

Compare newsreels  
to television news  
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Compare newsreels to television news today. What do they have in common and how do they differ Naturally, before starting to compare newsreels and television news it is important to understand that both of these Medias are linked for one simple reason: newsreels are the ancestors of television news. That fact can not be argued. Nevertheless, it is obvious that we can find both similarities and differences among them. This is will be the main subject of this essay.

When we talk about Medias, we have to understand that one of the first characteristics that should be addressed is accessibility. Nowadays, there is absolutely no problem for any person to watch television news - the only condition being to own a television set. But newsreels were not access centered. It was about bringing news even if not everyone was able to see it as newsreels were only available in movie theatres - and not in all movie theatres. This fact is also important for another characteristic. Television news today brings us the latest news. We are connected to the entire globe and we are told events that may have occurred a couple of minutes earlier. It was not the case for newsreels which brought images of events which were sometimes one or two weeks old. It was therefore impossible to receive instantaneous news as it is today, and live news could only be a dream for the decades to come. This dream come true thanks to the development of other Medias that help the broadcasting and the making of television news.

Comparing newsreels and television news is not only a matter of accessibility. We also have to consider the format. The newsreels were often short, no longer than fifteen minutes. Today, television news can be an hour long and can present - with more details - several events that happened

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during the day. Newsreels were often commented by an off voice who only described the playing images. In television news there is one - or sometimes two TV hosts - who introduce the subject. When describing a major event, there may be several coverage giving different prospective and even a guest - expert of the subject - to highlight the major points and give a better understanding. Though, we can compare both of the Medias, we must not forget that in a certain point of view, newsreels were made to make the audience wait before a movie. There was not a major focus on news as people were not there to watch what was happening in the world but only entertain themselves. Dedication to newsreels were not as strong as it can be today with television news. We don't watch television news in order to wait for a show. We do it on purpose as we know that they are reliable sources for us to understand today's world.

However, the basics remain the same. In television news as well as in newsreels, we are in the heart of the action and it describes what is happening around us with footage of the happenings. Both of the Medias are witnesses of their time and sometimes newsreels can be more representative as editing was only at its beginning. No wonder that Ian Sellar dedicated an entire movie, " Prague" 1, to newsreels. A Jewish man returns to Prague to find a newsreel presenting footage of his deported family during World War II. First stone of the information world, newsreels remain an important source of knowledge from times when television news was not even a dream.