

Behind-the-Scenes Secrets of a Fake News Machine

Much is being made about fake news these days. But there's nothing new about it. Major news outlets have been pumping out fake news for decades—distorting reality, exaggerating the truth, twisting the facts to suit their political views and staying silent on real news that is inconvenient to their political positions.

Of late, our East Coast media elite has been manufacturing scandals from misstated words uttered by politicians who have been deemed as deplorable while ignoring the misstatements of others who they have beknighted as worthy of their protection. They truly see themselves as “kingmakers” which explains their shock and contempt when the public recently elected the president and Congress that they had worked so hard to demonize.

Fair, objective, balanced journalism died ages ago. I can trace a seismic shift back to the Lyndon Johnson administration, when the government routinely churned out fake news about the Vietnam War and outraged most of the press corps on a regular basis. Then there came Richard Nixon with his house of lies who cemented the withering contempt of an already jaded press.

Even erstwhile respectable talk shows have long since tumbled into the mire. As a guest on one of the most popular afternoon talk shows a few years back, I witnessed it firsthand. At the time, I knew that my views (on homosexuality) were almost never allowed on television except as a means to ambush conservative guests. I knew I'd be facing extreme distortions of my position from a phalanx of opposing guests. And I knew if I started to say anything that made sense, they'd go to commercial and never return to that subject. They'd simply

return from commercial with an entirely new attack. So I weighed the pros and cons of getting ambushed versus getting the truth out about God's love and transforming power for the homosexual and decided to risk it.

Even though I had been promised only one opponent, (a typical ploy of the alt-left media), I knew from friends who had gone on afternoon talk shows before that that would almost certainly be a lie. And indeed, when I showed up on set, there were at least four opponents lined up against me—leaders from among the top gay activist organizations in the country.

I was ready for the “schmoozing trick” (where at least one of the producers of the show pretends to be secretly on your side). In fact, the producers that welcomed me could have won Academy Awards for their performance in pretending to be fair, honest and practically my best friend. But as prepared as I was for that subterfuge, I was floored by what else they had in mind.

Day one was a taped interview with three of the producers—to be used as a role-in for the live-to-tape show the following day. During that first interview, I answered the questions about homosexuality with the same grace and love I felt Jesus would have employed. But that's not what they wanted. They wanted me to be an angry, hateful Christian leader—a stereotype that would serve the purpose of discounting anything I might say.

That is a trick put forward by Marshall Kirk and Erastes Pill in a 1984 article published in the now defunct *Christopher Street* magazine (and later expanded in a book called *After the Ball*). In the article, Kirk & Pill put forward a manifesto for how gay activists could deceive the culture and overturn its then overwhelming opposition to homosexual behavior. (They referred to their proposal as a “study of the art of social persuasion”.)

They suggested that gay activists should enter into a campaign that is “calculated, hard-hitting and manipulative”. With unusual honesty, they added: “We are talking about propaganda.”

Most ominously, the authors recommended that those who opposed their cause (you and me) should be made to look bad in the public eye.

“To be blunt,” they wrote, “they must be vilified. ... made to look so nasty that average Americans will want to dissociate themselves from such types.”

How will that be achieved? They wrote: “The public should be shown images of ranting homophobes whose secondary traits and beliefs disgust middle America ... including images of the Ku Klux Klan ... bigoted southern ministers drooling with hysterical hatred to a degree that looks both comical and deranged ... thugs ... convicts ... Nazis, etc.” They called it “a campaign to vilify ... with all America watching.”

So when the producers of the talk show saw that I was being fair, grace-filled and loving toward homosexuals, they began to object to my answers. The first objection from one of the producers was: “You can’t say that.” I was rather stunned and inquired as to why they would fly me all the way to Hollywood to not say what I thought. Their answer: “We want you to say this instead” (and then proceeded to tell me what they wanted me to say)—something (you guessed it) mean and hateful. I told them I was going to respond honestly to their questions because the heart of my ministry was the same love for homosexuals that moved Jesus Christ to save me from that lifestyle.

Well, they weren’t about to have that.

Their next tactic was to ask me the same questions three or four times in a row. Sadly, I did not see the trick that was embedded in the tactic and wearily kept answering the same

questions over and over again. What they were fishing for were certain words from my mouth that they could later edit together to make me sound hateful, and sure enough, that is what appeared as the role-in for the “live” taping the following day.

I was familiar with the “hidden camera” trick used during “live-to-tape” filming, where producers place extra cameras out of sight whose sole purpose is to catch the unwanted guest with a tired, shocked or unhappy expression. Then, after the taping, they edit that expression onto the end of a tragic or touching story by the opposing guest (such as a story about their past sexual abuse or bullying). With one deft edit, they make the unwanted guest look like a callous monster in the final, aired version of the show.

Fake News! And it has been going on for a century or more—only now, the deceivers don’t even bother to pretend that they are being fair and balanced.

Today, it is worse than ever. There is no effort, it seems, by anyone in the news business to be truthful and objective, although there have been a brave few who have tried. But since all of the news organizations are now owned by ideologues, such brave hearts quickly lose their jobs and disappear from the airwaves.

Just look at the blatant attempts by the media to destroy our new president with the twisting of statements, outright lies and innuendos that used to mark out the gossip rags or tabloids from the professional newspapers and broadcasts. “Racist”? Donald Trump? He’s a New York liberal, for goodness’ sake. But he’s nobody’s puppet, and ideologues will eat and bury their own just as quickly as any tyrant from the past.

But here’s the rub for all who are offended on this issue of fake news. Many of us lie, too, and in an arena that is far more consequential.

This is Part One of a two-part series. {eoa}

Dr. David Kyle Foster is the producer of *Pure Passion TV* and the documentaries, “*Such Were Some of You*” (), “*How Do You Like Me Now? When a Child, Parent, Spouse or Sibling Says They’re Gay*” () and the upcoming “*TranZformed: Finding Peace with Your God-Given Gender*” () (coming June 2017). He is also the author of *Love Hunger (Chosen)*, *Sexual Healing (Regal)* and *Transformed Into His Image: Hidden Steps on the Journey to Christlikeness (Laurus Books)*.