

**Is there a “Liberal Media”?**

We have all heard the story of how little George Washington was unable to lie about a cherry tree. These days, however, we now know the cherry story was a myth. Yet this myth is taught in schools today as a “useful myth” and has been around for more than 200 years.

The same is true with the myth of a “liberal media”. For the past few decades, many conservatives and journalists have known that the liberal media was a myth, yet it has become a useful one. For liberals, the response to the liberal media myth can be best said in five words: If only it were true.

The problem is that the myth has been perpetuated for so long and too many individuals believe a liberal media actually exists. A well-known neoconservative columnist, William Kristol, once confessed to a reporter, “The liberal media were never that powerful, and the whole thing was often used as an excuse by conservatives for conservative failures.” In spite of that, Kristol is shameless about his own admittance and uses the myth to exploit the ignorant prejudices of his own faction. Pat Buchanan, a former Republican candidate for president, admits that a liberal media does not exist, but every Republican uses the myth to their advantage. Sean Hannity now substitutes the label of liberal media with “mainstream media” and uses the myth to spin his attacks on Democrats. What Hannity fails to realize, is that he is now a part of the “mainstream media” by being employed with Fox News.

Furthermore, many believe the media is owned and controlled by liberals. The fact is, in this age of mega-corporations, journalism is being monopolized with a diminishing number of parent corporations. Moreover, the owners and PACs of those corporations donate heavily to the Republican Party. Another false belief is that reporters are liberal and therefore, the media is liberal. To begin with, reporters have their reports edited and typically do not state their opinions. Also, it should be noted that the political beliefs of almost two-thirds of media reporters are in the center of the political spectrum. And then there is the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. The Board of the CPB is controlled by Republican consultants, conservative lobbyists and a former RNC chair.

In addition, the number of conservative voices and columnists in the media today, in comparison with their liberal counterparts, the conservatives have a 3-to-1 advantage.

Also, as a whole, Utah has a conservative media. In Davis County for example, when a Democrat presents an issue or an agenda, the media will usually seek a Republican response. But the media will rarely seek a Democratic response for a Republican issue or agenda.

Yet with the evidence of a growing conservative media, some will continue to believe that a liberal media still exists. With that in mind, Simon and Garfunkel said it best, "...still a man hears what he wants to hear and disregards the rest".

Happy Thanksgiving and God bless. Please donate to the local Food Pantries.

Richard Watson

Chair, Davis County Democrats