in recent election campaigns; the way race and class influenced crime stories such as the Tawana Brawley and the Central Park jogger cases; how the media has often seemed "married to the mob" in its reporting about reputed godfather John Gotti; and the changes in White House press coverage as Ronald Reagan was succeeded by George Bush. Diamond concludes by proposing several ideas for creating new media structures. Edwin Diamond is Professor of Journalism at New York University, where he directs the News Study Group, and he is media columnist for New York magazine. His previous books include Good News, Bad News, Sign Off. The Last Days of Television, and The Spot: The Rise of Political Advertising on Television.

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