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ENGL 401.03

29 September 2020

Analysis of “Targeted”

Targeted is an investigative journalism article released by the Tampa Bay Times. It was written by Kathleen McGrory and Neil Bedi and is about Pasco County Sheriff Chris Nocco and his highly criticized intelligence program. This program “generates lists of people it considers likely to break the law, based on arrest histories, unspecified intelligence and arbitrary decisions by police analysts.” This program has been extremely controversial because of its questionable methods of what some Pasco county residents are calling “stalking” and warns of its unjust profiling. I would say this article is successful in informing the public of Pasco County’s predatory Intelligence-led Policing program.

To explain this article’s ethos, I had to research this publication to analyze its credibility. Before finding this article, I had not heard of the Tampa Bay Times, and thus have no gauge on its bias. The Tampa Bay Times has been around since 1884 newspaper to accompany its website tampabay.com. From the name of the publication, and quick look at their website, I can infer that the Tampa Bay Times primarily serves the state of Florida and more specifically the area surrounding Tampa Bay. This publication has had many Pulitzer prize winner over the time since its founding.

Though I do not have enough information to state the publication as a whole's bias, I do suspect that one of the authors of this article has a slight left lean. The authors occasionally paint the officers as the villain, terrorizing helpless civilians. That may be because the public opinion on police officers has shifted greatly over the last few months and the authors might be trying to appeal to an audience who may be more critical of law enforcement than the average American is or would have been 5 months ago. I would much rather say that the officers are acting as extra nosy parole officers. I would say that the use of Kairos of this article is very important and would have a much smaller audience if this came out 7 or 8 months before.

Along with the two writers of this article, a photographer is also credited with providing all the pictures of some of the impacted families. To me, this could add to the publication's credibility because it shows that these journalists went the extra mile and met with the people who have been directly affected by the program in question. The inclusion of photographs of the victims may add to the pathos of this piece.

To continue with the pathos of this piece, this article has minimal appeals to emotion. Due to the nature of investigative journalism, articles like these rely more on facts and appeals to logic, otherwise known as logos. Though this article has minimal pathos, the authors do add quotes of people they interview that are heavily pathos-based like this quote: "Kennedy, the John Jay criminologist, called the agency's tactics "child abuse." "There is nothing that justifies terrorizing school kids," he said." (McGrory). These are few and far between though and I believe that this adds to the strength of their story by relying on appeals to logic rather than emotion is a good way to get a larger audience of a message.

For the logos of this article, there is many. I would say that this article is close to 80%-90% logos. This is evident by the sources the authors cite are police reports and press releases.

The authors also took great care in telling the victim's stories as well. Police reports and press releases are good primary source documents that are usually the best places to get information from. This is also good to use because a writer can use direct quotes from the sheriff himself or the officer filing the reports. For example, when writing about a manual to the program, the authors quote it by saying: ““If the offender does not feel the pressure, if the offender is not arrested when they commit their next crime, or if the offender is left to feel their punishment is menial,” the manual says, “the strategy will have no impact.”” (McGrory). To go along with this, the authors also questioned members of the public who have been affected the most. The authors ask these people and their family about their encounters with police that might suspect that some of the police reports may be fraudulent. This is the only sort of counterpoint the article presents, police report vs. eyewitness.

Some of the topics mentioned in this article relate and can be found elsewhere. For instance, Intelligence-led Policing is not a new concept and is easily found with a quick browser search. Even the FBI has a page on its website pertaining to ILP. ILP has a well sourced Wikipedia page as well.

I will conclude this by deciding whether this article is successful in arguing the idea that Sheriff Nocco's program is unjust and has led to the harassment of Pasco County citizens as well as numerous fines for minor infractions.

Works Cited

McGrory, Kathleen, et al. "A Futuristic Data Policing Program Is Harassing Pasco County Families." *Pasco's Sheriff Created a Futuristic Program to Stop Crime before It Happens. It Monitors and Harasses Families. / Investigations / Tampa Bay Times*, Tampa Bay Times, 3 Sept. 2020, projects.tampabay.com/projects/2020/investigations/police-pasco-sheriff-targeted/intelligence-led-policing/.