

MEDIA BIAS  
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- I Media bias is a product of four things.
  - 1 Pure objectivity exists only with God!
  - 2 Brevity: The brevity of the medium necessitates that only some things can be included and some must be included.
  - 3 Lack of knowledge: The person covering the story or issue may lack basic knowledge of his assignment, lacked sufficient time to thoroughly investigate, or was just innocently unaware of some pertinent facts.
    - (1) The person covering Christianity also covers the weekend nightlife.
    - (2) Time was of the essence
    - (3) Did their best to get good information, but humans are simply limited in their knowledge of anything and everything.
  - 4 Personal bias: The news is never merely the news, unless you were actually there, but rather it is the “edited” news; and it is edited according to the presuppositions of the editor, reporter, writer, photographer etc.
    - (1) Since all the news cannot be covered, someone must determine what is news worthy and what is not; hence, the reported news is a value judgment based on the presuppositions of what is “newsworthy”, and this is a value judgment.
      - A This affects:
        - a What stories they cover
        - b How they cover the story
        - c How often they cover the story
        - d What they ignore
- II Seven things to watch for concerning media bias
  - 1 Selective coverage: They cover stories that will get across the desired point.
    - (1) Church failures will receive far more coverage than the good that the church does around the world every day, or the faithful Christians who live the life.
    - (2) NOW gets far more coverage than Concerned Women for America even though CWA is the largest women’s organization in America.
    - (3) Jessie Jackson vs. conservative black leaders
  - 2 Positive/Negative coverage: Simply show the positive side on issues that you want to promote, and the negative of what you want to degrade.
    - (1) Political candidates, speeches, pictures etc.

- (2) Homosexuality
- (3) Death Penalty
- 3 Gotcha Coverage: Field easy questions to people who voice desired opinion of the interviewer, and level difficult and inflammatory questions to your adversary.
  - (1) Pay attention to the backgrounds of the panelist, and then the host handling of them.
  - (2) Note the ratio of Conservatives vs. Liberals
- 4 Repetition Coverage: Cover stories A.D.-nausea in order to get the desired point across.
  - (1) This is not referring to covering an ongoing story of interest, which is simply good journalism.
  - (2) This refers to repeatedly covering a story with the same bias and lack of complete information until the viewers believe that the biased presentation is the unbiased presentation.
- 5 Lack of perspective in coverage: Covering a story, or quoting a person without the full historical, or literary context.
  - (1) Question conservative Christians about whether or not their involvement in politics violates the “separation of church and state” without every mentioning that liberals have been involved for along time and are not asked the same questions.
  - (2) As though Christians not involved in government since America’s founding.
  - (3) As though the phrase “separation of church and state” is in one of our founding documents.
  - (4) Walter Mondale, Al Gore, Bill Clinton spoke in churches when running for office and were not questioned on it, but when conservatives do that the media cries foul.
  - (5) Counseling of young man at Grace community church. The media covered his suicide, counseling of the church, and left the impression that they were incompetent at best.
    - A Never mentioned that the young man had also seen secular counselors and psychologist, and one of who declared that the young man was fine, just before he took his own life.
- 6 Semantics: The choice of euphemisms, favorable terms, for those whom they favor and pejorative terms for those whom they disfavor.
  - (1) Pro choice vs. Anti abortion or anti choice rather than pro life.
  - (2) Journalist vs. conservative journalist
  - (3) Democrat vs. conservative republican
  - (4) Rainbow coalition vs. conservative, right wing, or fundamentalist.

- (5) Religious right but never the religious left
  - (6) Use fundamentalist rather than conservative or evangelical,
  - (7) Speak of fundamentalist Christians and then speak of fundamentalist Muslims like, Shiite who kill people and abuse women.
  - (8) Used to believe in God, or some other Christianity concept, and then educated and now believe in something else.
    - A Impression is only uneducated believe in Christianity.
  - (9) Homophobic applied to anyone and everyone who does not accept homosexuality as normal
- 7 Editorializing: The commentator begins to use one of the tactics above or simply to give his opinion on the issue.
- (1) This is often a subtle shift from reporting the news to evaluating the news.
    - A The war is escalating in the middle east
      - a We all wish that were not so, or I hate to hear that.
    - B According to the most recent polls, Americans disapprove of the Presidents actions.
      - a He should probably reevaluate his position.

III Support news reporting that is honest about its presupposition rather than seeking to hide it, and evaluate the news accordingly.

- 1 Conservative of Liberal
- 2 Make sure that you get the conservative view before making up your mind on a reported issue
- 3 Make sure you get the biblical perspective before you make up your mind.