

Mass media assignment

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Today, one can sit in a living room and with a smart TV' remote access archival footages and docudramas through YouTube, great historical moments like the American civil war, Emancipation proclamation, the Gettysburg Address and even relive Martin Luther King's "I have a dream" speech and the 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States.

Even though mass media can be praised for its help in preserving history and helping understand the past, some in some quarters see it as a necessary evil, a tool for manipulation. For example, it was argued by Denis McLain as he laid out the suspicions of the media when he said, "a long list of studies can be cited showing the media to have certain inbuilt tendencies to present a limited and recurring range of images and ideas which form rather special versions of reality".

Rounding up his point, Denis alludes to the fact that though in some areas to say that pattern is uncommon will not be true but acknowledges that in some other quarters, vibrant democracy provides the diversity and the ability to choose and make logical contradictions. In other words, the power of choice, of media content, resides in the hands of the individual. The easy accessibility of great speeches and moments in history which have told the story and struggles of a people, have all been immortalized due to the advancement of mass media for learning and reflection.

In his brilliant written analyses of Martin Luther King's "I have a dream" speech, Machismo Skating, explains how even after 50 years people can still relive the feelings, emotions and relate to the raw sadness African Americans of that time experienced, when he stated that: Fifty years later, it is a speech

that can still move people to tears. Fifty year later, its most Famous lines are recited by school children and sampled by musicians. Fifty years later, The four words “ I have a dream” have become shorthand for Dr. King.

King’s commitment to Freedom, social justice and nonviolence, inspiring activist from Attainment square to Sweet, Eastern Europe to the West Bank”. Today anyone who once to listen to that speech would have access to it for free even on a cell phone connected to a wife. In contrary, Skeptics of mass media consistently argues that access to cyber space may come free or easy but with a hidden agenda, as supported by Kenneth Newton in his article Of “ Mass Media Effects: Manipulation or Media Malaise? When he concluded that, television pulls in different directions, according to its content??’(596). In other words, instead of pulling people together, the media is a dividing tool, manipulated to fit its agenda. Furthermore, skeptics may point to the terrorist group called “ ISIS”, ‘ the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria”, and its masterful use of social media. The argument is that, ISIS have used advance media production techniques to promote its agenda, the same media technology that has helped re-enact unforgettable moments in world’s history like the “ Declaration of Independence”.

That ISIS have demonstrated that Unequal contemplated when he asked the question of “ how effectively the mass media can and do achieve objectives over others at the will of those who direct, own or control them or use them as channels for messages” (21 The fact is that, ISIS has successfully and continuously uses mass media to pour out its message and the establishment of an online magazine is evidence of its ever expanding presence on social

media and the continuous inflow of western fighters to the Islamic State proves the skeptics point.

That been said, everyone that followed the Arab Spring, saw how social media led the way in having political debates from one country to the other in the Arab world. The power Of mass media put a human face on the politically oppressed and helped topple most of the dictators in that part of the world. In conclusion, penthouse mass media is acceptable in some quarters as a powerful tool to manipulate public opinions, one cannot ignore the role it plays.

The world is now a global village. In few seconds, a video can go viral and one can become part of history immediately by watching the incident as it plays out. Great moments in History can now be accessed from a couch in a living room. Finally, as with most things in life, there are positives and negatives, whether mass media is a necessary evil or not, will ultimately be decided by individual user.