

Profit Motive Assignment

Introduction to Communication Studies

Date Due: Your paper must be posted at least 24 hours before your conference time on your conference's designated bulletin board and a paper copy is due at the beginning of your conference. We will be happy to provide comments on drafts during office hours but not over email.

Purpose and Particulars: Please see the assignment sheet entitled "Conference Papers."

Relevant Readings: McChesney and Goggin and Newell

Background: Both articles offer a critique of the ways in which profit influences the production of media--McChesney considers content, where Goggin and Newell consider underserved populations.

Task:

1. Pick a specific media artifact or technology produced for profit, ideally in the last 6 months. It should be as specific as possible, for instance a specific TV episode (not a whole show), a specific mobile phone (yours or a friend's, not all models)
2. Describe your artifact, and explain how you know it is made for profit (remember that you can buy artifacts that are not made for profit and that some for-profit artifacts are available for free to audiences).
3. Apply at least one concept, idea or proposition from McChesney or Goggin and Newell to show how the drive for profit has affected your artifact. One way to think about this is to consider how your artifact might be different if it wasn't produced for profit but instead primarily to serve the needs of a specific population.

Tips: The paper doesn't need to go in the order of the assignment. The strongest papers often integrate the discussion of the reading with the discussion of the example.

If you want to know who owns whom, check out this handy (though always slightly out of date) reference: <http://www.cjr.org/resources/>. You can also visit the Howard Ross Management Library in the Bronfman Building.