

Americans misinformation on public affairs and politics and how to change it

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Americans have moved from the age of enlightenment to a misinformed era. The mass media has a tendency of giving a biased view of their reports to have a growth on their ratings. It is impossible to get precise facts from the worldwide web. The American education system gets peppered with theoretical preconceptions about politics. Popular culture has become barraged by sinister tactics by the political class to win votes from the electorate. Families become swayed by the peppered education system, the bias media, the unreliable internet sources and popular culture (Barker 22). Americans have become so gullible and almost buy everything they hear. When a silver tongued politician or talk show host amuses them, they are naive enough to acknowledge the idea sold to them. It is easier for them to believe the politicians' or talk show hosts' words than engaging in studying an issue to get the facts right (Gilens 39). A lot of Americans have allowed radical talk show hosts to formulate opinions for them talk as they get paid millions, not because the talk show hosts are " patriotic Americans" but rather because they have the silver tongued salesman ability to make Americans to believe what they say. It makes those who hold a contrary opinion think they are wrong. This denies the general public a mind of their own they get misinformed on public affairs and politics. Another reason why most American citizens get misinformed on politics and public affairs is that they are generally ignorant, unaware and unworried about their ignorance. Most of them spend a lot of time watching and participating in reality television programs, technology, game shows, sports, entertainment gossip and hobbies rather than on politics of the day. Critical analysis of legislative

issues and public affairs are not common amongst most citizens. Although a substantial number of reputable citizens engage in public policy, their participation often become misinformed and shallow (Barker 101). Many Americans become disillusioned on the role of public service and politics. Perhaps they become unaware of the benefit of their participation on political issues. Majority of Americans are not ready to become responsible citizens of the United States. The public's ignorance about politics and public affairs threatens America's survival. The lack of interest by many Americans in things foreign is a reason for lack of interest on public affairs. For example, issues concerning uprisings and wars in other countries in the world get considered as foreign and do not affect them (Bond 49). This is a misplaced assumption that should be gotten rid of. Popular culture gets controlled by profitable interests. The American education system is to blame since it gets overburdened with non-academic and half-academic packages. The education system sacrifices studies on politics and world history for courses centered on pop psychology. Most American students are well informed on pop music and celebrities because they have become surrounded by them. This gets provided to them from different sources. The basic American youth philosophy is anti-intellectual. This makes them grow into adults who cannot think critically on issues political. Most youths become interested in discussing pop culture and entertainment but not current world trends. Measures to change on misinformation on public affairs To change this ideology of disinterest, ignorance and gullibility on matters political and public affairs, then the education system should be changed to integrate more politics and government studies in school to enhance a critical analysis

of the political issues. This will make the youths grow into responsible adults who are critical thinkers and can question the political system. The media too should change the way they report their news. They should do this in a neutral way. The media should not make or take any political affiliations. The media should inform the public accordingly on political issues. Freedom of speech is a two edged sword; it may provide a flow of ideas and information, but can also be used to spread unimaginable lies. The only defense we have against misinformation is common sense and the readiness to struggle to unearth the truth. American should develop an internal interest for public information to equip them against misinformation by the media. As the adage goes, “ do not believe any information you hear and only half of what you see”. Americans should make independent opinions and not base their judgment on what they are told or hear. Works Cited Barker, David Christopher. *Rushed to Judgment: Talk Radio, American Political Behavior, and Persuasion*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2002. Print Bond, Jon R. *The Promise and Performance of American Democracy*. New York: Cengage Learning, 2011. Print Bryan D Jones, Frank R. *Agendas and Instability in American Politics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009. Print Gilens, Martin. *Why Americans Hate Welfare: Race, Media, and the Politics of Antipoverty Policy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000. Print Glenn, Jack. *Once Upon an Oldman: Special Interest Politics*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2000. Print