Who Writes Our Cultural Narratives?

Media often tells us which narratives are important and which are not. By investigating the media’s coverage surrounding Hurricane Katrina, I was able to get a clear picture of what news the government and mass media considered to be priority. Sadly, for those citizens that are not aware or self-motivated, this is the only narrative they are ever exposed to. The first part of my project will focus on which narratives were told and which narratives were neglected.

Capital, power, and political motivation determine who has the ability to write our cultural narratives. Those who have the most of each will have the largest impact on the media that we consume every day. Large corporations and the government are the typically those who benefit from this system of influence. The second part of my project will focus on the disjoint between the gatekeepers of media and the consumers of media. They try to silence the voices of those that defy their rigid narratives. When the media failed the victims of Hurricane Katrina, they decided to make their own; they made graffiti, art, books, photography, and music. The third part of my project will focus on these alternative narratives and the media that was born out of them.

Media within media seemed like a really cool approach to my project. I decided to make my project look like media itself--advertisements, magazine pages, and newspaper articles.