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The Role of Media in Society

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Abstract

Our study will analyze, in a quite light manner the media roles in society. Of course, a throwback in time, at the moment of appearance of the first newspaper, was necessary.

The second part of the study comprises a series of items related by the current passing transformations regardless of media type. Thus, nowadays, the press is more interested in getting the financial gains, than in its role as a main source of information.

Key words: Newspaper, media, information, society, people **Introduction**

Considered to be a reflection of the society, media has become extremely necessary for almost everyone. Media has always played a significant role in the society, because its main purpose is to inform, to offer the latest news, to facilitate connections between people all over the world.

Newspapers - one of the most important tools of democracy

From historically point of view, the most common form of the distribution of information was word of mouth, which is still one of the most powerful tools in the sharing of information today.

Things have changed the moment when the first newspaper appeared, because the one of newspaper is the initial communication tools of the society. They've been the most usual and a generally received medium to be used in conveying the local, regional, national and international news to readers. The need for information is one of basic data of the whole social life. Searching for origins of the newspapers, we might be able to find equivalent to journalism of some

civilizations which have not known the pattern.

First code of public information has been Acta Diurna a Roman form of newspaper, which occur daily, starting from the year 59 B.C. Displayed in the city in public places where people used to gather, this newspaper was established by Julius Caesar and not much different from the nowadays tabloids.

Thus, in the newspaper were inserted social and political news, details of the criminal trials and executions, announcements of marriage, deliveries and deaths, and even sports and cultural news what were taking place at circus maximus and the Colosseum.

At the beginning of the 17th century, newspapers had reached in a form close to the one we know today. First sheet considered to be a newspaper in the true meaning of the word, an initial marketing bulletin circulating among the merchants of Antwerp and Venice, was News of Antwerp, published in The Netherlands year 1605.

The 17th century marked the publishing of newspapers in many countries. However, despite its content and the considerable increase of its audience, the press did not yet get the consideration on which its important novelty imposed.

The accelerated development of world market and the revolutionary periods have increased the importance of the press related events and the people's curiosity of what it meant breaking news. These are the most important reasons that conferred on press the title of the fourth power.

At the beginning, the newspapers helped people to get informed and today they are doing the same. Most of them inform people about the incidents, they write about any fact or event happening all over the world and they help in developing public opinion. Newspaper informs about the political activities, the new laws or the sports and activities happening in the society. Also, the newspapers are one of the

most important source concerning job vacancies and admission in school or colleges, about things that can be bought or sold. Nowadays, the role of newspapers is very significant in the promotion of trade, commerce, and business.

Living nowadays means to confront with lots of texts, as far as the short-lived, as invading: advertising messages, phone books, newspapers, posters, tourist guides, e-mail advertising ... These statements over which we take a look, we turn over or consult, but seldom we read them in the real meaning of the word. (Maingueneau, 2007)

But newspapers have many other roles. For example, most of the modern day papers have a section for the readers' opinion about any event in the society. This is an important way to keep in permanent contact with the readers and to support the development of the public opinion.

The modern media

We are surrounded by media and that's why media plays a very significant role in our society today. Newspapers, magazines, shows on TV, the music on the radio, news on the internet, everything means media and we can not live without it. Media facilitates the access to the information and it fully contributes to the formation of people's opinion.

Using any of the methods mentioned by Carl Hausman, the normal pyramid, the up side down pyramid or the combined one any journalist provide six areas of information: who, what, where, why, and how because these are the most important things the readers are interested, concerning any fact or event. Because society is influenced by media in many ways, the media has to help people to get informed about almost everything and also to form opinions and make judgments regarding the related facts. So, media has to be done in a responsible way which means to keep balance between good and bad.

In a democratic society, media has to be a real locomotive, to act like a guardian who work to keep that society well informed from all point of view. The media has to watch permanently that the democracy to function and trigger the alarm when something goes wrong, because the media has to speak for the people.

Journalistic texts must have a number of special features. When we open a newspaper, we expect to find in its pages certain types of texts. We hope that we will find exciting titles, consistent texts that inform us about current facts, or events that might interest us. We expect also to read texts in a specific form, because the journalistic texts do not offer brute information. In the case of journalistic texts, information is filtered by the journalist so as to meet the public's expectations.

The sociologist Abraham Moles defines information as "the amount of originality, unpredictable that bring a message" (Moles, Abraham, 1967). Filtering information in mass media is not an endeavor done at random. It depends on the nature of the information, the transmission channel (printed press, radio, television, internet) but also on the type of text file that the author wants to achieve (news, reportage, interview, survey, comment).

As a mean of transmitting information, journalistic text is printed in a publication or broadcast of a radio/television program and it respects the graphical and ideological code of publication or the program format of the station in question.

It is also a merchandise (a product meant to be bought and consumed) but a support for the required or desired information. As a result of these constraints, the information will be structured taking into account both of the references or of the public, as well as the functional elements of the related event.

The evaluation of information depending on the degree of involvement of the public often offers to the journalist arguments for choosing the genre publishing activities and the space or the time granted by the respective media information. The information could affect a wider audience or smaller, can involve immediate reactions, removed or not stirs any echo. For example a transport Bucharest strike involve immediate reactions to the inhabitants of the capital, while a strike in the CFR involves the entire population of the country.

In the modern society media has many other roles besides informing or making connections between different parts of the society. Education represents, also an important role of media. The young people can be easily influenced by media. Most of the teenagers try to be like the role models media has presented, to act like them because they simply need attention, or affection, or love. Sometimes, media even affects young people's perception about life, by getting into their mind, disturbing them or changing their behavior, in a good or bad manner.

Entertainment and advertisement are other two very important media roles. There is no doubt media has played significant roles in connecting people all over the world but modern media has become more interested in making money, centering on the news which are hot and good at selling. Thus media these days had to change to draw the readers' attention on the fact considered to be important for each type of media channel. One of the most important reasons media has to have such an attitude is due to the fact we live in a world strongly connected with money, so quite often, important figures in the society are targeted just for the media to earn as much money as it can from publicity and selling.

But, using a correct editorial policy, trying to be honest with their readers, listeners or viewers almost all types of media will continue to be able to change the society, the way people think and they can easily become a very powerful social tool.

Conclusion

The article has offered a short description of the roles that media has played and continue to plays in society. Of course, there are many aspects which can be analyzed more profound and the results of the former analyses will be different enough from that in these article.

It will be a chance for other researchers to try to find other roles that media played or plays and I hope that the study will represent an important source of information for them.

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