

Abigail Tolliver

Media & Politics

Analyzation and Comparison of Media Broadcast

Dr. Staci Rhine

CBS v. BBC - Taking on the News

United States citizens tend to think of themselves as up to date on news in their country and in the world. However, the quality of news they are getting compared to other world powers is quite low. With differently framed and reported media, it is no wonder it seems like we are in a different world than many other large countries.

American broadcasting network CBS's September 10th broadcast consisted of nine stories, ranging between thirty seconds to two minutes each. The broadcast started with a very quick runthrough of what the network considered "breaking news" that they would be covering, with eye catching clips of each. The stories throughout the broadcast were episodically framed, and rarely related to the story before or after them. Stories ranged from weather, to COVID-19, to politics.

Of all of the stories covered on September 10th, all were national news. The only foreign countries mentioned were Russia and China, due to their involvement in election hacking. The broadcast was ended by a story about a special needs child and his mother, who were working with a local organization to learn about life skills, even during the pandemic. The main anchor closed the story with a sentiment, "We needed that story today."

BBC is a media company based in the UK that produces a podcast called Newshour. Not only is the entire broadcast longer than CBS's nightly broadcast, so is each story covered.

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Newshour's September 10th podcast covered a multitude of stories. Of the twelve stories covered, plus sports, each took close to five minutes.

Newshour took stories from all over the world - President Trump's COVID comments, to the wild fires on the United States' West Coast, to stories about wildebeest migration being interrupted by safari camps, to stories in Indonesia and Uganda's recent elections.

These stories were not only covered for many minutes, but had no visuals. This required the anchors to explain in a large amount of depth what was happening, especially to give a sense of how large of an event each really was.

The anchors on BBC also interviewed experts in each topic, whether they had experienced it first hand or were studying it in depth. When speaking about the West Coast Wildfires, anchors quoted local governors on how much damage there was, and how it was truly affecting life for those in the area. Mac Nelson, chief meteorologist from Portland, Oregon's KPTV, spoke on the topic from an expert level for nearly four minutes on the current weather situation, how COVID-19 affected evacuation and the putting out of the fires, the effect on economy in different areas of the coast, and how many fires there truly were at the time.

On the contrary, CBS's broadcast showed many videos of the fires. Words like "drastic", "dangerous", and "deadly" are used often to grab viewers' attention and cling onto

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their emotions. They jump from state to state and to stats with no relation to the one before it, and have no expert analysis on anything that's going on. They speak a great amount on death toll, the children's deaths and health measures. However, they do not talk about the start, how to control or stop them, or any other nonphysical effect the fires are having on people in the region. Many people are quoted without the source beginning named.

All of this is covered in a span of a little over two minutes.

It is instances like this that really show the difference between the two outlets. Stories covering the same topics like the West Coast Wildfires or President Trump's COVID comments. Of all of the stories BBC covered, ten took place outside of the country it was produced in. When it comes to CBS's covered stories, zero out of nine were based outside of the United States.

Looking at the stories covered in CBS's broadcast, the soft news not only starts with flooding and school mass testing, but ending on a happy, lighter toned story to get any bitter tastes out of your mouth before the broadcast is over. When it comes to bitter tastes, the BBC doesn't seem to mind. No heart warming stories were thrown in to make sure listeners were happy, and they did not tip toe around any details that may have sounded displeasing.

CBS's episodic framed lens has shaped every story it has produced into one that the American people can and are willing to focus on. BBC's long winded broadcasts often lose the interest of people at the end of the day. When people come home from a long day at

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work, a broadcast like CBS gives them quick, basic information on things happening directly around them to keep them informed without having to sit, listen, and focus on stories from BBC.

Broadcasts with short segments like CBS can also help push other media outlets, whether it be other broadcasts like BBC or NBC, or print like the New York Times or Washington Post, or scholastic papers from colleges and experts. These segments are meant to catch viewers' attention. If they do, and the viewer is really interested, they will often go search for more information somewhere else.

The lack of international news in CBS broadcasts seemingly makes it more difficult for the American people to understand what is happening outside of their own borders. When it comes to foreign policy, trade, war, what right do the American people have to be shown what is happening in the places where their products are made, their armed forces are sleeping?

However, on the other end of the spectrum, only one story on BBC's podcast pertained to Britain, and it was one of the shorter stories within the podcast. It was almost as if they believed they would not be taken as seriously if they covered their own nation's news.

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It strikes up an odd question about how well people who rely on the BBC for news know what is happening directly around them, whether it's in Britain, or the US, or even Uganda.

Both broadcasts have their positive and negative elements. While most people have a preference, it almost seems as if a mixture of the two would be the most accurate yet time efficient news source.

As we continue living in a world where news is created and broadcasted continuously, without a minute to pause and ask questions, knowing what broadcasts there are and what they can provide is extremely important. Even if one were to watch CBS and BBC, people still don't know as much about what's going on around them as they like to think.

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Appendix

CBS September 10th Broadcast

1. West Coast Wildfires
2. President Trump COVID Comments
3. Foriegn Campaign and Election Hackers
4. Corona Relief Scammers
5. COVID Testing at University of Illinois
6. Officers fired in Texas
7. Relief Bill Goes Unpassed
8. Flash Flooding in DC
9. Special Needs Learning During a Pandemic

BBC September 10th Podcast

1. West Coast Wildfires
2. Fires near Refugee Camp on Greek Island
3. COVID Vaccine Distribution
4. Austrian Drought
5. Ukranian Diplomacy
6. President Trump COVID Comments
7. Brexit Rules Revisited
8. Canadian Prime Minister Scandal
9. Etheopian Electorate
10. Wildebeest Migration
11. Uganda Elections
12. Sports
13. South African Human Rights Lawyer Illness

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