

The doors of perception: why americans will believe almost anything



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The Doors of Perception: Why Americans Will Believe Almost Anything?

Nowadays, people live in a world that is largely dependent on communication and information to perform daily activities like studies, travel, personal relationships, work, entertainment, health care, and almost everything else. From the first few moments of waking up until the last few minutes before sleep, people get information from the newspaper, television, radio, or internet, and decide based on the information gathered.

Additionally, people now live life in the fast lane, and are used to instant gratification --- thus, the easier it is to obtain information, the better. This makes people put their trust in the “ experts” showcased by the media, hence absorb almost every bit of information provided by these “ experts.” Unconsciously and without further evaluation, people allow mass media to mold images that society accepts as collective truths. These are what make today’s media so powerful. The information and the means to disseminate it can have permanent effects on the society. This is why control of media outlets “ is considered a valuable asset for those seeking economic or political power” since media is such a powerful tool to “ catch and lead audience awareness to people, questions, and answers that can benefit those in power; it can validate and bestow position; it can influence and be a medium for mobilization” (Graber, 33). Tim O’Shea was not exaggerating when he said that “ thoughts and attitudes are continually being shaped and molded and conventional wisdom are scientifically implanted in the public consciousness by a thousand media clips per day” (2001). Even President Clinton stated, “ what worries him is that society will have access to all necessary information yet not have any means of assessing the validity of such information.” He added that “ this is the biggest challenge presented to <https://assignbuster.com/the-doors-of-perception-why-americans-will-believe-almost-anything/>

people with the development of media in the Information Age” (Downie and Kaiser, 221). The solution is not in censorship of media content. Instead of eliminating corrupt information, eliminate the dependency for such information and the information will disappear on its own. Dr. O’Shea discussed that one needs to understand that this whole cycle is about media manipulating people, which then shape the media to what it is. It is not a question anymore of who started the crazed cycle of events, but of who will take action to end it. Society cannot expect media to end this cycle, for as long as the system benefits them, they have no reason nor need to end the cycle. However, media will not risk investment by sending out information no one wants nor pays for. Just like the “ Tea in the Cafeteria” example of Dr. O’Shea, society must exert effort to filter information that they accept as truth. Media only has power that audience grants them. Works Cited Downie, Leonard, and Robert G. Kaiser. *The News About the News: American Journalism in Peril*. New York: A. A. Knopf, 2003. Print. Graber, Doris A. *Media Power in Politics* / Doris A. Graber. Washington: CQ Press, 1993. Print. O’Shea, Dr. Tim. *The Doors Of Perception: Why Americans Will Believe Almost Anything* . 15 August 2001.