



The Mass Media of the USA: An Analysis of Structures, Forces and Consequences

Mario Franz

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Seminar paper from the year 2008 in the subject American Studies - Culture and Applied Geography, grade: 1, University of Heidelberg, language: English, abstract: When children are young their parents are heroes to them. They listen

and accept everything they say. This applied to me and the relationship to my parents as well. Only during the adolescence did I start doubting some of the things my parents said or did. A bit later, my newly discovered critical thinking made me question my way to handle the media. Until then, I considered the news, as they were presented, as an objective delivery of facts. After I started to see my parents in a more realistic light, I got a similar view of the news and started to have a closer, more careful look at it. I cannot accuse my parents of deliberately misguiding me during puberty, but I started wondering if the media changes, or at least disguises facts on purpose to reach a certain goal.

Chomsky and Herman offer an analysis of the media in their work *Manufacturing Consent*, on which most of my term paper is based in accordance with my own experiences of the media. When I am not referring to any publication, one can assume that my statements are influenced by my own study of the media. According to Chomsky, this is quite an easy thing to do, because it is the part of intellectual culture that is easiest to study: "It comes out every day. You can do a systematic investigation. You can compare yesterday's version to today's version."

As the name *Manufacturing Consent* implies, they see a deliberate effort of the press to create a certain attitude among the public.

Chomsky and Herman are even speaking of a "propaganda model", which is put forth by the media. This term paper is dealing with the reasons, the beginning and the methods of the media trying to direct the people's thoughts. First, the motivation of the media to install and conserve a propaganda model is described. Then, the start of this is presented, starting with propaganda campaigns in the First World War. When Chomsky and Herman are talking about the propaganda model, they are relating it to a filter system, which irrevocably influences the news the public receives. This system consists of five filters, each of which I am going to present. These five filters are: 1. Size, Ownership and Profit Orientation of the Mass Media, 2. The Advertising License to do Business, 3. Sourcing Mass-Media News, 4. Flak and the Enforcers, 5. Anticommunism as a Control Mechanism. [...]

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