



Question 11 - Frontline, telling the truth.

The 'truth' is always very subjective and can be exploited by power. By understanding the way events, personalities and situations have been shaped by their representation, we understand how there are many versions of the truth. Frontline shows the satirical representation of current affairs shows of our time, it uses parody, satire, and stylistic ^{techniques,} to influence and manipulate our versions of the truth. The editorial cartoon by Moir shows the subjectivity of truth, using satire.

The "A Current Affair report" shows the responders manipulation through visuals and "Absolutely fabulous?" shows how the presentation of an image can influence meaning.

The "The right of rights" shows how authority impedes our access to the truth. After discovering that telecom have bugged peoples telephones, The Frontline team, believing it is their duty, attempt to "inform the public, regardless of the consequences", ironically however, this attitude is soon abandoned once ~~the~~ telecom has asserted its influence of the executives of the Frontline team. In this case, Telecom have controlled, manipulated and selectively chosen the 'truth' that is represented.

This is evident in the editorial cartoon (SMTA 11/7/02) which depicts the alienation and exploitation of the Ubonera escapees and conveys how Authority can control public access to the truth. The children are the victims of the politicians, as their size has been reduced to emphasise their helplessness as well as their alienation from social power. John Howard and Philip Ruddock are the manipulators who use their authority to exploit the subjectivity of the truth for their own personal gain. This is also evident in "Smaller fish to fry" where the executives threaten not to renew the Frontline team's contracts if they don't withdraw from a bank fraud story, the executives do this for their own benefit. The use of situation shows how representation of the truth has been shaped, these are parallel situations which the responder will identify with. In the cartoon John Howard quotes "They are a grave threat to national security" which ~~sentationalises~~ ^{sentationalises} the situation. This is also satired by the juxtaposition of the small innocent faced children locked behind the comparatively large barbed fence. This use of satire emotionally



and intellectually manipulates the responder into the Composer, Moir's and Sitch's view of the exploitation of the truth.

In "the Siege", Marty's crouch pose 5 km away from the siege, to "make it look like I'm really in danger" dramatises the situation and this again parallels with Howard's comments and shows the manner in which influences control meaning. The facial distortion of John Howard is used to ridicule and satirise him and is used in the same way with Mike Moore. caricature Mike's "Ray Martin" hair style and empathetic "mmm..." is a parody of current affair hosts of our day and we identify with this and see how our understanding has been shaped by Sitch's representation.

Selective evidence/interviews are used in "the Siege" to show and satirise principles of Journalism. The Frontline team's choice to interview a psychology student rather than an expert and "interview him in front of a bookcase" shows and satirises expert credibility. It shows the composer cynicism of the medium of Journalism as it ~~to~~ shows and reveals the unethical

practices employed by the Media.

The "a Current Affairs Report" also uses selective interviews to convey subjective opinions. In an interview with Dr Louise Newman, she gives her expert opinion on a girl who was imprisoned in her home for 2 years, and she uses words such as "psycho-analysis" to force the responder to identify with her credibility. This is mirrored with a situation in "Playing the ego Card" where Mike rigs up an interview with 2 soldiers to assert his subjectivity. Mike "So this mountain is virtually crawling with rebels?" "Yeh, you said so". This ridicules and satirises Mike's Journalistic Credibility and shows him as being unreliable, thus we are forced to question the representation of interviews such as the ACA interview because of the parody shown in Frontline.

"Add sex and stir" shows the Frontline team's underestimation of the viewers need for visuals "A pub brawl in Manly is better than a massacre at Milsons if you've got pictures". "Smaller Fish & Fry" shows camera shock techniques employed by martyr, to expose a drug dealer. And this is mirrored with the ACA report which

creates vision in order to manipulate with the responder and to influence the representation given to us. The ACA report uses a blurred picture of the abused girl to create sympathy and a sense of victimisation which manipulates the responders representation emotionally.

In "Add sex and stir" Mike is offered to do a commercial to enhance his image. However Brian objects stating "it ruins your image" which shows the superficiality of those who claim to be 'serious journalists'. This is also seen in a Time Magazine article "Absolutely Fabulous?" which sees the ignorance of celebrities who endorse useless products. The title of the article is a pun and rhetorical question which foreshadows the rest of the article which questions the representation of the truth of these useless products. "We ain't got Dames" shows how the presentation of images (GP of sneeze) appeals to the demography of the woman and Barb also encourages the Frontline teams to do stories on body images and celebrities, to appeal to women.

This is also reflected in "Absolutely Fabulous?" where there is a picture of an able bodied man which appeals to the demography of the health conscious. It is a stylistic device used to emotionally manipulate our response.

In conclusion, we have seen that parody, satire and stylistic techniques have been used to shape the representation of our understanding of the truth.

This is also evident in the editorial cartoon, which satires John Howard's authority as well as in "The Light of Nights". Also the ACA report is critical of journalism and also uses parody to convey this. And the "Absolutely Fabulous?" article shows the manipulation of our response through images. Frontline shows us through satire that the truth is subjective and that it can be exploited by those in power and the power structure.