



Tabloid Television: Popular Journalism and the 'Other News' (Communication and Society)

John Langer

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Fires, floods, accidents, celebrity lifestyles, heroic acts of humble people, cute acts by family pets and the weather. Television's non-news about non-events takes up an increasingly large part of contemporary broadcast journalism, but is regularly dismissed by television pundits as having no place on our screens. To its critics, this 'other news' distracts our attention with trivialities and entertainment values, and undermines journalism's relationship with the workings of democracy. Yet, in spite of these protests, this 'lite news' remains as entrenched and as popular as ever.

In *Tabloid Television*, John Langer argues that television's 'other news' must be recognised as equally important as 'hard news' in the building of a genuinely comprehensive study of broadcast journalism. Using narrative analysis, theories of ideology, concepts from genre studies and detailed textual readings, 'other news' is explored as a cultural discourse connected with story-telling, gossip, social memory, the horror film, national identity and the cult of fame. Langer's study also examines the political role played by an allegedly non-political news and explores the links between this type of news and recent broadcasting trends towards 'reality television'.

Tabloid Television, Popular Journalism and the 'Other News' provides an eclectic and intriguing look at one of the most maligned areas of television news. By offering an extended and thoroughly grounded analysis of actual news stories, John Langer locates the question of representational power as one of the central concerns of the media studies agenda and offers some interesting speculation about where television news may be heading.

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