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Paper Title: Use and Abuse of Scientific Knowledge: The Portrayal in the Media

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Abstract

The utility of science and media to the human race is not a point of debate. The new paradigm is the inter play between science and media. Both are cost and time intensive endeavors, having a huge impact on public life and conduct. The use and benefits of sciences are innumerable and stand uncontested. The abuse of science comes from three sources. And this abuse happens because science sells. The three sources of abuse are:

- Politics
- Media
- Industry

These three sources are intrinsically linked. Our focus will be “media”

“Advertising may be described as the science of arresting human intelligence, long enough to make money from it”

Stephen Leacock

Science is like religion. It has the potential of being used as an ideological weapon by people with ill intention. People/public usually because of their limited knowledge of science will hesitate from asking piercing questions of pseudo- scientific demagogues. The scientific jargons are impressive giving casual statements a veneer of rationality. The politicians and the industry love to use this rationality to their advantage. Media is the tool. However, scientists also use the media as a tool to spread information, gain popularity and make money. They also use it as scare tactic. The media personnel or journalists will also use science to inform the public and for personal gains. The end result is sensationalization of science by all the stake holders. The power of media and science combined is over whelming and can be dangerous. The aim should be to create more linkages between the two and aim for a more harmonious relationship than the one that exist now.

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