

Appendix 1

CBS NEWS STANDARDS

The Panel addresses in its Report certain of the CBS News Standards. The Panel reproduces in this Appendix the following Standards that are most relevant to matters pertaining to the September 8 Segment:

Personal Standards

General Policy I-1

Politics I-9

Production Standards: Newsgathering

General Policy II-1

Interviews II-3

Confidential and Other Restricted Sources II-6

Handout Footage II-15

Production Standards: Editing and Production

General Policy III-1

Editing III-5

Correction of Errors in CBS News Broadcasts III-11

PERSONNEL STANDARDS

I-1

GENERAL POLICY

Credibility is essential to every news organization. It is a bond between us and our viewers and listeners. Nothing erodes the bond faster than viewers or listeners thinking that we have an axe to grind or that we are beholden to anyone or anything other than fairness and the truth.

Accordingly, employees of CBS News must conduct themselves in a manner that avoids even the appearance of compromising their journalistic independence and integrity.

This means that CBS News employees, both full-time and freelance, must accept no gift or favor of consequence and engage in no activity that may be perceived as damaging their ability to report the news fairly and accurately. This principle applies both to conduct while on Company assignment and to personal affairs.

These rules are not subject to an individual employee's interpretation. As with most of what is spelled out in this book, when in doubt, ask. Your executive producer or bureau chief is the first point of contact. Senior management is also available to discuss these issues.

I. 9 POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

The potential for damage to our credibility is perhaps greatest in the area of politics. In an age when the public trust is strained, fairness and impartiality must be paramount. Therefore, if you wish to run for an important political office or actively support someone who does, you must leave your CBS News job to do it.

Avoid active participation in politics and political campaigns, especially as a candidate, manager, consultant or campaigner. This prohibition includes wearing buttons or otherwise publicly identifying yourself on one side or the other in political campaigns.

Of course, this policy does not prevent an employee from contributing or belonging to a political party or contributing to political campaigns. But, in the unusual case in which your involvement or actions become a public matter or otherwise lead CBS News management to believe that your objectivity (or the appearance of your objectivity) may be compromised, a modification of your cover- age duties or, where this is impractical, a leave of absence may be required.

Exceptions to these general policies may be made, on a case-by-case basis, for employee participation in campaigns for local offices of relatively minor significance or for employees seeking election or appointment to such positions. Approval must be obtained from senior CBS News management before undertaking any political activities of this type.

PRODUCTION STANDARDS NEWSGATHERING

II-1

GENERAL POLICY

Everything we do while covering a story or gathering material for a broadcast must be done within the highest standards of journalistic integrity. An otherwise accurate and useful story may be tarnished in the public eye by sloppy, thoughtless or unethical newsgathering practices.

It is vital that CBS News personnel remain at "arm's length" from the stories we cover and that we not be perceived in the slightest as participants or interested parties.

These standards cannot anticipate every contingency; they merely establish guidelines and foster an attitude that can be broadly applied. CBS News employees are encouraged to discuss the application of these standards with their supervisors and with executives of the CBS News Division.

**PRODUCTION STANDARDS
NEWSGATHERING****II-3****INTERVIEWS**

Interviewing is one of the most basic techniques in reporting a news story. And the ground rules governing the taping of interviews are some of the most important ones in this book.

Any exception to the standards on interviews must have the approval of the president of CBS News or a designated vice president.

Interviews must be unrehearsed; questions may not be submitted in advance. It is permissible, however, to discuss in advance with the subject the general purpose of the interview and the areas that will be covered.

Words or ideas must not be put in a subject's mouth or mind, although it might be appropriate, when a subject has responded to a question with a particularly convoluted or technical explanation, to say, for instance, "I didn't understand that. Can you explain it more simply?" It is not permissible to say, "Say it this way...."

While not encouraged, an agreement to exclude a question or area of questioning may occasionally be granted. The management of CBS News must be informed of the agreement before the interview occurs. This agreement must be mentioned in the broadcast on which the interview is shown.

Generally, the subject of a voluntarily granted interview may not later prohibit us from broadcasting it. However, if such a demand is made, senior management must be informed immediately.

The raw or edited film, tape or transcript of an interview may not be shown to the interviewee or a representative in advance of its airing, nor may the interviewee or his or her representative participate in editing the interview. Moreover, the

II-3 CONTINUED

unedited film, tape or transcripts may not be shown to the interviewee or his or her representative, even after the edited interview is broadcast.

When principal interviews are made with two cameras, real-time reaction shots and questions should be used in editing. In editing single-camera interviews, it is almost always preferable to use dissolves or wipes to cover jump cuts, rather than to strain for cutaways, but there may be times when the reporter or producer feels that reaction shots and reverse questions made out of real-time sequence are necessary.* In such cases, the subject must be made aware of what we are doing and why, and, if questions are to be repeated, the subject or his or her representative is to be given the opportunity to be present during the recording of those questions.

The subject of an interview shall have no voice in the selection of the CBS News employee who will conduct, produce or record the interview, or in which CBS News broadcast the interview will appear, and no agreement should be made to limit the reuse of the interview or any portion of it.

All recorded interviews are subject to editing, and no CBS News employee may represent to anyone that an interview will be carried in full or unedited.

Interviewees may not be paid for appearances in CBS News broadcasts.

Informants, consultants, experts, researchers, freelance reporters and others who furnish assistance in the coverage of news stories may be paid for their services, but if they are also interviewed for use in the broadcast, their financial relationship to CBS News must be made clear as part of the interview, as in the super "CBS News Consultant."

*See Section III-5.

**PRODUCTION STANDARDS
NEWSGATHERING**

II-6

**CONFIDENTIAL AND OTHER
RESTRICTED SOURCES***

Our goal in gathering information for broadcast is that everything we learn from sources be "on the record." Experience teaches that almost all information will be available from an open source if we try hard enough to find it. Off-the-record, not-for-attribution or on-deep-background status is often used by government officials and others to manipulate public opinion; therefore, the agenda and motives of those giving this information should be carefully considered.

Off-the-record interviews are especially to be avoided with a subject of a story who has declined our request for an interview. Obviously, we cannot force anyone to grant an interview; we have no subpoena power. We will consider anything that an individual or company wishes to tell us, in person or in writing, just as we would any other piece of information, but it must be open and attributable.

There are, however, instances—particularly when people who we believe possess important information feel they would be subject to danger or reprisal if their identities were revealed—in which promises of confidentiality may be warranted. The nature of the confidentiality should be precisely defined. When we strike an agreement to protect a source, we take on responsibility to fulfill every aspect of that agreement. In this connection, keep in mind that the identity of a confidential source and the circumstances of any offer of confidentiality must be disclosed to management if requested.

*See Section IV-3.

II-6 CONTINUED

In the use of confidential information, however, every effort, consistent with the confidentiality agreement, should be made to characterize the source, so that the viewer may evaluate what weight to give to the information provided.

If it is necessary to disguise the identity of a subject as a condition of using an interview in a broadcast, we must always indicate that the subject's face or voice has been altered.

**PRODUCTION STANDARDS
NEWSGATHERING****II-15****HANDOUT FOOTAGE**

There have been countless examples of altered or misleading videotapes or documents being given to reporters covering a story in an effort to influence coverage. Therefore, CBS News personnel in the field who are given or otherwise acquire tapes or other material from non-CBS News sources must be satisfied that the material is what it purports to be. If there is doubt or uncertainty, it must be communicated to the appropriate broadcast personnel. The source of the handout footage must be clearly identified in the broadcast.*

There may be cases in which a CBS News employee obtains handout footage and, while choosing not to use it in a CBS News broadcast, fulfills an affiliate's request for the footage. In such cases, CBS News employees will clearly label the footage for clients.

*For further discussion of handout footage in editing, see Section III-3.

**PRODUCTION STANDARDS
EDITING AND PRODUCTION**

III-1

GENERAL POLICY

Just as in the gathering of news, the guiding principle of broadcast news production is that everything must be exactly what it purports to be. Because there are so many ways in which reality can be distorted, even if unintentionally, all steps in the editing process must scrupulously reflect what actually happened.

New technology makes it possible to create a false impression of reality. Therefore, while animation, graphics and similar technical devices are valuable tools, their use must be made explicitly clear to a viewer or listener.

III-5**EDITING**

Editing is essential to the practice of journalism. We must make every effort to ensure that our editing reflects fairly, honestly and without distortion what was seen and heard by our reporters and recorded by our cameras and microphones. The editing process requires careful news judgments geared to the individual facts of each situation.

Interviews are to be edited in a straightforward manner, preserving the sense of the interview. Even a short sound bite should accurately reflect the spirit of the entire interview. An answer may not be taken out of context if the result is to distort the original meaning. If a question to an interview subject is used, the answer must be to that specific question. The question and the answer may be edited, but not in a way that would distort the meaning of either. Answers to different questions may not be combined to give the impression of one continuous response. In short, we cannot create an answer merely because we wish the subject had said it better.

In the editing of an interview, cutaway shots or reverse questions may be used (see Section II-3 for shooting cutaways and reverse questions in the field). But the cutaways and reverses must not distort what actually occurred. The correspondent may register appropriate visual expressions, such as smiling at a joke. In all cases, however, the correspondent must be careful that casual expressions do not convey approval or disapproval of what is being said.

The narration leading to a sound bite must reflect the question that elicited the response. For

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III-5 CONTINUED

example, we cannot say, in leading into an expert on explosives, "We asked Dr. Doe how the bomb that killed eight people was constructed," when the original question was, "How do you make a homemade bomb?"

III-11**CORRECTION OF ERRORS IN
CBS NEWS BROADCASTS**

Our reputation for accuracy in reporting depends upon our efforts to get the story right or, if we get it wrong, to broadcast a correction. Significant errors of fact must be corrected clearly and promptly in the broadcast in which the error was made. If the error is made in a documentary or other one-time broadcast, the president of CBS News will decide where the correction will appear.

It must be clear in the correcting broadcast that we are broadcasting a correction. Consequently:

- It is not sufficient merely to report that the statement included in the original broadcast has been denied, if we now know that the statement is wrong. The accuracy of the denial must be specifically confirmed.
- It is not sufficient merely to include the accurate information in the correcting broadcast. The fact that it is a correction must be specifically noted.
- It is not sufficient merely to broadcast a letter from a viewer or listener which asserts that we were in error, if in fact we were. The accuracy of the assertion must be specifically admitted.

Any complaints of unfairness or inaccuracy should be brought promptly to the attention of senior management. In any operation as complex as ours, errors are bound to be made, and it is important to deal with them directly and expeditiously.