An Alternative to the Fighting Frame in News Reporting

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Abstract

Abstract: Journalists rely on conflict as a conventional method of framing news reporting. Faced with the pressure of deadlines and time and space constraints, as well as strained resources, and their perception that media consumers prefer this reportorial style, journalists resort to conflict-based reporting. The approach positions one side against another, excluding the likely possibility that there are several sides in any given dispute, simplifying the complexities of the issue, and often exacerbating the conflict by the very nature of the reportage. The general public repeatedly expresses dissatisfaction with current media practices. Journalists themselves are increasingly calling for an alternative approach. Using a dispute between a monastery and a forestry company as a case study, this paper will analyze media coverage, comment on key players’ observations, and offer an alternative approach for consideration.

Keywords

Media; Journalists; Fighting frame; Conflict-based reporting

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Framing and perspective certainly matter. The framing of news stories has been shown to influence readers’ attributions of responsibility, general attitudes, and knowledge level pertaining to crime, disaster, and public policy issues. Specifically, one study suggests that the public health model of reporting was related to readers’ decreased blame and criticism toward individuals and increased blame and criticism toward social conditions pertaining to crime and violence (Coleman & Thorson, 2002). Several articles reviewed in this fact sheet suggest that reporting provocative aspects of traumatic events, while neglecting contextual information, may lead to unnecessary fear in the general public, along with inaccurate perceptions of the events portrayed. The British government has a new unit fighting “alternative news” websites, driving their stories down search engine results and pushing the official government narrative to the top. Civil servant and government communication boss Alex Aiken said the Cabinet Office’s new Rapid Response Unit (RRU), which has begun a pilot, is not a “fake news unit” as it was dubbed when first reported in April. In a blog post, he described how the taxpayer-funded unit “monitors news and information being shared and engaged with online” and seeks to tackle narratives, from outside the mainstream media, which the News source and slanting of news tone were factors influencing media framing. Cissel [18] and [19] agreed to the importance of news sources and slanting of the news tone in framing. Research has shown that it is an only alternative form of media that reports the strengths and legitimacy of social Movements, casting a positive light on activists as against the mainstream media, whose reports tend to be non-sympathetic (Cissel, 2012). The Web as an Alternative Communication Resource for Pro-Biafra Independent Movements in Nigeria: The Case of Indigenous People of Biafra. Result revealed that the newspapers framed the abduction of Chibok girls in a constructive manner, to a very small extent.