

1. In 2011 a revolutionary wave called the Arab Spring got the attention of CNN and they decided to send a team to Bahrain to produce a one hour documentary. The Arab Spring was a series of anti-government protests, uprisings and armed rebellions that spread across the Middle East in early 2011 (Manfreda, 2016).

Amber Lyon is an award winning journalist and photographer that lead the investigation of the Arab Spring in Bahrain. In 2012 CNN aired the documentary titled “iRevolution” exclusively to the U.S audience. Even though the documentary won awards CNN International (CNNi), which is the most watched English speaking news outlet in the Middle East, refused to play it on their network. Lyon had brought attention to the corrupt government of Bahrain; however CNN censored the documentary and refused to replay it. Lyon accused CNN of censoring documentaries of foreign countries to benefit their own agenda. After doing some investigating it was brought to everyone’s attention that the Bahrain Economic Development Board was advertising on CNN and paying for sponsored programming (Greenwald, 2012).

This article is a perfect example of the agenda setting hypothesis. Information went through the mass media and then it reaches the gatekeepers. In this instance the gatekeepers chose not to air the documentary in the Middle East because it didn’t benefit them. The Bahrain government spent 32 million dollars in just public relation fees to help give their regime a better image. The gatekeepers chose to filter the documentary to a certain demographic where it wouldn’t really impact the image of the Bahrain government and in turn it looks like they benefited in sponsorship.

2. This article is a great example to show how spiral of silence was unable to be used against a minority. Usually when it comes to agenda settings the group with the most power tends to get their way. For example CNNi is a big news media outlet and it always has some sort of agenda when reporting or not reporting on certain events. Even though CNNi stonewalled Lyon’s allegations she was able to eventually shine some light on the relationship between the Bahrain government and CNNi.

In 2012 Lyon was coincidentally laid off after her disruptive comments about the Bahrain government and CNNi. CNN stated that it was unrelated and they had decided to outsource their documentaries. CNN emails have been found pressuring Lyon and others to back off of their claims about how corrupt the Bahrain government was. CNN producer were demanding that she make the government look like they were trying to fix the issue rather than to make it worse.

CNN was trying to pressure Lyon’s to conceal her views by making her feel like she was alone in the situation; this is known as fear of isolation. CNN was hoping that Lyon’s had low self-esteem and that would let them bully her into their corner. However, CNN underestimated Lyon’s passion and in turn the spiral of silence wasn’t so quiet.

### Works Cited

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