**A Liberal’s View**

**Read the Facts: No Liberal Media Bias**



**By S. Devereaux Sanford**

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For all who assert that there is a ‘liberal media bias’ in political news coverage, saying that President Obama gets more favorable press than likely Republican nominee Mitt Romney the facts prove you wrong. The Pew Research Center’s recent study shows that of all the presidential candidates during this past election cycle, President Obama has had the least favorable coverage by the news media. Since January, Romney has actually had twice as much positive coverage as President Obama.

While it is fashionable to complain about a liberal press and jump on the bandwagon of those that use it as an excuse for not always getting the coverage slanted the way they prefer, saying that the press has been biased or unfair to Republicans is just not true. The investigation that Pew conducted was produced through two forms of coding of media content. One involved computer-assisted analysis of more than 11,000 news outlets and the other of 52 newspapers, television, radio, and web outlets from January 2 through April 15 of this year. It revealed, among other facts, that Romney received significantly more positive news coverage than did President Obama.

Over the past four months, researchers found news coverage of Romney was 39 percent positive, 32 percent negative, and 29 percent neutral, whereas Obama’s coverage was 18 percent positive, 34 percent negative, and 34 percent neutral.

Clearly the public has been consistently shown a negative portrayal of President Obama. That, in large part, is due to the fact that for many months he has been the target of multiple Republican candidates attacking his record and his competence as they sought to take his job. Typical politics, but certainly not media bias in favor of Obama.

An interesting fact that came out of the study is that Ron Paul regularly received the most positive portrayal of any candidate in the GOP race. However, if you thought the media tended to ignore him more than the other candidates – you were right. Paul received about one-eighth as much coverage as Romney and about one-quarter as much as Santorum and Gingrich. He also got less scrutinizing, or vetting, of his personal background and public record. It was the lowest of any candidate in the primaries. Think about how many times you even heard about his wife or family. Not much. Paul had a huge following; however it seems that the media never really took his campaign seriously.

Santorum, who for a while was Romney’s chief rival, had some important primary victories though he never luxuriously in a sustained period of positive press. There were times when his coverage was more positive than negative, especially following his victories in Missouri, Colorado and Minnesota and the week of his win in Louisiana, but the doubts over his strong beliefs and his financing made them shorter, rather than sustained periods of glory to gloat over.

As for Newt Gingrich, his personal life was scrutinized and he surged up and down in political news coverage. However, he really had only one week during the primary season where he significantly received more positive press coverage than negative, and that was the week of his victory in South Carolina in January. He then became a less significant presence in about one-third of the media campaign stories, then around March he was in less than 1% of the campaign stories. His predictable goodbye this week is no surprise to anyone.

The race is about to begin between Obama and Romney and there won’t be any lack of press following their tactics, strategies and behaviors. But next time you hear someone saying it is a liberal media favoring Obama, make sure you tell them they are wrong. You now know better.

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