The Media Creates, rather than Reflects, a Society’s Values

In our world, the media provides a form of mass communication that has a broad influence on our society. So it is understandable that the media may have opportunity to create, as well as reflect a society’s values. However, three points that correspond with this statement that argues that the media does more to create rather than reflect a society’s values are the opportunities for bias, portrayals of ideals, and the mass influence social media can play on reporting news.

Our media is portrayed by companies with discrete views, so ideas can be biased in the way they are presented. For example, it has been brought up that the race of terrorists plays a role in how they are portrayed in the media. People that aren’t white are targeted as terrorists or are connected to ISIS and danger. While white individuals are depicted as troubled or mentally ill and are not defined by their race.

A constant example of how the media creates a society’s values is the notion the ideal woman. From a young age, children are exposed to what they media decides an ideal woman would physically look like and act. This is due to the constant social media presence of celebrities, models, and how accessible this content is. There are now professional social media influencers that as their careers promote products and persuade others using their large social media presence and audience.

Another example that supports this statement is the role social media plays in sharing news. Now more than ever there are more avenues of finding, sharing and learning information. Because of this, many people find themselves learning about breaking news on social media. While a social media platform is similar to other news sharing sites much of its content is designed to target distinctive people. For example, in 2016 there were many terrorist attacks across the world. But attacks in Paris were much more prevalent on social media than the attacks that were happening at a similar time in Istanbul. Supportive Facebook filters deemed it was important to pray for Paris, while there was a lack of support for Istanbul. While there are many reasons for why this occurred, in hindsight this may have provided inherent values to our society deeming which country deserved our support more.