

A BIBLICAL VIEW ON MEDIA BIAS

CENSORED



MarjorieDannenfelser
@marjoriedfb

Following

Abortion is profoundly anti-women. - Mother Teresa #daywithoutawoman @SBAList



"Abortion is profoundly anti-women. Three quarters of its victims are women: Half the babies and all the mothers."
Mother Teresa

RETWEETS 61 LIKES 77

10:48 AM - 8 Mar 2017

61 77



MR. ORL

MR. MARINO

KERBY ANDERSON

MEDIA BIAS



Most of us are aware of media bias, so this booklet attempts to move beyond proving its existence to explaining how it surfaces and how much of an impact it has on our perception of the world and on our political choices. It has been possible to measure media bias, and it has become possible to estimate how much media bias influences policies and elections.

The Narrative

One of the ways media bias surfaces is through what has been called “the narrative.” Former CBS reporter Sharyl Attkisson describes this in her book, *Slanted: How the News Media Taught Us to Love Censorship and Hate Journalism*.

A narrative almost always presents multisided issues in a distinctly one-sided fashion. Logic and rational thought are set aside. She explains there are three ways in which truthful information can also qualify as narratives. First, truthful information can be deliberately presented in a biased fashion in order to confuse or overwhelm other facts. Second, truthful information can qualify as a narrative when it is amplified beyond its news value to fit a broader story-line. Third, truth can be couched in terms that present an issue as a closed case. Contrary facts and views are illegiti-

mate. We hear environmental activists tell us that the science is settled.

Once a narrative is successfully established, lots of effort goes into cultivating it and promoting it. “Contrary views, facts, and science must be shoved down the memory hole—disappeared—as though they had never existed.”¹ This may even include campaigns to convince the public to embrace ideas that previously were unthinkable.

She also explains that reporters must embrace the concept of “doublethink.” This term was used in George Orwell’s book, *1984*, to describe people who were conscious of truthfulness even while telling carefully constructed lies. “News reporters and pundits must accept doublethink in order to service The Narrative with a guilt-free conscious.”² And the public must be conditioned to attack anyone who tries to shed new light

on an issue or even have a dialogue about it. They must learn to be skeptical of the “wrong” people who are uneducated and on the wrong side of history.

Measuring Media Bias

A number of years ago, a UCLA professor (Tim Groseclose) published his groundbreaking study that used quantitative methods to study the issue. He constructed a measure of media bias known as the “Political Quotient” often called PQ for short. He later published his results in his book, *Left Turn: How Liberal Media Bias Distorts the American Mind*.³

Using his research method, he found that eighteen of the twenty media outlets at that time were left of center. The only two he found that were not were The Washington Times and Fox News Special Report with Brit Hume. He also published the PQs of selected politicians and media

outlets. You could look down the chart and see where various television news programs like CBS Evening News or newsmagazines like Time compared to various politicians and the average US voter.

He was able to document that all mainstream news outlets have a liberal bias. And it isn't too surprising to find that some of the supposedly conservative outlets (like Fox News) are not as biased to the right as typical mainstream outlets are biased to the left. And according to his measure (at the time), the *Drudge Report* "is approximately the most fair, balanced, and centrist outlet in the United States."

He was also able to measure the impact the media is having on the perceptions of Americans. Absent the media's influence, the average American's views would reflect those of conservative areas like Orange

County, California and the state of Kansas.

He also explained how bias surfaces. He says the media uses distortion, not lies or incorrect facts, to report news with a liberal slant. In other words, the facts they use are usually correct. But the omission of other important facts is how bias manifests itself.

Bias in the Newsroom

More than a decade ago, Bernard Goldberg published his book, *Bias: A CBS Insider Exposes How the Media Distort the News*.⁴ It was significant because he was one of the first media insiders to reveal what many of us suspected about the background and attitudes of the people who determine what you read, see, and hear in the media. There were other studies (like the Lichter-Rothman studies) that also provided insight. But Bernard Goldberg's book provided lots

of information and an important perspective.

His perspective was helpful because it set aside the idea that media bias was part of some liberal conspiracy. Instead, he said that “the bitter truth” is actually worse. Essentially what we have in “the mainstream media” is a common worldview that is promoted in the newsrooms and also promoted in the way news stories are covered.

Various studies of the media elite conclude that the people who determine what is newsworthy and how it is covered are very different from the rest of the American public. Let’s look at some examples.

When you ask journalists to identify their political party, you only find that 4 percent of them identify themselves as Republican. In the general population, about 20 percent of Americans identify themselves as

liberal and about 40 percent identify themselves as conservatives. When journalists were asked to identify their political orientation, 61 percent said liberal. And only 9 percent identified themselves as conservative or moderate to conservative.

One study found that members of the media, when compared to the public at large, are less likely to get married and have children. They are less likely to own homes. And they are less likely to go to church or synagogue. How many of the journalists polled belonged to the American Legion or service organizations like the Rotary Club? The answer was zero.

Media Bias Through Censorship

Not only do we see media bias through what the mainstream media covers. We also see bias on what they choose not to cover or even censor. This may be the most significant way media bias surfaces. Here are two examples.

A number of years ago, the Center for Medical Progress did a number of hidden-camera interviews of Planned Parenthood. They exposed many disturbing aspects of Planned Parenthood that were later revealed through other investigative reports.

The videos revealed the dark secrets of Planned Parenthood and would have been a major news story if the investigative reporting was done of a major corporation. In fact, the only response from Planned Parenthood about the videos was that they were “heavily edited.” They were not.

You could say that the only editing of the videos was done by the mainstream media: they edited them out of any broadcast. A guest we had on *Point of View* at the time estimated that ABC, CBS, and NBC spent four times as much time talking about the killing of Cecil the Lion in Zimbabwe

as they did covering the Planned Parenthood videos.

The combined total coverage of the videos for the three networks over a period of months was all of 23 minutes. Brent Bozell (Media Research Center) then tried to put those 23 minutes into perspective. He found that the three networks “completely censored the actual video of the Planned Parenthood officials incriminating themselves.” He estimated that all you saw from the actual videos was 73 seconds. CBS aired one minute of the footage. NBC devoted just 13 seconds to the videos. ABC never showed one second of the undercover videos.

Another example of media bias through censorship can be found in the 2020 presidential election. After the election, the Media Research Center asked The Polling Company to survey 1,750 Biden voters in seven

swing states (Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin). They tested the voters' knowledge of eight news stories that liberal news media failed to report properly.

They concluded that this lack of information proved crucial. They discovered that one in every six Biden voters surveyed (17%) said they would have abandoned the Democratic candidate if they had known the facts in one or more of these news stories.

The eight news stories surveyed included three stories that reflected poorly on Joe Biden or Kamala Harris and five stories about Trump administration successes. For example, they found that more than a third (35.4%) didn't know of the Biden sex assault allegations. Nearly half (45.1%) did not know about the scandals involving Hunter Biden. And a quarter

(25.3%) of them did not know that Senator Kamala Harris had the most left-wing record of any Senator in 2019.

When they surveyed the Trump successes, they found that anywhere from four in ten to five in ten did not know about economic growth, the creation of 11 million jobs, the Middle East peace deals, energy independence, and Operation Warp Speed.

A total of 17 percent said they would have changed their vote if they had been aware of these issues. This would have moved every one of the swing states into Trump's column and given him 311 electoral votes. This study is illustrative of the impact the mainstream media had on the 2020 election.

Biblical Perspective

As Christians we must guard

against becoming conformed to this world (Romans 12:1) which can easily happen given the powerful influence of media in our 21st-century world. We will need discernment to separate truth from error, reality from fantasy, true facts from fake news.

The Apostle Paul warns us, “See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ” (Colossians 2:8). It is easy to be taken captive by the culture through false views and media bias. We need to guard against being deceived.

Paul also calls for us to grow in knowledge, wisdom, and discernment: “And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless

for the day of Christ” (Philippians 1:9-11). We should guard against believing everything we see, read, or hear. Media bias will give us a false view of the world.

We should also recognize that a secular news source is not going to look at the world through a biblical lens. “The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one” (1 Corinthians 2:14-15).

Instead, we should use a biblical worldview to evaluate what we see in the world. “Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in

glory” (Colossians 3:2-4).

We are dedicated to providing the truth and evaluating every aspect of our lives from a biblical point of view. That’s why we call the radio program, *Point of View*.

Additional Resources

Kerby Anderson, *Christian Ethics in Plain Language*, Thomas Nelson 2005, chapter twenty-one.

Sharyl Attkisson, *Slanted: How the News Media Taught Us to Love Censorship and Hate Journalism*, Harper-Collins, 2020.

Bernard Goldberg, *Bias: A CBS Insider Exposes How the Media Distort the News*, HarpPeren, 2003.

Tim Groseclose, *Left Turn: How Liberal Media Bias Distorts the American Mind*, St. Martin’s Press, 2011.

Marvin Olasky and Warren Cole Smith, *Prodigal Press: Confronting the Anti-Christian Bias of the American News Media*, P&R Publishing, 2013.

End Notes

¹ Sharyl Attkisson, *Slanted: How the News Media Taught Us to Love Censorship and Hate Journalism*, Harper-Collins, 2020, 4.

² *Ibid.*, 6.

³ Tim Groseclose, *Left Turn: How Liberal Media Bias Distorts the American Mind*, St. Martin's Press, 2011.

⁴ Bernard Goldberg, *Bias: A CBS Insider Exposes How the Media Distort the News*, HarpPeren, 2003.



Point of View

Point of View Ministries • PO-Box 30 • Dallas, TX 75221

pointofview.net . 800-347-5151

A Biblical View on Media Bias

© Point of View Ministries 2021