

Essay on do the
media present the
news accurately is
the media slanted
from the c...

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



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Introduction

Conceivably, the most important roles that the media plays is reporting and informing the public. As such, media forms an integral part of the contemporary society with news coming from all corners of the world.

However, a big question presents itself. Do media present the news accurately? Freedom of expression is a fundamental right contained in almost all constitutions and thus giving the media the freedom and the mandate to report without fear of victimization . However, it cannot be disputed that the media has of late overstepped its mandate or abused this fundamental right. With the current global trend of money-mindedness and desire for quick money, it cannot be categorically confirmed that some media houses, if not all are sometimes falling victims of biasness in order to meet the expectations of their audience and bag in that extra dollar.

With the way, the media has handled the debate surrounding the legalization of marijuana it can be out rightly stated that the media is by hook or by crook failing in its mandate to report and present news accurately. The media has power to influence, make and break an individual's public image or reputation. News articles from reputable media houses have shown

weaknesses in terms of the accurateness of the information they present and seems slanted from country that they are reporting.

In the current world where business rings in everyone's mind, there is a tendency to use popular individual to attract an audience. There is a growing trend by media house to beat competition and grab a larger market share through a strategic plan to generate a controversial society issue and back it up with opinions of renowned personalities. This approach depends on the level of attraction a news article may have on the intended audience. Simply, when opposing the view of a popular political figure, there is a tendency to refer to them in coded names. Such an approach seems to work out well for the masses that are against the opinion of such a leader. In the debate on marijuana, part of the article reads " The burnout essentially declared himself king with his proclamation that if the Congress doesn't bend to his will he would simply use his pen to write executive orders." Referring to the president Obama as ' pothead' and in a previous statement to Clinton as the ' I dint inhale it' is a coded language that would work well for the audience as they would seek to know more about the coded names. If a reader refers to the president in such a, manner within a peer discussion, the likelihood is that some member will want to know the source of the manes and refer to the same story. This would be a kind of advertisement in favor of the media house. In another article on Townhall. com, still on issues relating to marijuana legalization, a catching statement appears " Whether you find that analogy insulting probably depends on whether you smoke a lot of pot (or if you're a " Belieber")". The term ' Belieber' has been cloned from Justin Bieber's, a renowned star in the entertainment industry. In this situation, his

character has been synchronized to portray the effects of marijuana. While the same message would be relayed through the use of a formal name to describe this character, the financial benefits arising from associating a serious social debate with a renowned person like Bieber are massive. In relation to article on marijuana legalization, The Huffington Post paints a completely different picture of how the media should relate to the society. The graphical and informal approach that Huffington Post has taken in advocating for the legalization of marijuana portrays how the media has lost its aura of educating the masses and concentrated on gaining more numbers to achieve its business objectives. that article " This Is Why Marijuana Should Be Legal Everywhere" gives ten reasons as to why marijuana should be legalized. The reasons offered are just lame and unfounded. A few of them include " No one has ever died of a marijuana overdose", " Cannabis can be a safe and useful sleep aid", " So many extremely successful people smoke marijuana" and concludes by summing it up that " Legalization would be a beautiful thing." The Huffington Post is not a blog site but a reputable media house with great influence on the society. This is to what would have been expected of them in such a weighty matter. However, the need to gain a foothold and remain relevant has called for drastic measures within the media sector to the devastating effects of the recipients attitudes and the society in general.

Media as a reporting tool has been converted to a weapon to settle old scores, particularly political. Say, a journalist picks a topic that will draw controversy and use that to attack a foe. In one of the articles in Godfather Politics, " Pothead President Encourages Lighting Up", from the way the

article handles the issue of legalization of marijuana using the president as a point of reference clearly shows that his original intention was not to report or inform the public. For instance, regarding a whole president as “ pothead” is unethical and this questions the accuracy of the article. “ There's also evidence that Obama may have sold drugs out of a hot dog cart during his youth in Hawaii”-this statement does not come with enough evidence to cement his allegations and can be termed as attack on an individual's character. This evidently shows that the media has overstepped the boundary and bias stands in the centre of the industry as a whole.

On the other hand, media seems to have blown the entire debate on legalization of marijuana out of proportion. It seems that its intention in reporting is to attract more debate or conspiracy around the topic than it deserves. This may be as a way to remain relevant to its audience. A statement found within the Town Hall magazine, “ It's such a big day in history,” Harris, told the Washington Times. “ The fact that we don't have to be criminals and can just smoke, and not be looked down on, or have to mess with the local police”, is a clear indication that apart from reporting, the media has other objectives. Moreover, the accuracy of the information cannot be confirmed and neither can the identity of “ Harris” be confirmed. An article found in the Washington Post by E. J. Dionne titled, “ Marijuana injustices need to end” seems to take the debate on the legalization of marijuana to a different twist involving races that is uncalled. “ In the states with the worst disparities,” the report noted, “ Blacks were on average over six times more likely to be arrested for marijuana possession than whites. In the worst offending counties across the country, Blacks were over 10, 15,

even 30 times more likely to be arrested than white residents of the same county." This is sensationalism. The author seeks to divert the public attention from the debate of marijuana to another debate that involves race. In media, reporting sensationalism is a type of bias that seeks to favor the exceptional than the common.

Mainstream bias is also evident within the media from the way the issue of marijuana is handled. Mainstream bias seeks to report what everybody is reporting to avoid offending anyone. The news articles seem to be divided into two in terms of opinion. There are those that are reporting in order to please an audience that is ' pro' and others reporting to an audience that is ' anti' legalization of marijuana. For instance the Washington Post and the Wall street journal seems to target a pro marijuana legalization audience. On the other hand, Huffington Post seems to target an anti marijuana legalization post.

Conclusion

As seen from the above in-depth look at various news articles on legalization of marijuana, it is evident that the media is failing to report accurately and seems biased. With even reputable media houses such as the Washington post taking this direction, there seems that the problem is deep-rooted in the entire media industry.

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