

Student's Name

Professor

Course

Date

### **How biases cover the truth**

Whether guilty or not guilty, each suspect is supposed to be treated without personal bias in order to give them a fair ruling. *The 12 Angry Men*, by Reginald Rose, is a good example of the very many instances in the world of justice that shows that our personal, psychological and cultural bias could cover the truth from being told and could also lead to a poor judgment whether in matters of justice or personal character. In the movie, you find members of the jury who come from different backgrounds and have different opinions which at some point prove to be helpful to the case of a young boy accused to have stabbed his father. As the jurors argue among them towards finding the truth, they all offer their arguments according to their personal experiences hence crowding their ability to come up with the most preferable ruling. However, juror number 8 sees things from a different angle, having put his personal bias aside and taking time to follow the case proceedings carefully.

Davis (Juror 8) appears to be the most compassionate among the rest of the jurors. He is determined to prove the innocence of the 19-year old that is facing a death penalty for a crime he probably did not commit (Rose 2008). For these reasons, he fears that they may execute the wrong person and fail to find out the truth. As stubborn as he may appear to the rest of the jurors, he asks them to convince him that the boy is guilty and through their reasoning, it is possible to

find out personal biases of each of the jurors with a point to make. He wants to gather all the information before arriving at his decision.

Driven by his anger, juror 3 is convinced that the boy is guilty and he must pay for his crime. He says, "... this kid is guilty. He has to burn." Evidently, his judgment is being corrupted by what happened to his own son. He had a fight with his son and therefore the psychological status he is currently in cannot allow him to see the case from a reasoning point of view. Until he comes down and listens to Davis, the judgment he gives is a bias of his own making. Through this kind of reasoning, the truth of the case would have remained hidden, ending up prosecuting the young man without sufficient evidence (Rose 2008).

Rose has used juror number 10 to bring out bias in the form of racism. The juror is a racist who cannot be reasoned with. He thinks the rest of the jurors are having a hard time to reason as they should. This, therefore, gives the truth no time to be arrived at. He rushes to judge the accused without having closely evaluated the evidence presented. The more he talks, the more the audience can realize that he places himself on a different class and has a bias against "people of color". It is therefore hard to come up with the truth when one is looking down upon other people and is filled with discriminative comments. He uses this aspect to bring other jurors to his side but unfortunately, in the end, he fails and is forced to join the rest (Rose 2008).

Juror number 7 does not care about justice. Instead, he is full of himself and he feels that his time is getting wasted during the process of finding more evidence. Also, he does not quite play well with the rest of the team. His personal time is at a higher cost so he is willing to cover the truth and rush the judgment so they could get over with (Rose 2008).

Among the rest of the jurors, the above mentioned are more stubborn jurors and the major obstacle of the truth. They tend to let their personal issues come in the way of their reasoning. Luckily, Davis is able to convince them by first listening to their reasoning and presenting his so as to convince them otherwise. He is able to change the minds of a few before going for a blow that allows them to vote unanimously; not guilty. Even without having to present them with evidence that proves the defendant not guilty, he is able to appeal to each one of them whenever they bring something up. He uses his principles rather than his personal prejudice to give a fair judgment to the accused. This thereby shows that whenever people let their personal biases, (whether psychological, cultural or personal), the decision-making process may be slow and insufficient hence ending up making the wrong choices. If I were among the jury, I would have not done better than juror number 8. I have seen what comes of not evaluating each decision. Poor results always come whenever you mix personal issues with the decision making process.

Work cited

Reginald Rose, Ed, Lee J. Cobb, Henry Fonda, Sidney Lumet, and Begley. *12 Angry Men*.

Beverly Hills Calif: MGM Home Entertainment, 2008. Print.

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