

Detecting media bias



Media Bias Part A For this particular assignment, I chose to concentrate on the local Bay Area news as covered by KTVU. It appears that two unidentified persons committed suicide at a local San Jose strip mall and police were called to the scene. This particular news item was the result of real time reporting and is a perfect example of the way the media can prove to report the news, without really giving any real information in the story.

This particular story was written by in such an obvious rush by the beat reporter that there were certain grammatical errors and a tremendous amount of missing information about the dead people. There was even a story about a toddler who was found in a car seat but whose connection to the previous story remained unclear. Since there was very little information to go by at the time of the reporting, I firmly believe that this article lacked the depth and breadth of an accurate news report. It reported unconfirmed information and relied on hearsay rather than verified data from the police and mall authorities.

It would appear that the facts as reported in the story were only based upon the little information that the reporter could either verify from the authorities or heard from some witnesses on the ground. Therefore, it is hard to say if the writer actually had an inclination to report the story in one particular way or if he had intentionally or unintentionally misrepresented facts in the story.

There were certainly questionable assumptions made within the story as the reporter questioned a particular witness about what he thought he heard and saw prior to and during the suicide. I find it disturbing that he took the word of an untrained bystander when reporting about the kind of gun and bullet that was used in the successful suicide attempt. He took the witnesses word for it when he said that there was little to no blood on the scene. The man

was simply having a meal at McDonalds when the event occurred. He was not identified as any sort of medical professional, coroner, or member of the police force who had the authority to make such pronouncements about the victims.

The emphasis of the story was supposed to be on the double suicide that took place. The news reporting was so scattered that it was really difficult for readers to identify what story the beat reported was trying to tell. He ended up maximizing his word count without informing the readers about what really happened, who those people where, why they committed suicide, and if they were related to the abandoned child that was found in one of the cars parked at the mall.

Due to the haphazard reporting done by this reporter, it became quite evident that readers must learn how to be critical of the things that they read. This is because reporting the news and actually reporting informative news are two different things.

References

N. A. (2012). 2 dead in apparent murder-suicide at San Jose mall. ktvu. com. retrieved from <http://www.ktvu.com/news/news/crime-law/man-woman-found-dead-san-jose-shopping-center/nMY8f/>