

Media Bias Project on Political Campaigns in United States on Two Popular online Newspapers—News York Times, and Washington Post

The first time ever in the life, the first eye-opener in the life

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8 students of Media bias's project-- Chan Seyha, Hun Keo Veasna, Ket Monny Vathna, Nget Kan Davith, Samreth Sodh, Seng Litor, Yang Chan Dara, and the last one is Yav Sok Him.

His project was dividing into two small teams Chan Seyha, Hun Keo Veasna, Sodh, Seng Litor and Nget Kan Davith, Washington Post research team Ket Monny Vathna, Samreth Sodh, Yang Chan Dara, Yav Sok Him.

What I can learn from this project besides the political situation in USA is group working, patience, leadership (broaden our mind), and the way to build my career—how to write news and guidelines of each news publishing company.

What is Media Bias? Media bias is the tendency for the media to represent different people in a particular way based on their own views, the views of their sponsors, and possibly the views of society. Bias in the media involves many types, and these include bias by commission, omission, story selection, placement, source election, spin, labeling, policy endorsement and condemnation. This paper will however only focus on three of the many types of media bias: “Bias by Omission”; “Bias by Story/Source Selection”; and “Bias by Spin” around the issues of the U.S. 2012 campaign.

The media-aided approach during the U.S. 2012 campaign deeply interests me because I wish to answer my hypothesis which is that a political party tends to win in an election if the party is more covered on media than are its counterparts. On this note, I am so much curious about how the media coverage for each political party contributes to the result of the upcoming election in the U.S.

Particularly, “Bias by Omission”, later referred to Omission, is defined as (1) leaving out one side of a particular argument for a considerable length of time, and (2) ignoring facts that potentially refute the other side. “Bias by Story/Source Selection”, later referred to Story/Source

Selection, refers to articles whose news stories coincide with the conservative group's agenda while ignoring the liberal group's. This type of bias can also be seen when a writer includes more sources that support one side of the story over another by using some remarkable phrases such as "experts believe", "observers say," or "most people believe". "Bias by Spin", later referred to Spinning, refers to a state where there is only one interpretation from one side, excluding the other equally relevant side. This kind of bias involves the reporter's tone, subjective comments and individual judgment about the existing facts.

More specifically, the three types of media bias are to be discussed in the 8 Washington Post articles and 8 New York Times articles which were written during February and March, 2012 on the two prominent presidential wannabes, namely Barack Obama and Mitt Romney.

There are mainly three types of media bias found in the 16 articles.

1. Omission`

The article written by Rucker is extremely biased toward Romney rather than Obama. The writer raised up the US military mission. He quoted nearly all of what Romney criticized Obama and his administration. Moreover, the writer talked repeatedly about Romney's speeches that blasted Obama on putting military in a dangerous state. What's more, Romney was given a chance to say what he had agreed or disagreed with the US and NATO. In this regard, Obama was given so little space to react to what Romney said – he was allowed to opine in only a few sentences about his plan to withdraw military (Rucker 2012)

Romney was given 31% to put up his group and blame Obama on gasoline and energy prices which has been higher and higher. Furthermore, he asked Obama to remove his three cabinet officers from position. However, Obama was quoted of 38% to support all the decisions made by him and his party (BRONDER 2012).

Farnam (2012) quoted so many of Romney's words about Obama's weakness and gave no chance or space to Obama to fight back. Besides, Romney wanted to imply that he could do better than Obama if he were the current president of the US.

Obama talked about two important issues – rising gas price and health-care law. He got 27% to mention publicly about his strategy in order to respond to those problems and fought back strongly to the republicans, specifically Romney. On the other hand, Romney was given a 5% in the article to cast his comments, responding to only one of the two major issues raised earlier by Obama. On this note, Obama gains support from readers by turning his political weakness into strength as well as receiving positive points on both issues that will be an advantage for his coming re-election in November (Gardner and Wilson 2012).

Landler (2012) gave chance to both Obama and Romney to present some issues on the strength of America. Particularly, the writer allowed Romney to project his perspective on the subject matter more than Obama. Obviously, the Romney's perspective was to attack Obama. Nevertheless, Obama was not given an opportunity to react to Romney. Hence, Obama was not bound to be supported much in this case.

Gay (2012) covered very much on Romney when he raised the issues of health care system while Obama's administration was showed to give so few feedbacks on this issue. In particular, Obama was quoted to have used a very general term as "health plan" to respond to those specific strategy projected clearly by Romney. In fact, R. Santorum and Gignrich also got involved in this article – mocking Romney; however, their attack on Romney didn't affect the analysis on the media bias, omission, between Romney and Obama's business. Thus, Romney was dominant so much in this article, and he was presented as very determined to achieve his bunch of strategies. Notably, this news article was totally influenced by Romney's health care service on abortion issue which Obama was not seen to respond.

Rucker (2012) mostly touched mainly on what Romney had said about Obama's weak points and it did not allow Obama to respond. In this regard, the author seemed to show only one-

sided voice from Romney and let him take full advantage of showing his strategy and obtaining trust and popularity from the people of America.

Shear (2012) mentioned only the achievement of Romney without letting Obama present his results and respond to what Romney offensively of him.

2. Story/Source Selection

Rubin (2012) showed that after Obama won the presidential election, the American economy still got nowhere better. By seeing this weak point, the author tended to select the story that was based on economic field to downgrade Obama's credibility yet to give credit to Romney. The good points of free marketing strategy by Romney had been raised to show that there would be a good solution that somehow improved the America's economy.

Balz (2012) stressed on the potentiality of Romney's business. It could be inferred that the readers may think that Romney must make a good leader for them because Romney is now projected as a successful businessman; therefore, he will be able to solve the serious problems in America if he is voted President of the US.

Eggen (2012) used the word "Americans" who show such strong support to Obama. The word "Americans" is meant to represent all the people in the U.S while in fact it only refers to a pool of supportive people.

Nakamura (2012) chose only the famous people for Obama including political consultant, producer and his wife. The first lady here refers to Michelle Obama which was delivering her speech for fundraising. It can be implied that besides Obama himself, he has another person to help as well as to gain fund for his campaign. It can impact that when Hollywood or famous people in Hollywood support Obama, the fans of Hollywood will support Obama too.

Mr. Alan B. Krueger, the chairman of the president's Council of Economic Adviser, and some private sector forecasters were chosen to talk very highly about the Obama's project after it is confirmed that the project is a success story while none of Romney's expert, supporter, or Romney himself was interviewed to give their opinions on the other side of the story (Calmes 2012).

Since US encountered the economic crisis, none of presidential candidate has proved any effective step to recover. Therefore, there is so need of someone who has a sure-work policy to shoot this problem out. Still, the financial problem in US remains a big challenge. Meanwhile, this news article immediately switched to advertise the potentiality of Romney over this problem, which surely helps Romney to heighten his status. Moreover, it shows that he was supported by many of the caucus goers who mainly involved in the politics (Zeleny 2012).

McIntire (2012) quoted only Obama's high-ranking officials' speech, while no one from Romney's was interviewed.

Confessore (2012) showed only the supporting sources from the Romney's side. Moreover, those sources were the big shots in politics such Robert Garff, Ron Kaufman, and Wayne McCormack. The author chose to talk only about the achievements and effort of Romney; therefore, it led the people to a thought that Romney would be qualified for the presidential post for he was able to erase the scandal of Olympic game in 2002.

3. Spinning

Sonmez (2012) illustrated a very strong supportive voice from a high-ranking supporter of Romney. Choosing to write about who supports Romney can promote Romney's popularity and therefore people see Romney as the most potential person to be elected.

Almost all the sentences were about Romney, and most of them supported him. The writer described Romney in so many good terms—committed, conservative, and experienced. However, Romney was projected to have ever delivered a message which no one could understand its meaning. Particularly, he spoke without preparation—he said whatever he wanted. From this, some of electorates need to doublecheck whether they should trust the person who sent unclear messages or not. On the other hand, the writer still admired Romney and he dared to say that Romney “must win and keep winning”. These sentences show obviously that the writer exactly supports Mitt Romney and wants him to become the president (Balz 2012).

The word “brighter”, which was described by Obama’s advisor, consists a muscular tone of supporting Obama. Somehow, the author wanted to add that Obama is full of light or intelligent in this context. What about Romney? Isn’t he so bright to be said about? (Cohen 2012)

The term “too” expresses negative meaning already. Obama complained in this article that he spent too much money on his campaign. Therefore, if he is elected to be the president, the people would think he will spend the national budget carelessly as he did during his election campaign. It means that Obama lose some credit already especially in terms of managing public finance (Farnam 2012).

Calmes (2012) obviously showed supportive tone to Obama that he really had a good plan and map to deal with the economic crisis in the US. That is, it could be seen by the people that Obama must be the reliable person to help Americans in the next mandate.

The informative quote effectively persuaded and re-built the supporters’ trust. Thus, he indirectly implied his own expectation to help promote his status and to gain his much-needed votes. The success in Nevada might have influenced some pro Obama people’s perception about their political stand after hearing Romney’s claim that he would decrease the employment rate faster than Obama did. The writer also covered Romney’s potential ability and his experience as a businessman (Zeleny 2012).

McIntire (2012) and Cooper (2012) illustrated a supportive term “strength of Obama”, which was used to convince the reader that Obama is truly a good leader. However, the connection between Obama and his donor who was proved to be a criminal upsets the Obama’s followers to some extent.

Confessor (2012) mentioned deeply about Romney’s registered lobbyists; the donation of those lobbyists to Romney; and the contributions to restoring the situation of Winter Olympics. This would probably make the people think that Romney is an influential person because most of the powerful and prominent people in the society have been taking his side.

In conclusion, the three types of media bias found in the 8 articles of New York Times and 8 articles of Washington Post are very obvious to see. In particular, according the statistical tables, both the Times and the Post tend to give more space, choose positive side of the story/source and use supportive words towards Romney than towards Obama. Statistically, while the Times and the Post support Obama in respect to the three types of media bias of about 17% and 13% correspondingly, it gives Romney a double figure of about 33% and 29% respectively. However, the two media outlets criticize Romney thrice and twice correspondingly higher than it does to Obama. In retrospective, the media influence has been shown to have been playing a very crucial role in the election campaign in the US.

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Annex: Statistics tables

	New York Times		Washington Post	
Total sentences	429		251	
	Pro Obama	Against Obama	Pro Obama	Against Obama
Omission	2.7%	NA	4.7%	NA
Selection of Story and Source	7.9%	3.2%	6.3%	NA
Spinning	6.9%	1.8%	2.3%	1.1
Total	17.5%	5%	13.3%	1.1%

	Pro Romney	Against Romney	Pro Romney	Against Romney
Omission	11.4%	0.4%	9.1%	NA
Selection of Story and Source	6.5%	6.5%	1.1%	NA
Spinning	15.6%	9.3%	19.1%	2.7%
Total	33.5%	16.2%	29.3%	2.7%