

Essay on television broadcast news

[Media](#), [Television](#)



In today's journalistic world it is sometimes difficult to decipher between news broadcasts rendered as credible information as opposed to merely entertainment. It is safe to say that the media does have a responsibility in reporting the news truthfully and with honesty. As we begin to look more closely on the role of the News Media, local and national, we will find many interesting facets of the broadcasts to be analyzed. It is also expected that the media deliver news that is detailed, informative and credible.

Unfortunately the content of the information sometimes broadcasts has other insignificant focuses such as, news regarding celebrities, entertainment (especially here in Los Angeles so close to Hollywood) and other tragic but unnecessary news. The content seems at times unimportant, weak, and falsely dramatic rather than a factual honest and necessary report of important occurrences local, national and international. At times the news seems more like a dramatic soap opera rather than news. Competition and monetary gain seems to drive the media to serve information that can be sometimes manipulated or sometimes just simply inappropriate.

Another facet of the news media is the status of female anchors and reporters on network and local newscasts, which will be examined in this paper. It is important to note that the media has been known to be a field influenced by gender, racial and ethnic biases. These important topics will also be examined. It seems that the News Media is not very particular in choosing quality journalism these days. Some exceptions do exist although it seems that shows which function as informative shows are merely just entertainment and tabloid-like journalism.

Such shows include, “ Entertainment tonight”, “ The E channel” programs, “ Inside Edition”, and “ Access Hollywood” to name a few. Even reality shows like “ Cops” which are credible and reflect real life experiences are packaged for entertainment and sensationalist viewing. Also, when analyzing the role of local and national television broadcast news we still need to view the content of these programs with a grain of salt. News broadcasters are more influenced by events that will cause an immediate impact and sensational effect on the viewers than actual, credible and significant news.

It is common for news broadcasters to begin the news with such broadcasts covering such events as a “ Wild Pursuit” or freeway car chase. Or, other such glamorized topics may include the arrest of famous actors or musicians whom have committed crimes. The O. J. Simpson case was a perfect example of such media frenzy or, the famous pop musician George Michaels being arrested for masturbating in the Beverly Hills Park restroom. How can the media choose to cover such insignificant events when the local areas, the nation or the international community has so many other important social, economical, political and humanitarian problems and events that are hardly addressed.

Also, when we pursue to analyze the credibility of broadcasters, how are we sure that the information given to us is factual? Are we to believe everything that CNN reports is untainted and free of excessive nonfactual events and information? It would be justified to question the source of reported events and news stories. There has been so many times in which different views and different versions of the same story have been reported by varying news

channels. Therefore it is sometimes difficult to decipher between fact or fiction and credible information or merely entertainment.

It is also interesting to note that the media tries to maintain an air of social and political correctness when it comes to choosing its journalists although certain biases still due exists in the journalistic field. It is only in recent times that the news media has decided to hire more ethnically diverse journalists. Also in a field that had been mostly dominated by men, in recent times we have seen the hiring of more female anchors, reporters and journalists. Sometimes broadcasters use attractive journalists to gain the interest of the viewers.

One of the most important TV news personalities of the last 40 years has been the famous Barbara Walters. She is one of the first women to gain acceptability and credibility from television news viewers. Also Christian Amanpour remains the first female TV broadcaster in our history who commands the same kind of respect as the long line of father figures that started with Murrow and continues with Rather, Brokaw and Jennings. Women journalists such as Walters and Amanpour have gained respect and stardom through many years of hard work and struggle through journalism.

Nowadays, historic news stories have become the journalistic fast track to celebrity. And this happens so routinely that the search for the new media stars automatically built into coverage of the events themselves. Within hours of the attack on the World Trade Center, you could already hear people in the media world asking, “ Who’s going to be made by this one? ” Such celebrity came to female anchorwoman Ashleigh Banfield, a 33-year-

old Canadian-born journalist when on September 11, Banfield covered groundzero in New York for MSNBC.

Standing firm as she became coated with ash, network executives were so dazzled by her on-camera savvy that, although she had almost as little international knowledge as our president, they jetted her off to Pakistan, where she began anchoring the week-nightly news show “ Region in Conflict.” Since then, she seems to have been everywhere for the cable channels covering a variety of important news stories and issues. A similar story occurred when Andrea Thompson made headlines when she recently revealed that she was quitting ABC’s “ N. Y. P.

D Blue” to do a three-month tryout at the CBS affiliate in Albuquerque, N. M. to become a TV anchorwoman. Shortly after Andrea Thompson was hired by the CNN as an anchor. The 39-year-old actress and model has said that she believes her skills as an actress are transferable to TV news, even though she does not have any background in journalism. Although it’s not a matter of acting the news, it’s hard to fake a journalism background if you do not have one. Again this proves how today’s news media functions more as entertainment than credible responsible journalism.

Some may say that it does not take any journalism skill to read a news script, and most stations want an appealing person, so why not have a pretty person reading a copy of the news? Personally I believe that this is unfair to other journalists male or female who have pursued a career studying and experiencing modern journalism. It is unfair to hire “ sexy” or “ sexual – attractive” journalists to report the news when the most important factor is the content and truthfulness of the news itself. It may be appropriate to

flaunt ones sexuality in the fictional soap opera or fictional TV show arena, but not in the modern journalistic forum.

Gender and sexuality should not be a factor. It would be hopeful to expect the News Media to cover more events with greater importance and significance to all people rather than to use journalism as a form of entertainment for the masses. Furthermore, it seems to me that the actual event and truth in media shouldn't be tainted by such factors such as gender, ethnicity, age or how one presents him or herself physically, the events and news topics covered should speak for themselves, not the other way around.