



Media Fairness Initiative

A Look at Bias in the News



Media Fueled Obama's Election

1/7/09

During the presidential campaign, media coverage of Sen. McCain was three times more negative than coverage of President-elect Obama, according to the nonpartisan Project for Excellence in Journalism. A separate University of Illinois study found that media bias "can lead to the election of the wrong candidate."

President-elect Obama won by about seven percent. **That means if the media's one-sided coverage changed the minds of just four voters out of 100, the media – because of their bias – determined the outcome of the election!**

Now that the election is over, will President-elect Obama get a free ride from his media allies? **One cable news host is already on record as saying it's his "job as a journalist to ensure that this presidency is successful."**



Our nation faces significant challenges. We need vigorous debate to chart the course ahead. By adhering to the highest standards of journalism, the media can provide a valuable service. But we need to hold them accountable.

Where were the Media ... ?



... when President-elect Obama appointed individuals to cabinet positions despite the fact that some face widespread concerns about ethical improprieties and conflicts of interest?

... when President-elect Obama determined that an **internal** investigation would decide the extent to which his staff was involved in conversations with Gov. Blagojevich about Obama's vacated Senate seat?

Media Fairness Initiative Background

Purposes:

- 1) Not to censor or condemn, but to encourage the media to adhere to the highest standards of reporting and provide the American people with the facts, balanced stories and fair coverage of the news.
- 2) To encourage Americans to be educated news consumers and to voice their disapproval of biased reporting.

Activities:

The MFI promotes meetings with members of congress, members of the media, journalism professors and students, media watch organizations, and other stakeholders to discuss the problem and generate possible solutions. The MFI also supports coordinated messaging techniques such as op-eds, floor statements, news conferences and releases, and media appearances.

How to get involved:

To support the Media Fairness Initiative, please contact Dan Rosso in Rep. Lamar Smith's office at 202-225-4236 or dan.rosso@mail.house.gov.