

Mass media creates  
rather than reflects  
social reality media  
essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

The modern society is surrounded by different types of media that present multifarious information. This is done in a gratuitous manner whether with or without the consent of the audience. It has been argued by some that the media's role has extended from the conventional reflection of societal values to the creation of new values. This is a complex and controversial matter though. However, this article's final stand is that the media is an amplifier of underlying societal values. Some of the content is distorted, even though one cannot down play the inherent significance of the media's belonging to the society (Lull, 2000, p. 37).

The media has rapidly developed with the advent in information technology. It has become easier to access information in contemporary times than it was some few decades ago. This has been through smart gadgets and technologies such as phones, and the internet, and social networking sites such as Facebook, My Space, and Tweeter among others. Virtually everything is going 'e', from e-mails to e-newspapers. This has made it so easy to communicate; you could easily speak your mind and even show the world what you've got through YouTube (Kuerschner, 2006, p. 11).

When one is sitting in their living room to watch music videos from MTV, different interpretations arise, but one thing is common-MTV clearly displays the way music has developed. MTV has generally been a symbol of those who are young and jaunty. The music, the lifestyle of rap stars, rock stars, pop stars have liberally set new criterions, which are earnestly followed by the young. MTV has increased its presence in oriental countries; this has been observed as an invasion from the West and a destruction of conventional values. There has been a creation of new 'styles' of walking,  
<https://assignbuster.com/mass-media-creates-rather-than-reflects-social-reality-media-essay/>

talking, clothing, and consequently thinking for the young oriental minds. For example, MTV's era in Japan is quickly associated with the birth of the rebellious Japanese adolescents. However, it is sincerely wrong to believe that the MTV itself creates reality from nowhere or to conclude that the MTV is responsible for all changes in the contemporary technologically advanced Japan. The MTV has actually been successful in the western world, and then in the rest of the world simply because it has continued to support and magnify the values that are inherently held and nurtured by these societies. The contemporary society is more liberal, more spontaneous, and more rebellious; this may be as a result of industrialization, and the media serves as an amplifier of such values. If the modern media would instead assume a more conservative figure, the expected result would be its extinction.

(Connell, 1995, p. 9)

Information has a significant effect on people lives. For example watching the world cup can make one to experience a gamut of emotions, a sense of delight, nervousness and even resentment at the same time. Watching movies can take someone's mind away from reality; this may bring inspiration to do act in a certain way. Therefore, information has created a myriad of avenues to the society but at the same time the society has become heavily dependent on these avenues (Newbold et al., 2002, p. 31).

The film making industry is another noteworthy example. Several changes have occurred in this industry and the modern filming industry has witnessed radical changes in the physical appearance of actors and actresses. Main actresses have become symbols of beauty. Modern movies depict beauty as tall and slim. More evidence can be seen from the modern posters and <https://assignbuster.com/mass-media-creates-rather-than-reflects-social-reality-media-essay/>

magazine covers display of images of women. The social appetite and taste for the woman body have really changed over time. The figure of a man is displayed as tall and well built (Parenti 1990, p. 6). The media has significantly propagated a certain type of beauty. Think about it this way, what if the media starts to promote short and fat model of beauty, would it be successful? This question may receive more 'No' than 'yes', this means a doubt in the ability of the media to create the beauty that is not inherently held by the society. Another example is watching a movie of the hero robbing a bank with striking ingenuity; this instills negative messages into the masses (McGillion, C., 2003, p. 33). Generally stealing is wrong, but the 'hero' of the movie walks out free, and goes to have fun without any conscience. Such movies create negative values that are against the principles of honesty (Barr, 2000, para. 2).

However, the media plays a significant role in presenting facts and realities say from newspapers on development, finance, justice, poverty, e. t. c, which are real reflections of what is happening in the society (Newbold, 2002, pp. 219). The values and mentality of the society is displayed as a whole rather than as an individual. Renowned scholar James Curran argued that "The conviction ... that the media are important agencies of influence is broadly correct. However, the ways in which the media exert influence are complex and contingent" (p. 158). For example the way the media has reported on terrorism has really instilled fear in the minds of people (Cozens, 2006). The loathing of terrorism has on the other hand turned others into pacifist. The media is arguably the most important form of expressing views and it is itself a medley of individual's and society's views (Fiske 1989, p. 127).

With all these said, some view the media as being liberal but a closer analysis reveals otherwise, the owners of media outlets are not liberal themselves. Media outlets are businesses that are kept afloat by advertising revenues. It is true that some media outlets do a good job of being impartial. But when a TV station backs a political candidate who is sponsored by business heavy weights it must pay the price (Kalathi, S, 2004, p. 40). Money of course directly buys influence as a result it affects how media covers a certain event (Price, 2002, p. 13). It is a medium for the ruling class to “perpetuate their power, wealth and status” (Barr, 2000, p. 17). Therefore, the media in this sense does not reflect reality (Curran, 2002, p. 45).

## Conclusion

The thesis of this paper is that the media does play a role in creating reality from underlying societal values. Thus, the media cannot create values of its own. The article puts the relative advantage and disadvantage of the power of the media in creating reality, with an emphasis on the way the society has inherently allowed this to happen.