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**The "Noose" Media: Strange Fruits, Bloody Leaves, and Swinging Bodies  
Student Writers' Corner**

**By Tolu Olorunda**

**BlackCommentator.com Student Guest Commentator**

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It is amazing to watch the network news channels bicker over who's more biased than the other. While it might be amusing to some, one cannot undercut the tragedy that "pathwayed" this unimpeded act of folly. It is indeed a deep reminder of what passes for journalism today: Corporate demons, morphed into news-giants, but doing very little to deliver depth and density in their packages. The road from independence to corporate-control has been a long and winding one. Its drivers have included shady politicians, imperialists, capitalists, colonialists, dictators, senators, governors, democrats, republicans and independents. It is with this understanding that we mourn the deep tragedy of Cynthia McKinney's virulent presidential campaign being grossly overlooked by the mainstream press. How oxymoronic is it, that for networks with such promising slogans as "The best political team on television," "The place for politics" and "Fair and Balanced political coverage," lackluster seems to be the name of the game.

It is also noteworthy to remember, that while our champion, Cynthia McKinney, was being unapologetically ignored, such poignant questions by white pundits we're being raised: "Is Barack Obama black enough"? "Is he too black"? "Is he a Muslim"? "Is he a black nationalist"? "What's up with his wife"? "And why isn't she a doormat like the conventional white presidential-spouse"? It is even more disheartening, to comprehend how this collage of idiocy, came from the same networks which obsessively stalked the scandals of Anna Nicole Smith, Paris Hilton, Natalie Holloway and Britney spears. All at the expense of slain, abducted and missing sisters of color such as Tamika Huston, Sanchez-Toledo, Tionda Bradley and Diamond Bradley. It is this same white-establishment-media that found it necessary to curtail the prophetic

tradition of the black church, into a "loud-mouthed ritual of hate-teaching." If objective analysis and critical-deference is paid, it would appear unequivocally clear that Rev. Dr. Jeremiah Wright was, in fact, accurate in his analysis of the desperation displayed by half-baked talking-heads, who strived to no avail in dissecting the comprehensive history of black liberation theology. What was presented as an investigation was a subliminal assault on the black church.

How ironic is it, that the exact media channels, which were quick to self-commend in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, were virtually absent in the subsequent weeks, months and years of heart-aching problems for displaced residents. New Orleans evacuees have experienced innumerable tribulations ever since the storm. Just a few of those tribulations are contaminated trailers, police brutality, Ku Klux Klan activities, air pollution and governmental-apathy. The most recent challenge was the demolition of public housing, by "The Department of Housing and Urban Development." In the preceding weeks before the "December 2007" ruling, there were massive protests, strong resistance and vocal oppositions to the proposition, but no substantial news coverage to amplify the anti-demolition voices. The "ever-dependable" media left the helpless New-Orleans residents alone to fight "their" war on gentrification.

It is presumable they had "more important coverage", such as Britney Spears going bald. This kind of travesty is what accounts for the insubstantial coverage of the food crisis in Haiti, the repression of Darfurians, and the-convenient-Olympic-influenced-reports about Tibetan oppression. In 2005, "Black Entertainment Television" announced plans to eliminate the half hour program, BET Nightly News. This decision resulted in moral outrage from within the black community. BET's president and chief operating officer, Debra Lee, seemed to be unscathed by this reality, as she boldly proclaimed in a press conference, "With 24-hour news networks and everyone getting news off the Internet, our audience doesn't want to wait until 11 p.m. to find out what the news is." The show had been looked upon as a beacon of illumination for the constant dangers that afflict black people nationally and internationally. To see BET impenitent about their decision, was considered a slap in the face of concerned viewers.

It is puzzling to ascertain, that while BET is not the only TV network on cable, no other major network has attempted to employ a black newscaster for a nightly slot. Perhaps they fear that a black or brown journalist might be unwilling to prostrate before the big-money industries that dictate what script is read on the airwaves. It is also worth recalling how the black community was volubly in opposition to the Iraq War from its inception. At a time when it was deemed unpatriotic and immoral to critique the hubristic policies of the present administration, the black community rose up as the no. 1 constituency in stark dissent over the War plans. Maybe, our incompatibility with a system of authoritarianism makes us unqualified for the jobs of sheep like pundits on TV.

Journalist, Author, Freedom Fighter and Political prisoner, Mumia Abu Jamal, once wrote about the phenomenon of media control. In his essay titled, "When the Media Manages US," he noted, "The media manages us with words; like 'coalition forces', like 'terrorist', and finally, and perhaps most fatally, like 'democracy.' Not since the Vietnam War have we seen such myth-making by the media; for did they not then try to spin the web of 'democracy' over the eyes and minds of millions? Only in the rare,

underground and radical press could those truths be spoken, for the major dailies, the three big networks (back then, there were only three), and corporate radio told the government's side of the story. And that story was a lie." Those radical press organizations have effortlessly fought against the lies, falsehoods and fabrications, often propagated by mainstream news-media networks. Exemplars of this righteous cause are Democracy Now! PBS and Free Speech TV. Other independently-owned media organizations such as Youth Media Council, Block Report, Turn off Channel Zero and Luv4Self network, have taken up the fight against entertainment corporations which have pulverized and cheapened the integrity of the black woman. While it does seem an excruciating and unbearable fight to the finish line, it must be taken into consideration that the salvation of the faith of our fathers, the tradition of our mothers and the history of our ancestors is the prize. This is one battle we cannot afford to lose!!


**BlackCommentator.com** Student Guest Commentator, Tolu Olorunda, is an 18-year-old local activist/writer and a Nigerian immigrant. Click [here](#) to reach Tolu Olorunda.

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