

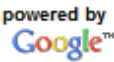


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A Study Proves That Media Can Subtly Induce Society To Justify Violence Against Women

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The media can induce some people to justify, without noticing it, cases of violence against women which appear in press, as they often look for the assumed "reasons or causes" which provoked the crime, "which leads people to look for a reason for a fact that should be unjustifiable in any case". This is one of the main conclusions of a study carried out in the department of Social Psychology and Behavioural Science Methodology of the University of Granada by researchers M^a Carmen Herrera y Francisca Expósito, who state that the treatment given by certain media to these crimes "is extremely dangerous, and gives rise to erroneous conceptions of one of the most serious problems of present world".

In the study, the researchers intended to confirm the influence of the news related violence against women on the social perception of this blot. They worked with a sample of 300 students of different faculties of the University of Granada, with an average age of 28 years old. The researchers presented several news published in national newspapers related to violence against women to the participants, dividing the sample into three groups according to the degree of manipulation of the news: in the first case, the aggressor's violence was justified ("he was drunk", "he was a violent person"); in the second case, they provided information related to the victim ("the aggressor had asked her to marry him and she refused") and, finally, they presented the same news in a completely objective way.

Possible reasons?

In the light of the results, the Professors of the UGR insist that, in the treatment of news related to violence against women, they have found frequently "justifications or reasons" (alcohol, jealousy, arguments, situations of prolonged unemployment, etc) "presented by the media to the audience as possible causes of the described situation".

One of the most interesting results of the work is that the participants tend some how to justify the aggression when they are told the news exploring the assumed reasons which provoked the crime, "trying to find a reason for a fact that should be unjustifiable in any case".

The study also reveals that readers ten to explain the described fact in a different way according to the type of information included in the news, this is, if the journalist provides details related to the victim or, to the contrary, if he provides information related to the aggressor. "Paradoxically insist the Professors of the UGR this difference redounds to the trend to maintain the situation of inequality between men and women to explain a fact provoked but such reason".

The researchers say that, with this work, "they do not intend to point to the media as responsible for the increase of cases of violence against women", but they think that, after the results obtained, "the media should be more rigorous when it comes to tell the news related to this kind of violence".

The results of this work will be published in the next issue of the journal *Anuario de Psicología Jurídica*.

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