"You and your friends on the internet" – Hugh Keevins

There it is in a nutshell.

I am sure if we could go back a couple of million years we would hear a diplodocus curse a similar sentiment at a large black dot growing ever bigger in the sky.

The world is changing. You, reader, are changing it. You are changing it merely by reading this

instead of a 30p bit of recycled paper. For so long the views espoused in the old media were taken as truth. They were cast iron. Their utterances shaped governments, outcomes of wars and the minds of the readership. Until somebody decided that they could make an awful lot of money with this sort of power. As this seed of an idea took shape it twisted the old media away from its noble roots to provide checks and balances to those in power and into the grotesque behemoth we have been watching the death of over the past several years.

This leads me to two names, names of men likely unfamiliar with most reading this. These are men whose words will resonate deeply within many Celtic supporters.

Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman.

Herman & Chomsky co-wrote Manufacturing Consent : The Political Economy of the Mass Media. Recent events got me thinking about this seminal work for obvious reasons. Here is a brief synopsis of the work, courtesy of Wikipedia:

Using the propaganda model, Manufacturing Consent posits that corporate - owned news mass communication media — print, radio, television — are businesses subject to commercial

competition for advertising revenue and profit. As such, their distortion (editorial bias) of news reportage — i.e. what types of news, which items, and how they are reported — is a consequence of the profit motive that requires establishing a stable, profitable business; therefore, news businesses favouring profit over the public interest succeed, while those favouring reportorial accuracy over profits fail, and are relegated to the margins of their markets (low sales and ratings).

Anyone who has had the dubious pleasure of listening to any of the old guard on their daily interactions with the public will know how much they bristle if their integrity is questioned. The mere suggestion of there being any sort of editorial bias in Scottish sports reporting is met with incredulity. Never mind any suggestions that the Scottish Sports press prints outright lies to benefit one particular entity. Cast your minds back to last year and the press scandals. Police, government, local authorities all in bed with the media. The rampant agendas and dirty dealings were being laid bare at the very heart of our democracy yet the Scottish Football hacks would have you believe they are the last bastion of journalistic integrity. The final resting place for the spirit of Woodward and Bernstein. The question we have to ask ourselves regarding the propaganda model in Scottish Football is not “is it happening” it is “why would Scottish Football be the only branch of the media that Chomsky & Herman are not correct on”?

The Chomsky & Herman model describe 5 editorial filters that are applied to news reporting in mass media (From Wikipedia):

1. **Size, Ownership, and Profit Orientation:** The dominant mass-media outlets are large firms which are run for profit. Therefore they must cater to the financial interest of their owners -

often corporations or particular controlling investors. The size of the firms is a necessary consequence of the capital requirements for the technology to reach a mass audience.

2. **The Advertising License to Do Business:** Since the majority of the revenue of major media outlets derives from advertising (not from sales or subscriptions), advertisers have acquired a "de-facto licensing authority". [1]
Media outlets are not commercially viable without the support of advertisers. News media must therefore cater to the political prejudices and economic desires of their advertisers. This has weakened the working-class press, for example, and also helps explain the attrition in the number of newspapers.

3. **Sourcing Mass Media News:** Herman and Chomsky argue that “the large bureaucracies of the powerful *subsidize* the mass media, and gain special access [to the news], by their contribution to reducing the media’s costs of acquiring [...] and producing, news. The large entities that provide this subsidy become 'routine' news sources and have privileged access to the gates. Non-routine sources must struggle for access, and may be ignored by the arbitrary decision of the gatekeepers.” [2]

4. **Flak and the Enforcers:** "Flak" refers to negative responses to a media statement or program (e.g. letters, complaints, lawsuits, or legislative actions). Flak can be expensive to the media, either due to loss of advertising revenue, or due to the costs of legal defense or defense of the media outlet's public image. Flak can be organized by powerful, private influence groups (e.g. think tanks). The prospect of eliciting flak can be a deterrent to the reporting of certain kinds of facts or opinions. [2]

5. **Anti-Communism:** This was included as a filter in the original 1988 edition of the book, but Chomsky argues that since the end of the Cold War (1945–91), antic ommunism was replaced by the " War on Terror ", as the major social control mechanism. [3] [4]

Consider the population of Scotland and the inherent social issues within regarding anti-Catholicism and anti-Irish racism. Looking from an economic point of view the bulk of the population will either be pro-Rangers or at least have Rangers sympathies. Applying the Chomsky & Herman filters above to Scottish Sports news and you can easily see why we read and listen to what we do.

The press attitude in Scotland is nothing to do with hating Celtic or loving Rangers (well not always). It is much more simple than that. Money. Pro-Rangers and Anti-Celtic sells. Stories like that hit the largest demographic. It really is that simple.

Now readers I would like you to do something before finishing the article. Click on the following video, leave the music playing, then come back.

{youtube}nr9AcsFlDek{/youtube}

Now consider the position the media find themselves in. The asteroid is en-route, there is no Bruce Willis to blow it up. In Scotland one of their main “bankers” for shifting copies is also dying. Dying clutching a karmic invoice in their hand, the universe seeking reparation for 10 years of cheating. Not just ordinary cheating though, cheating one of the key pillars of their “culture”. Madame Karma adds penalties to the invoice if you add hypocrisy to the original

charge sheet.

The Scottish Sports media is under greater pressure than ever before to get stories to shift papers. As a general rule people will not regularly read bad news about something they love. Denial is the first stage in grief. If the “truth” is printed on a daily basis, readers will leave. They don’t want to read that. Hence we are reading, and hearing what we are. Incredible stories. Ludicrous revisions of the facts. Outlandish claims with no basis in reality. Stories from the same journalists, days apart, in 100% contradiction of each other. It is getting as bad as supposed journalists denying knowledge of the existence of certain websites who have been at the forefront, and have a so far 100% accuracy record, on THE biggest Scottish sports story in history. The media are trying to keep Rangers fans in denial as that is their last chance of a profit. Self preservation does funny things to people.

My friends on the internet be aware of all this in the coming months. As the asteroid grows larger so will the behaviour. The mis-information, lies, revisions and deceits will continue until they can no longer be denied. When you read a Rangers story, or listen to a nasally toned explanation, remember Herman & Chomsky and smile as you now know their modus operandi, and rather than get angry pity them.

We have had to put up with this for all of my life but the end is near, for all of it. It is 2012 after all…..perhaps the Mayans were correct.

It’s been a long time coming…..

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