**What Makes a Story Newsworthy?**

75% of Canadians rely on TV news for information about the world.

Yet the average TV news story is only 30 seconds long. This makes in-depth analysis of real issues impossible. Basically TV news is a flashy headline service giving the viewer the minimum of what they need to know to understand the story.

TV News has opened a world for us to learn about, but it also constructs the world for us,

selecting what we see, hear and read about.

“Gatekeepers” chose what news is presented to the viewer. Editors choose which stories will be covered by whom. Reporters decide the details in stories they are assigned. Photo and film editors choose the few visuals used from the many shot.

North American “gatekeepers” tend to be white, middle-class, and male. Personal perspectives often influence their choices about what is news and what is not news.

**Mean World Syndrome:**

The perception that the world is more violent than it actually is.

Violent crime, for example has gone down 25% in the past 30 years, but coverage of violent crime has gone up in the media 600%.

Creates a population that is not more violent, but is more AFRAID.

**What Makes a Story Newsworthy?**

1. **Timeliness** – What is happening now. The very quick transmission of information means that news gets old quick.

2. **Proximity** – How close to home? The closer the story, the more

interest.

3. **Prominence** – we will usually pay more attention to news about

world leaders and celebrities we recognize than to news about

people we don’t know. Local people are also more interesting to

us even if they are not famous.

4. **Consequence** – Items that affect us directly such as tax increases,heat waves, crime, etc.

5. **Human Interest** – Touching or funny stories that deal with basic

needs such as clothing, food, shelter and affection. The common

characters

6. **Visual News** – news stories with dramatic or exciting visuals.

**Disaster Pornography**

Visual news with more exciting visuals can lead to unbalanced reporting because a more important story may be bumped out by a more exciting-looking story.