

Responsibilities of the media



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The Media and its Responsibilities

The media plays an extremely critical role in not only the United States of America, but to the rest of the world. As children, we are taught right from wrong. Our parents, brothers and sisters taught us when we were doing right and scolded us when we were doing wrong. Most people have a morally straight compass based on their up-bringing. The Media is a form of communication, whether that be television, radio, newspaper or social media advertisements and postings. The people of the World expect the media to have that same morally straight compass. From all of the false claims, the cries of “fake news” and misrepresentation of political values that have been occurring make it hard for people to believe or even trust the media. Not only does the effect the American people along with the rest of the World, the fallacies that the Media reports could possibly effect foreign relations and lead to conflicts that would have otherwise been avoided. All information should be factual and they should consider the effects of presenting inaccurate information. News presented should be factual and should disregard the consequences of the truth. The ethical theories that will be explored in this paper will be utilitarianism, deontology and the ethical perspective of ethical egoism.

“Utilitarianism argues that, given a set of choices, that act the we should choose is that which produces the best results for the greatest number effected by those results.” (Mosser, 2013) This applies to the Media in regards to something that they may be lacking in. The Media is more focused on reporting news stories that have little to no relevance to anything in the world along with misrepresenting or showing only one side of the story. This

often occurs when you have someone potentially politically affiliated with a set party and are trying to boost viewer's opinions of a certain subject in regards to that party. Currently, there are six major news agencies that control over 90% of what we watch on television and the internet. (Alterman, 2004) This fact leads to a majority of the people from around the world to gather their news from some type of media outlet. This could be from social media, television, etc. The unfortunate thing about this is that we have people in charge of media companies that lack the utilitarianism point of view and puts out whatever makes them the most money. When this occurs, you begin to create divides because some people believe everything they hear from a particular news source rather than drawing their own opinions. When people don't draw their own opinions, you begin to have people that believe everything they hear on the news whether it be right or wrong, factual or completely bias.

Deontology is a lost art that the media as a whole should get back into touch with. Deontology is the concept of doing or reporting what is correct regardless of the consequences. A little bit further broken down, if a media outlet reports factual information, as they should, they should do so without the fear of losing popularity because it would be for the greater good. This art would allow for people to get much more factual information with media outlets completely disregarding their popularity or television ratings.

Unfortunately, this seems to be non-existent in the world that we live in today. Luckily, " only 6 percent of Americans believe what they here on television" (Snyder, 2014) Whether this be a report about Kim Kardashian and how she wants to be taken serious as a lawyer, or who is working with

who in regards to collusion with Russia. Thankfully some people still have some common sense to not believe everything that they hear. Although it's sad that the people cannot believe what they hear on the television, it makes you wonder where these people get their information from. Not all media outlets put out information that only certain people want to hear. There are many independent news agencies that report solely on facts; however these agencies are not gigantic corporations and do not get as much air time as they should.

The ethical issues that arise in the media and their corruption and misrepresentation are just that, they mislead people and more often than not, only care about their ratings and making money versus reporting factual information to the people. In a completely ethical society, the media would report the honest truth to all people regardless of what it did to their ratings. Imagine a world where you could believe everything that CNN or MSNBC told you instead of going to fact check them and finding that they left out crucial parts to a story or that they were just plain wrong. " Ethics guides the media to be objective, fair and accurate while presenting news, views and opinion" (Basu, 2011). It seems as though this was the standard in new reporting years ago; however, we have strayed from this over the last two years.

The breaches of ethical behavior come from all different types of media sources. Often times when it comes to media, we get stuck on focusing on the television aspect of news reporting. We must not forget that media sources are all over the place. From the internet, social media, newspaper and many other sources, media is everywhere. One breach of ethical behavior is on social media and the internet. Websites like Facebook are <https://assignbuster.com/responsibilities-of-the-media/>

utilizing political affiliation to control what is seen on timelines as well as different political ads. Did you know that there is a place in your Facebook settings that controls what political party you affiliate with, what it grades you as far as being moderate, conservative, etc. and if you wish for political targeted ads to show up on your timeline? The media's ethical responsibility is to be objective, fair and accurate. Polling data reveals that the public widely believes the press to be inaccurate, one-sided and lacking independence (Pew Research Center, 2011). How do we help eliminate this feeling throughout the world and create an honest and trusting media? We eliminate these options on Facebook and allow people to be free thinking. One of the biggest ethical breaches is the fact that people are controlled in the way that they think. There are very little free thinkers and the media is to blame. Wikipedia is another big source of news and general information, but how can we trust a source that is so popular when it has options for regular people to edit what is already in context? This creates misrepresentation and false claims about certain types of events of about people.

Ethical egoism is the act of being able to see through the bad or the false and take the good or to draw your own conclusions. Although the media misrepresents a lot of information, luckily there are a lot of people who are able to decipher through the false reports and make sense of it all.

Unfortunately, this happens with most media outlets where they present the side of a situation that would best suit their audience, but ethical egoism would be to watch or understand both sides of the story and be able to draw to yourself what happened.

Both utilitarianism and deontology are important when it comes to practicing virtue ethics. A person needs to be morally straight in order to achieve virtue ethics. For example, a person who is able to tell the truth constantly, tell a person when they are wrong or right even if it means losing someone important in your life and being able to stand up for themselves, that is the definition of virtue ethics in my opinion.

References

- Alterman, E. (2004). *What liberal media? The truth about bias and the news*. New York: New York: Basic Books.
- Snyder, M. (2014, May 21st). [Web Log message]. Retrieved from: [Http://www. infowars. com/7-things-about-the-mainstream-media-that-they-do-not-want-you-to-know/](http://www.infowars.com/7-things-about-the-mainstream-media-that-they-do-not-want-you-to-know/)
- Mosser, K. (2013). *Ethics and social responsibility*(2nd ed.) [Electronic version]. Retrieved from [https://content. ashford. edu/](https://content.ashford.edu/)
- Basu, S. (2011). SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY: THE OBLIGATION OF MASS MEDIA. *Global Media Journal: Indian Edition* , 1-6.
- Pew Research Center for the People & the Press. (2011, September 22). “ Press widely criticized, but trusted more than other information sources.” Washington, D. C.: Pew Research Center. Retrieved online from [http://www. people-press. org/files/legacy-pdf/9-22-2011%20Media%20Attitudes%20Release. pdf](http://www.people-press.org/files/legacy-pdf/9-22-2011%20Media%20Attitudes%20Release.pdf).