

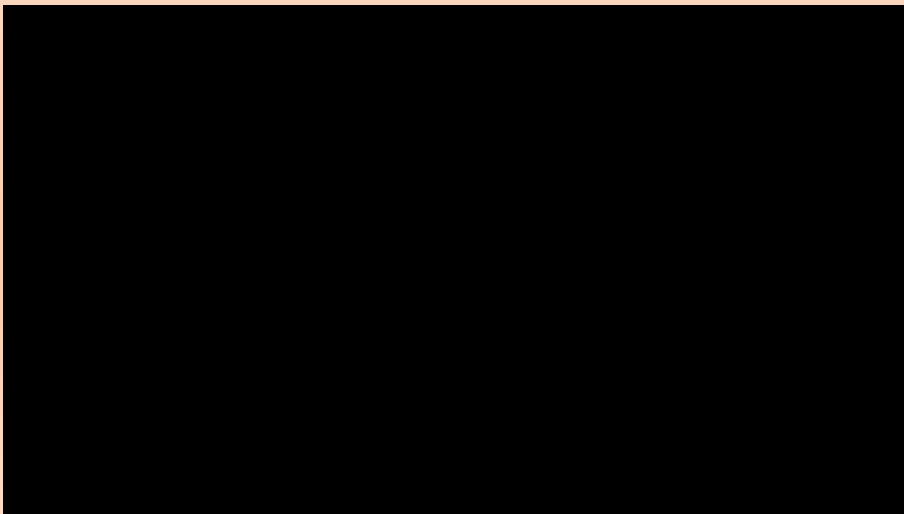
# Unit 6: Linkage Institutions

## Lesson 6.2 – Media Bias



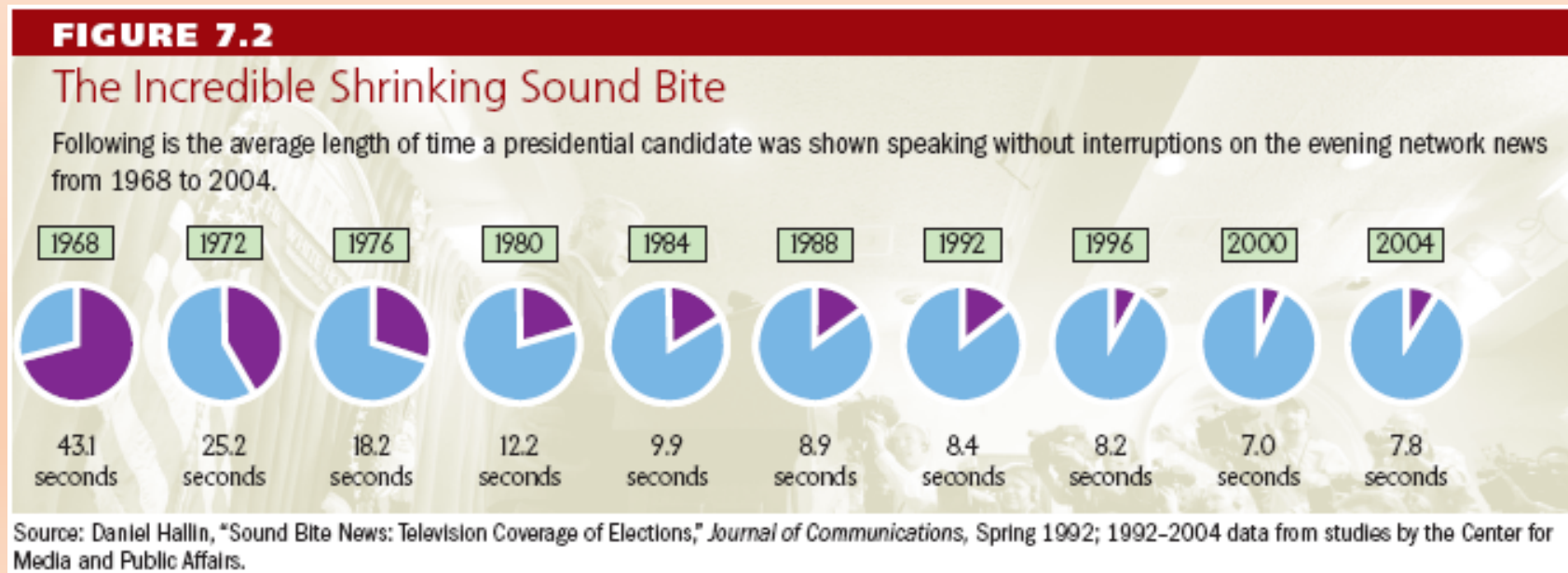
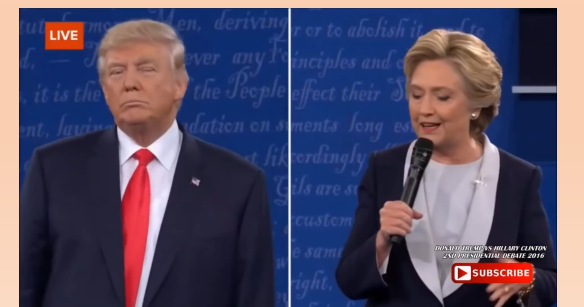
# Reporting the News

- Journalists rely on public officials and established sources to get their information.
- Trial Balloons: Intentional news leak for the purpose of assessing the political reaction.
  - Fed to reporters in the form of information leaked.
- Reporters and their sources depend on each other—one for stories, the other to get them out.



# Reporting the News

- Presenting the News
  - *Superficial* describes most news coverage today.
  - Sound Bites: short video clips of approximately 10 seconds



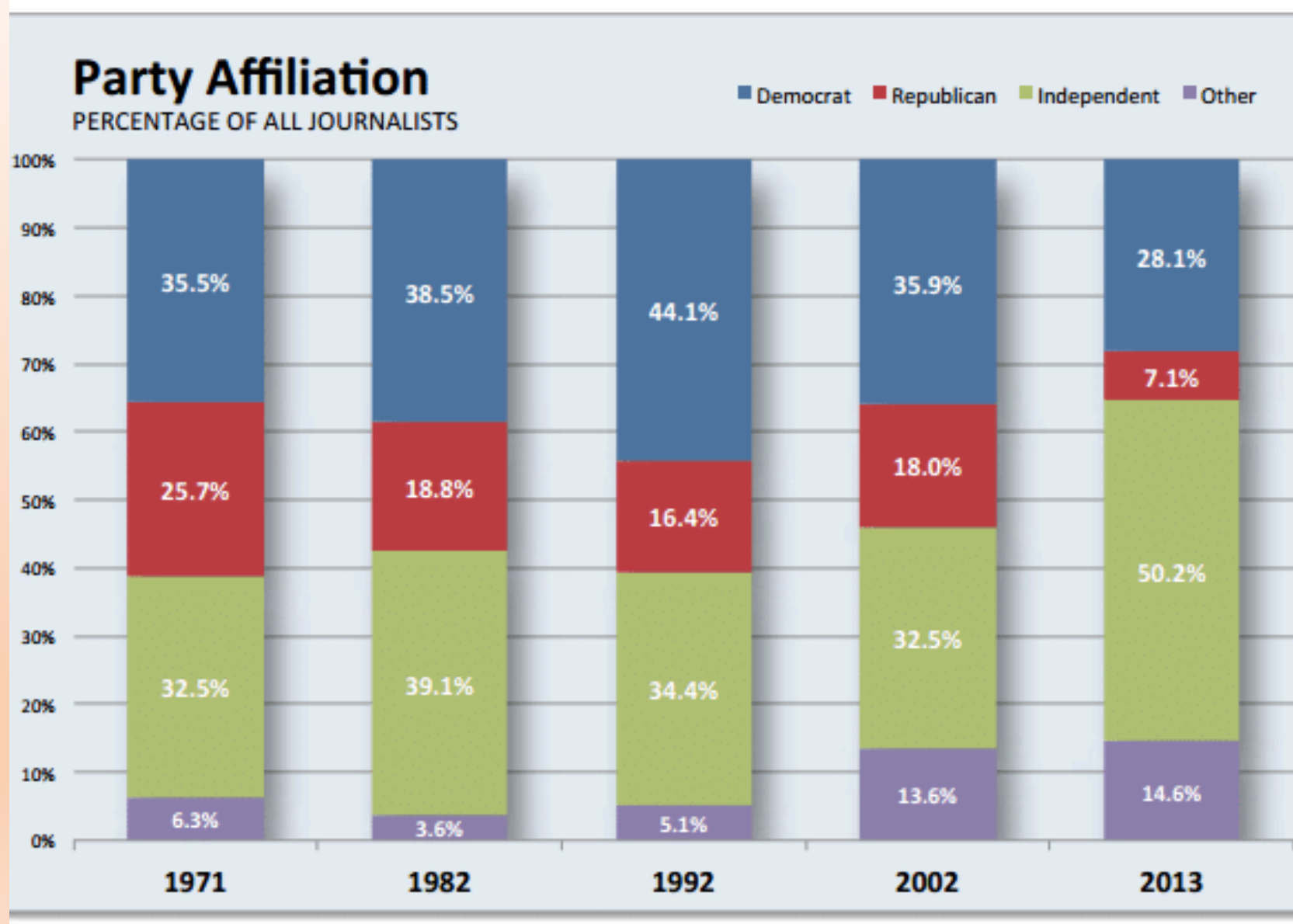


# Bias in the News

- Many people believe the news is biased in favor of one point of view (“Mainstream Media” favors liberals).
- Reporters are more likely to call themselves liberal than the general public.
  - Most stories are presented in a “point/counterpoint” format in which two opposing points of view are presented.
- Generally media it is not very biased toward a particular ideology
  - Biased towards what will draw the largest audience—good pictures and negative reporting.



# Bias in the News



# The News and Public Opinion

Agenda-setting effect -Television news can affect what people think is important.

- Some stories or events can be made more important, others less important, depending on their coverage.
- Media outlets favor of stories with high drama that will attract people's interest (rather than extended analyses of complex issues).
- Bias toward stories that generate good pictures
  - “Talking Heads” – less engaging to viewers



# Reporting the News

**TABLE 7.2**

## Stories Citizens Have Tuned In and Tuned Out

The explosion of the space shuttle <i>Challenger</i> in 1986	80%
Terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon	74%
Impacts of hurricanes Katrina and Rita	73%
Los Angeles riots	70%
Rescue of baby Jessica McClure from a well	69%
School shootings at Columbine High School in Colorado	68%
Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990	66%
Start of hostilities against Iraq in 2003	57%
Supreme Court decision on flag burning	51%
Opening of the Berlin Wall	50%
Arrest of O. J. Simpson	48%
Nuclear accident at Chernobyl	46%
Capture of Saddam Hussein	44%
Controversy over whether Elián González should have to return to Cuba	39%
2000 presidential election outcome	38%
Impeachment trial of President Clinton in the Senate	31%
Confirmation of John Roberts as Chief Justice	28%
Prescription drug benefit added to the Medicare program	25%
2004 Republican National Convention	22%
Release of President Bush's education plan in 2002	21%
Congressional debate about NAFTA	21%
Jack Abramoff's admission that he bribed members of Congress	18%
Ethnic violence in the Darfur region of Sudan	16%
Passage of the Communications Deregulation Bill	12%
Violent protests in Tibet against the Chinese government in 2008	12%
2003 Supreme Court decision upholding campaign finance reform	8%

Source: Pew Research Center for the People and the Press.

# Media and the Scope of Government

- **Watchdog function** of the media *helps to keep government small.*
- Many *observers* feel that the press is *biased against whomever holds office* and that reporters want to expose them in the media.





# The Media

- The media is NOT democratic.
- News outlet focus on one person rather than groups – easier
- The rise of the “*information society*” has not brought about the rise of the “*informed society*.”
  - News provides more entertainment than information; it is not thorough.
  - News is a business, giving people what they want.



# Top News Stories of 2016

