

The positive and negative effects of the media on society



Effects of Media on Society The use of media in society has been around for many decades. What started out as newspapers, periodicals, and radio broadcasts has expanded to include television and the Internet. As such, media is easily accessible and has become a vital part of the everyday lives of billions of people. Media has many useful and positively beneficial aspects, such as providing people with immediate information about goings-on throughout the world. However, media does not come without its negative effects as well, which include both intellectual and physical ramifications. The media exists to educate people about the world around them. It is a tool of intelligence and education, and people that implement media into their daily routine find themselves gaining much insight about events and situations taking place all throughout the world. One of the greatest, positive perks of the media is how quickly the information and news are able to spread. If a terrorist attack against the United States were to be thwarted in another country, most Americans would know about it within minutes (Robinson 15). If a child were kidnapped in a small California town, the rest of California would be informed of it in the timeliest manner. Media has allowed people to be well-informed without letting time or distance get in the way of obtaining important knowledge. While media may be beneficial in keeping people filled in with up-to-date information, there are sides to media that are not as useful. Media has the ability to influence the way that people think and it has the habit of providing viewers, especially impressionable children and teenagers, with facts and images that are misleading and sometimes dangerous. People are presented with images of beauty and lifestyles that appear desirable, though they are really damaging. Many celebrities, for example, promote extreme thinness as beautiful, prompting

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ordinary people to go to unhealthy measures to become just as thin (Steyer 43). Similarly, media depicts actions that are not condoned in normal society. Television shows that glamorize teenage pregnancy will only increase this issue among normal teenagers. Movies that show graphic violence, excessive use of drugs and alcohol, or promiscuity will cause others to mock these lifestyles. A thin line is drawn between fiction and reality and a large portion of society is always on the verge of crossing it. The effects of media also have the ability to be neutral to society. Media provides people with news, information, and debates that are taking place around the world. It can help form the views of society by supplying vital information or facts from both sides of an issue. This allows society to know everything that is taking place. However, this ability brings with it the power to be biased or prejudice with certain information (Bryant & Thompson 239). Some news programs get their information wrong, or otherwise alter the facts if they think they can benefit from it. People cease to think for themselves, or else they believe something that may or may not be true. Media was created with positive intentions, but it has proven to be both beneficial and harmful to society. It all depends on what individuals take from media and how far they are willing to allow it to influence their lives. People can watch news bulletins to understand what is going on in their own communities or in other parts of the world, but they must remember that they can still make opinions outside of those being revealed on the bulletin. Likewise, there needs to be a stronger grasp on reality so that society does not continue to fall prey to the negative images and lifestyles that media displays. Works Cited Bryant,

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