

Ethical reporting

Gender Based Violence

Journalism

- Inform
- Educate
- Entertain

Story-telling

- The Good
- The Bad
- The Ugly
- The Beautiful

- Good News is Not News!

Two types

- Politics
- Crime
 - GBV!

GBV

- Domestic violence (intimate partner)
- Sexual violence
- Sexual harassment
- Trafficking and sex work
- Transactional sex

- Around 24% of women have experienced some form of GBV and 23% of men have admitted to being perpetrators (Gender Links, 2012)
- Costs of intimate partner violence: Rs 1.4 b (UNDP/MRC, 2010)
 - direct medical and health care services
 - productivity losses

Reporting on GBV

- A two-sided coin
 - Inform and Educate (denounce)
 - Entertain! (spectacle)

- The media is one of the most important socializing influences in people's lives. Negative and stereotype images of women in the media, and stereotype images of women in the media, and the ways in which the media reports on gender-based violence (as a lesser crime or violation) contributes to the **acceptance of gender-based violence as a norm**. The dominant myth is that the media is neutral and objective. This is not so. Each journalist brings to the newsroom his/her views opinion, beliefs and attitudes.

- These inform the way in which the journalist views a particular issue. Thus the media is not a passive transmitter of information to society but a source of information that comes with value judgements. **Because the media informs our understanding of issues, it has a critical role to play in processes of transformation.**
- **REPORTING GENDER BASED VIOLENCE, IPS**

Storyline

- A victim (sufferer) - passive
- A perpetrator (actor) - active

- Activists prefer the term “survivor” to “victim”

Coverage of GBV

- First page
- Explicit headlines
- Sordid pictures (or sexy pictures of victims)
- Stereotyping

Examples of headlines

- Le mystère de la femme démembrée
- Mortelles... passions !
- Il étrangle sa femme 'infidèle' et la découpe

Example

- *Il ne pourra être présent à la naissance de ses jumeaux prévue dans cinq mois. Thierry Stéphane Agathe, 22 ans, a fini par avouer, hier, avoir assassiné son ex-petite amie Marie Rachelle Géraldine Rose, 21 ans, à cité Argy, Flacq, en lui assenant une trentaine de coups de couteau dans l'après-midi de dimanche. Ce qui plonge son actuelle petite amie en plein désarroi.*

- *Le mobile du meurtre relèverait d'une affaire de relations extra-conjugales alléguées entretenues par la victime avec confirmation obtenues par Asish Takoordyal en ce début d'année.*
- *Tariq Gaffoor-Ally aurait, alors, sombré dans la jalousie et aurait commandité cette attaque à l'acide.*

- *Il pense régler cette affaire une bonne fois et exécuter son sinistre plan de se débarrasser de celle qui le rend cocu. Il étrangle Deepa à mort.*
- *Mourir assassinée par l'homme qu'elle a aimé à la folie. C'est le destin tragique que Marie Rachelle Géraldine Rose (20 ans) partage avec deux autres victimes de crime passionnel : Bhanoomatee Takoordoyal (33 ans), étranglée à mort avant d'être découpée en morceaux au moyen d'un 'grinder' par son mari, Asish Takoordoyal*

Issues

- Identity protection / confidentiality
 - No names / no pictures
 - Yet often indications
- Poor sourcing: Secondary sources / hearsay / rumour

Subtext

- Emphasis on relationship
- Alleged behaviour / clothes
- Jealousy as ultimate mark of love

- Somehow, she “asked” for it...

How to improve?

- What are some of the ways the media can provide more sensitive and in-depth coverage of domestic violence that can actually help people and lead to a better understanding of the issue?

Ideas for stories

- Different types of GBV
- Big picture: stats, factors, studies
- Specific factors leading to GBV
- Malfunctions in society (relationship men-women, upbringing, attitude to working women, separation and divorce...)

Ideas for stories

- The cycle of violence
- How GBV perpetuates patriarchy
- Costs of GBV to personal and national development

Ideas for stories

- Contextual support (institutions, family, friends...), red flags
- Protection Orders / enforcement
- Is rehabilitation possible?
- Why women appear to put up with GBV?

- Educate yourself on the legislation
- Identify & address common questions / misconceptions.
- Put gender-based violence in context.
- Shed light on causes and contributing factors for GBV; warning signs for GBV
- Be careful of sources who are emotionally involved with the perpetrator.
- Avoid quoting distant acquaintances/colleagues.
- Compile publishable sample materials on GBV through collaboration with local victims advocates, service providers, and list references to NGO services and other resources for survivors of GBV

GBV

- Ensure visibility
- But as a Human Rights Issue!

References

- Strategies for Media Representatives on Covering Gender-Based Violence
- Reporting Gender Based Violence, IPS, 2009
- Gender Links Reports