

Influence of mass media on american culture



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During the last decades mass media has developed significantly and become not only a source of information and entertainment, but also a source of profit and a device of political influence. It is hard to overestimate the impact that information media has on our modern American society.

From the psychological standpoint, mass media has a great impact on our consciousness, as it helps develop our notion of what is good and bad, which stands as a background for establishing conventional norms and ethics. People, especially young generation, are prone to exurb information and messages they get from the television, papers or the Internet. For example, if someone sees a blonde driving a fashionable car and advertising some brand of cigarettes, one can get the message that smoking is good, as in his or her consciousness it is associated with luxury and wealth. Besides, many provoking and shocking techniques involving violence, sex, and harmful addictions are used in TV commercials, TV shows and papers in order to get attention of the audience (Rodman, 2011). The primary goal of modern information media is to make profit, but they should understand that they bear a social responsibility and must be aware o the effects they may have on the minds of American citizens.

Nowadays, information media is vastly used in the political sphere as an effective device of propaganda and manipulation of the public opinion. It helps create a positive image of a particular political candidate in order to increase his or her ratings and gain the loyalty of voters. Nevertheless, it was found that media-oriented political campaigns turned out not to have as powerful and direct effects on voters as it was firstly expected. Actually, this is because the voters with strong political opinion primarily take into

consideration the campaign program and are slightly influenced by the media (Hanson, 2010). Still, mass media may sometimes be used in order to discredit an opponent with the help of incriminating evidence. In such a way, by discrediting a leader or one of the representatives, the reputation of the whole party can be put under question. The political career of one of the most beloved American politicians, the President Clinton, was finished after the wide coverage of his relationship with Monica Lewinsky by mass media.

The phenomenon of media convergence, which combined modern technology and information media services, has simplified to a great extent an access to the media. Numerous websites offer such services as on-line radio, video on-demand, and news reporting that can be provided at the same time and are available at any time unlike the scheduled television broadcasting. Moreover, the news became more oriented on the target audience and may be presented in categories like sport news and events, political and economical news or gossips about celebrities. In addition, the audience becomes more involved in the process, having a possibility to share documents and media files via social networking systems. For example, a world-wide famous Facebook networking system contains the whole subsystem of different applications and virtual communities that not only provide an effective communication, but allow sharing photos, music, videos, even if they are taken from the outside sources like YouTube.

To conclude, mass media has a strong influence on American society, being one of the factors that participate in establishing the national and individual moral qualities. Media is also used in order to construct public political

opinion. In addition, media convergence concept made information media services more available and convenient in usage.