

Teaching a critical approach to news media bias

John Silva, NBCT Senior Director of Professional Learning
March 17, 2022





John Silva, NBCT
Senior Director of
Professional Learning

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@MrSilva

- My primary role is to design and facilitate professional learning for educators.
- I also teach news literacy concepts to adult audiences.
- I follow trends in misinformation and conspiracy theories.
- I was a MS & HS social studies teacher for 13 years in Chicago Public Schools.



Elizabeth Price

Manager of
Professional Learning

eprice@newslit.org



[@lizprice__](https://twitter.com/lizprice__)

- I help facilitate NLP's professional learning programs through process-building and cross-functional collaboration
- Prior to NLP, I was a program manager at the self-driving car company, Cruise
- Passionate about intersection between technology, equity and justice

Andria Chamberlin for the News Literacy Project

Upon Reflection: 14 lessons from our first 14 years

As a mom and NLP supporter, Wyoming woman values news literacy

NLP experts took to airwaves for National News Literacy Week 2022

LOS ANGELES
PRODUCTIVE CONVERSATIONS
TALKING TO PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE MISINFORMATION

6:47
46° 9

<https://newslit.org>

About the News Literacy Project

Our mission

The News Literacy Project, a nonpartisan national education nonprofit, provides programs and resources for educators and the public to teach, learn and share the abilities needed to be smart, active consumers of news and information and equal and engaged participants in a democracy.

Our vision

News literacy is embedded in the American education experience, and people of all ages and backgrounds know how to identify credible news and other information, empowering them to have an equal opportunity to participate in the civic life of their communities and the country.

Guiding questions for teaching news media bias



Guiding questions for teaching news media bias

- What counts as “news media bias” and who decides?
- Is most bias in news overt/intentional or perceived/incidental?
- Can people’s perceptions of bias be reliable?
- If someone says bias is left or right wing what is the “center” and who decides?
- Is all bias partisan?
- How can journalists and news organizations minimize bias?

News Media Bias:

“ When assumptions or opinions favoring one side (or interpretation) of an issue or event skew news reporting in a way that is unfair or distorting. ”

Questions of bias must focus on news

- Most information that we encounter is inherently biased in some way including opinion, commentary, propaganda, entertainment and even advertising.
- News seeks to inform us and minimize bias by following the standards of quality journalism.
- Before discussing bias, you must question the source. Is it a standards-based news organization?

The term “objectivity” distorts our understanding

- Objectivity in journalism is an aspirational ideal but is often misconstrued and has established an impossible standard in the public consciousness.
- Thinking of the aspiration to be both **fair and accurate** is a more useful conceptual frame.
- This helps us work away from a binary approach to the subject (objective/biased) and toward a critical approach (less biased/more biased).

“ A critical approach recognizes that legitimate, standards-based news organizations demonstrate a concern for fairness and accuracy. ”

Open-ended and unguided prompts can cause students to creatively read bias into news reports.



These types of questions are based on perception and influenced by unconscious biases.

Where is the bias?

What does this media message want you to feel?

Who benefits from this?

What is the intent behind this news report?

Is there a hidden meaning behind this?

Which do you think is less biased?

The New York health department undercounted the number of Covid-19 deaths in nursing homes by thousands during former Gov. Andrew Cuomo's time in office, an audit conducted by state officials found.



New York health department under Cuomo administration undercount...
The New York health department undercounted the number of Covid-19 deaths in nursing homes by thousands during former Gov. Andrew ...

57 77 160

New York comptroller audit concludes Cuomo admin undercounted COVID nursing home deaths



New York comptroller audit concludes Cuomo admin undercounted C...
An audit released on Tuesday by the New York State government concluded that the administration of former New York Gov. Andrew ...

82 156 375

Does this change your view?

 **CNN** @CNN · 2h

The New York health department undercounted the number of Covid-19 deaths in nursing homes by thousands during former Gov. Andrew Cuomo's time in office, an audit conducted by state officials found.



[cnn.com](#)
New York health department under Cuomo administration undercount...
The New York health department undercounted the number of Covid-19 deaths in nursing homes by thousands during former Gov. Andrew ...

57 77 160

 **Fox News** @FoxNews · 13h

New York comptroller audit concludes Cuomo admin undercounted COVID nursing home deaths



[foxnews.com](#)
New York comptroller audit concludes Cuomo admin undercounted C...
An audit released on Tuesday by the New York State government concluded that the administration of former New York Gov. Andrew ...

82 156 375

Unconscious Bias:

“When our brains make quick assessments or judgments based on stereotypes or perceptions. In this case, we perceive a news source to be biased and we “see” that bias more readily.”

Motivated reasoning:

“ To deliberately interpret information in ways that confirm what you already want to believe and to invent reasons to dismiss anything that disproves these beliefs. ”



Sometimes, bias only becomes apparent when viewed in a wider context.



What do think might be considered news media bias in this example?



How about now?

<p>5 NewsChannel 5 Nashville 1 hr • 🌐</p> <p>This convicted felon is the second man to be arrested in the vandalism of the Metro Courthouse during Saturday's riots.</p>  <p>NEWSCHANNEL5.COM Man charged in vandalism of Metro Courthouse,</p>	<p>📅 May 31 at 8:28 PM • 🌐</p> <p>25-year-old Wesley Somers was arrested on charges of felony arson, vandalism, & disorderly conduct for setting fire to Nashville's Historic Courthouse... See More</p>  <p>NEWSCHANNEL5.COM 25-year-old arrested on charges of setting</p>
--	---

5**NewsChannel 5** @NC5 · Jun 2

The pictures above were posted on NewsChannel 5's Facebook page by two different people, a day apart, during our coverage Nashville's protests. Both of these men are charged with causing damage at the courthouse. People are pointing out the difference in the posts. 1/



70 380 572

5**NewsChannel 5** @NC5 · Jun 2

We called the man on the left "a convicted felon" and did not share his name. The man on the right, also with felony convictions, was identified by name. His criminal record wasn't mentioned. The posts are being called implicit bias - and NewsChannel 5 deserves that criticism. 2/

10 50 365

5**NewsChannel 5** @NC5 · Jun 2

Good journalism requires accuracy, but also much more. Our team cares about deeply about fairness, justice, and equity. We do our best to hire talented people from many backgrounds who share those values. 3/

3 19 143

5**NewsChannel 5** @NC5 · Jun 2

We train our team about differences, stereotypes, and the ways bias can show up in our coverage. As part of our training, we have even shown our team examples from across the country that are very similar to the one above. 4/

2 13 106

5**NewsChannel 5** @NC5 · Jun 2

For many years, we have had a diversity team that advises us. Despite all of that, bias can still creep in. Both the community and our own team need to call it when we see it and hold each other accountable. 5/

3 16 140

5**NewsChannel 5** @NC5 · Jun 2

That's what is happening today. We have changed the posts and are sharing the original version with our entire team - so that we can learn, and do better.

27 30 374

Media bias charts can be helpful
but have limitations.

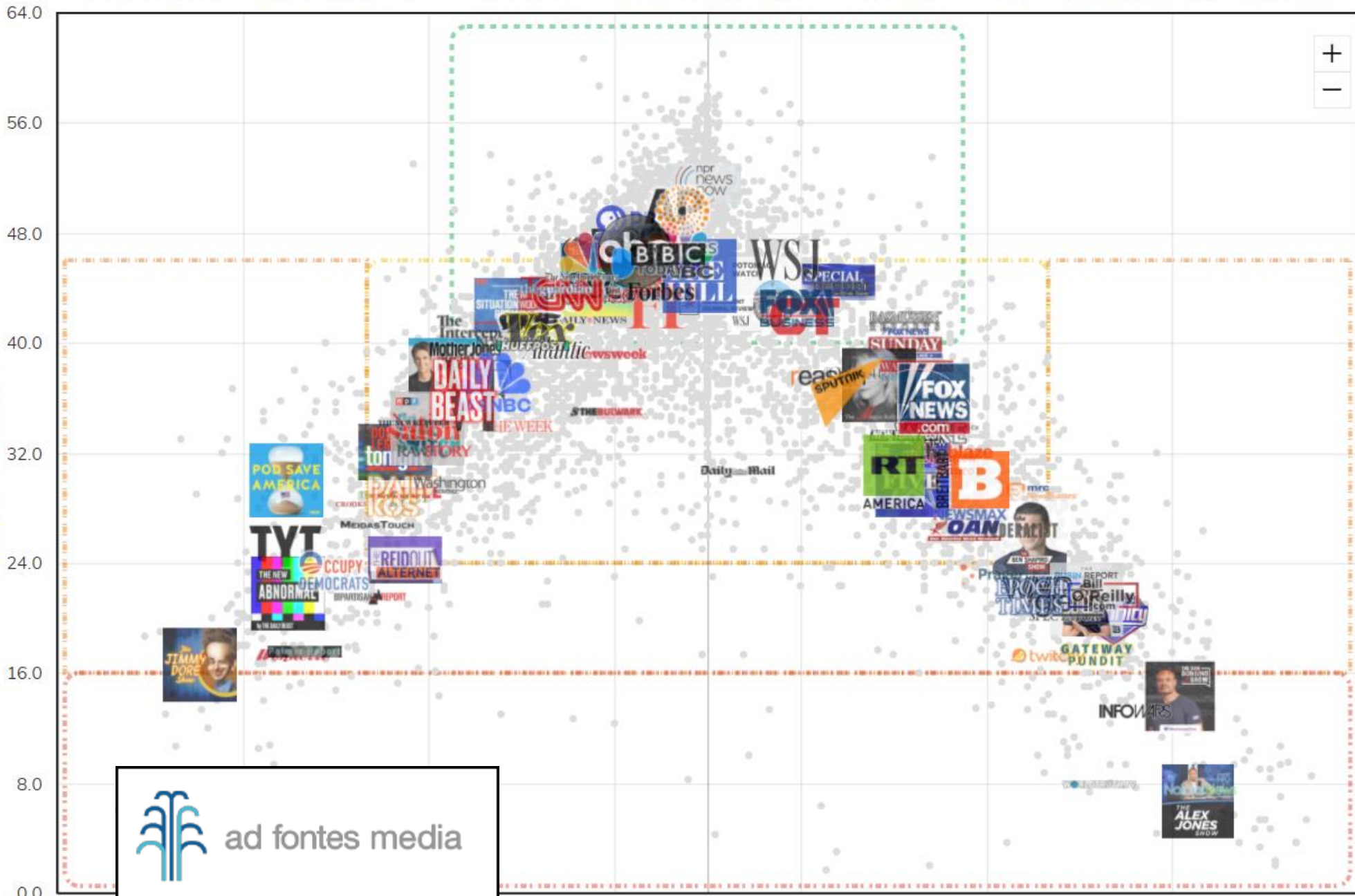


Most Extreme Left Hyper-Partisan Left Skews Left Middle or Balanced Bias Skews Right Hyper-Partisan Right Most Extreme Right

Type Key

Original Fact Reporting
 Fact Reporting
 Complex Analysis or Mix of Fact Reporting and Analysis
 Analysis or High Variation in Reliability
 Opinion or High Variation in Reliability
 Selective or Incomplete Story / Unfair Persuasion / Propaganda
 Contains Misleading Info
 Contains Inaccurate / Fabricated Info

MORE RELIABLE
 Overall Source Reliability
 LESS RELIABLE



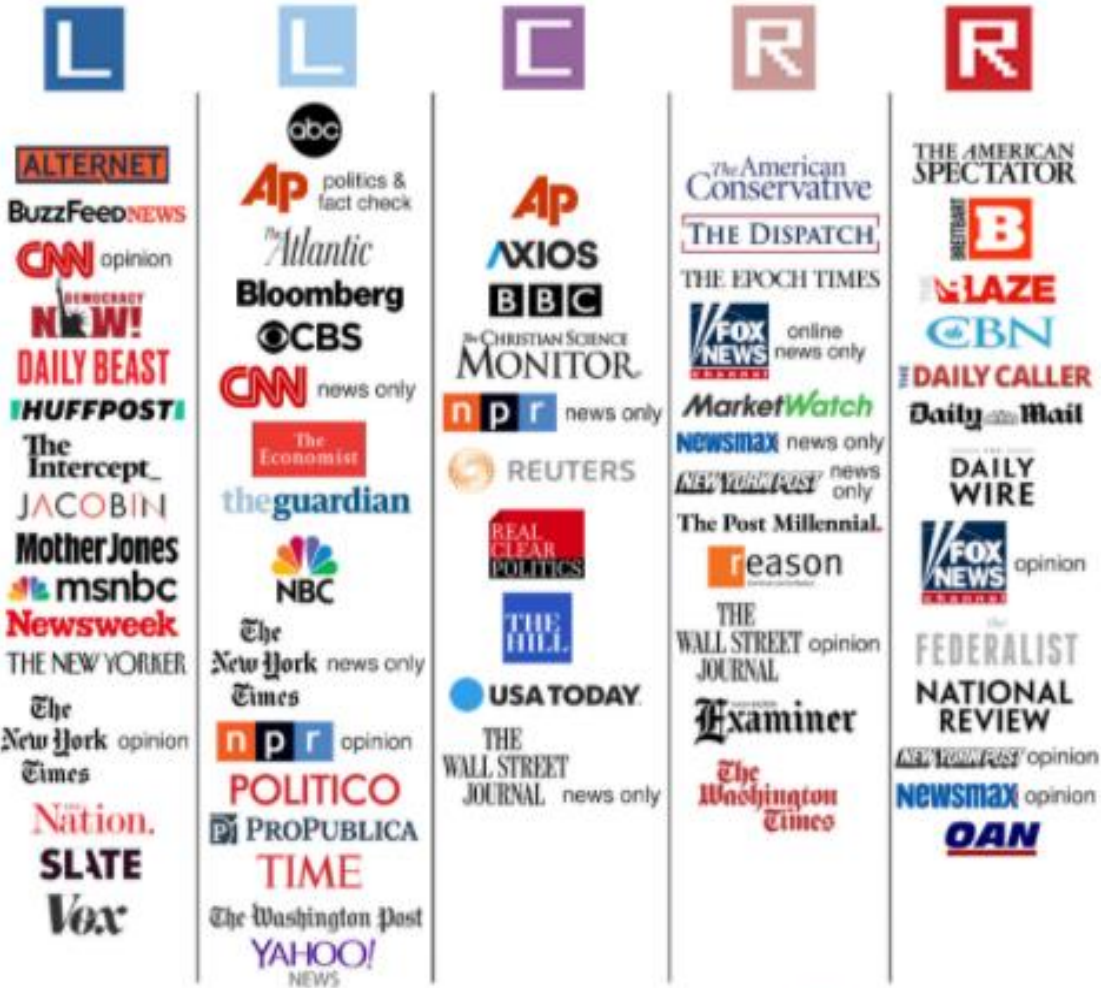
+
-

- Most reliable for news
- Reliable for news, but high in analysis / opinion content /
- Some reliability issues and / or extremism
- Serious reliability issues and / or extremism



AllSides™ Media Bias Chart

All ratings are based on online content only — not TV, print, or radio content.
Ratings do not reflect accuracy or credibility; they reflect perspective only.



L LEFT L LEAN LEFT C CENTER R LEAN RIGHT R RIGHT

AllSides Media Bias Ratings are based on multi-partisan, scientific analysis.
Visit AllSides.com to view hundreds of media bias ratings.

Version 3 | AllSides 2020

Limitations of media bias charts



- Focus is almost exclusively on political bias.
- Inquiry models that are debatable, not definitive ratings.
- Heavily influenced by perception.
- Can reinforce unconscious biases.

Limitations of media bias charts



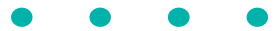
- Reflect more the orientation of opinion and commentary, not news.
- Tend to imply false equivalence between high-quality, standards-based news orgs and overtly partisan or problematic sources.
- Suggest that most newsrooms have a systematic ideological goal or orientation.

With some sources, it's like looking for sugar in a donut shop



- It's very easy to find and comes in many different forms.
- It's the main reason people go there.
- They don't try to avoid it (and we don't expect them to)!

Let's reframe the question



“ We need to move from a left/right,
liberal/conservative binary to
recognizing types and forms of biases
on a spectrum of less or more biased. ”

We should think of news media bias as a spectrum

Sources of news



But we must focus on news, not other types of information, and how bias is expressed.

Essential questions for students

- Why is it important to understand the differences between news and other types of information before discussing bias?
- Is it possible for news to be completely unbiased or objective?
- How do our own biases affect the way that we perceive news coverage?
- How do biases show themselves in news coverage?
- In what ways can reports from different sources be more, or less biased than others on the same subject?

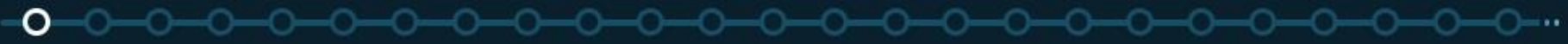


Understanding Bias

Share →

Get started

EXIT



1 of 32



Next



Understanding Bias

TYPES

Corporate bias



A type of bias in which the business or advertising interests of a news outlet, or its parent company, influence how — or even whether — a story is reported.

“Big story” bias



A type of bias in which journalists' perceptions of an event or development as a major, important story can cause them to miss key details and misrepresent key facts.



Partisan bias

A type of bias in which a journalist's political views affect news coverage.

Demographic bias



A type of bias in which race, gender, ethnicity or other factors — such as culture or economic class — affect news coverage.

Neutrality bias



A type of bias in which a journalist or news outlet tries so hard to avoid appearing biased that the coverage actually misrepresents the facts.

SCENARIO:

Lopsided experts

In a year of covering advances in cancer research, a health reporter quotes dozens of doctors and other experts. Only two are women.



Read the example and identify the type of bias it represents.

Partisan bias

Demographic bias

Corporate bias

Neutrality bias

"Big story" bias

Read the example and identify the type of bias it represents.

SCENARIO:

More air time

The producer of a morning news show inadvertently dedicates more air time to coverage of her preferred presidential candidate's platform than to the platforms of other candidates who are polling equally well.



Partisan bias

Demographic bias

Corporate bias

Neutrality bias

"Big story" bias

Read the example and identify the type of bias it represents.

SCENARIO:

Missed story

Senior editors at a local news outlet decide that allegations of corruption by their publication's parent company are not newsworthy enough to warrant extensive coverage or to be featured on the front page. They decide, instead, to publish a short report in the business section. On the same day, national news outlets put this story on the front page of print editions and featured it on their websites' homepage.



- Partisan bias
- Demographic bias
- Corporate bias**
- Neutrality bias
- "Big story" bias



Corruption?

Allegations

Read the example and identify the type of bias it represents.

SCENARIO:

Climate caution

The social media manager at a national newspaper posts a story about a U.N. climate change report. So that the coverage isn't perceived as biased, she posts a graphic with this caption: "Is climate change man-made? Click here to find out." However, the report's findings present overwhelming evidence that climate change is, in fact, the result of human activity.

Partisan bias

Demographic bias

Corporate bias

Neutrality bias

"Big story" bias

Read the example and identify the type of bias it represents.

SCENARIO:

Rural representation

A journalist who spends most of his time in a metropolitan area travels to a nearby rural community to report on an environmental hazard there. In his report, the journalist describes the community as "a simple, God fearing slice of America."

Partisan bias

Demographic bias

Corporate bias

Neutrality bias

"Big story" bias

The above types of bias can take any number of

FORMS



Absence of fairness and balance

The failure of a straight news report to present all relevant viewpoints on an event or issue in an accurate, impartial way.

Framing

The way that journalists approach and organize a story, which can affect what it emphasizes.



Story selection

The process that news outlets use to decide which issues and events to cover.



Tone

The use of words and phrases that affect the audience's perception of the issue or event being covered.



Flawed sourcing

A straight news report that neglects to include all of the people, organizations, documents and other providers of information that are needed to make the reporting accurate, fair and comprehensive.



SCENARIO:

More air time

The producer of a morning news show inadvertently dedicates more air time to coverage of her preferred presidential candidate's platform than to the platforms of other candidates who are polling equally well.



The bias type for this scenario has already been identified as partisan bias. With that in mind, read the example again and identify the form of bias it represents.

Framing

Absence of fairness and balance

Tone

Story selection

Sourcing

SCENARIO:

Rural representation

A journalist who spends most of his time in a metropolitan area travels to a nearby rural community to report on an environmental hazard there. In his report, the journalist describes the community as “a simple, God fearing slice of America.”

The bias type for this scenario has already been identified as demographic bias. With that in mind, read the example again and identify the form of bias it represents.

Framing

Absence of fairness and balance

Tone

Story selection

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SCENARIO:

Missed story

Senior editors at a local news outlet decide that allegations of corruption by their publication's parent company are not newsworthy enough to warrant extensive coverage or to be featured on the front page. They decide, instead, to publish a short report in the business section. On the same day, national news outlets put this story on the front page of print editions and featured it on their websites' homepage.



Allegations

Corruption?

The bias type for this scenario has already been identified as corporate bias. With that in mind, read the example again and identify the form of bias it represents.

Framing

Absence of fairness and balance

Tone

Story selection

Sourcing



SCENARIO:

Climate caution

The social media manager at a national newspaper posts a story about a U.N. climate change report. So that the coverage isn't perceived as biased, she posts a graphic with this caption: "Is climate change man-made? Click here to find out." However, the report's findings present overwhelming evidence that climate change is, in fact, the result of human activity.

The bias type for this scenario has already been identified as neutrality bias. With that in mind, read the example again and identify the form of bias it represents.

Framing

Absence of fairness and balance

Tone

Story selection

Sourcing

SCENARIO:

Lopsided experts

In a year of covering advances in cancer research, a health reporter quotes dozens of doctors and other experts. Only two are women.



The bias type for this scenario has already been identified as demographic bias. With that in mind, read the example again and identify the form of bias it represents.

Framing

Absence of fairness and balance

Tone

Story selection

Sourcing



Note: In some cases, sources are blurred to minimize confirmation bias



Can you identify a type of bias?

- Partisan
- Demographic
- Corporate
- Neutrality
- Big story



Democratic congresswoman refuses to meet with unvaccinated constituents



2:03 AM · Feb 2, 2022 · SocialFlow

Can you identify a form of bias?

- Tone
- Framing
- Story selection
- Sourcing
- Absence of fairness and balance



Democratic congresswoman refuses to meet with unvaccinated constituents



2:03 AM · Feb 2, 2022 · SocialFlow

The image shows a social media post with a headline and a photograph. The headline reads "Democratic congresswoman refuses to meet with unvaccinated constituents". Below the headline is a photograph of a Black woman with long dark hair, wearing a blue top, sitting in a wooden chair and resting her chin on her hand, looking thoughtfully to the side. The post is timestamped "2:03 AM · Feb 2, 2022 · SocialFlow".

How does the choice of this image affect our perception?

Democratic congresswoman refuses to meet with unvaccinated constituents



2:03 AM · Feb 2, 2022 · SocialFlow

Google search results for "Terri Sewell," showing various images and captions related to her identity as a congresswoman, representative, and public figure.

Search results for "Terri Sewell,"

Navigation: All, News, Images, Videos, Shopping, More, Tools

Filters: theodore dixie, representative, husband, congressional, district, educatio

Image 1: Terri Sewell - Wikipedia
en.wikipedia.org

Image 2: Terri Sewell - Ballotpedia
ballotpedia.org

Image 3: Press Kit | Congresswo...
sewell.house.gov

Image 4: Congresswoman Terri A. Sewell Swo...
sewell.house.gov

Image 5: Rep. Terri Sewell endorses forme...
al.com

Image 6: SEWELL, Terri | US Hou...
history.house.gov

Image 7: Terri Sewell '86 | Princeto...
spia.princeton.edu

Image 8: Rep. Terri Sewell knew the former ...
birminghamtimes.com

Image 9: Terri Sewell
clerk.house.gov

Image 10: Government Alumnus V...
uab.edu

Image 11: [Caption obscured]

Image 12: [Caption obscured]

Image 13: [Caption obscured]

Image 14: [Caption obscured]

Only two major news orgs published this story

 New York Post 
@nypost

Democratic congresswoman refuses to meet with unvaccinated constituents 



2:03 AM · Feb 2, 2022 · SocialFlow

 Fox News 
@FoxNews

Democratic congresswoman refuses to meet with unvaccinated constituents




Democratic congresswoman refuses to meet with unvaccinated constituents
Rep. Terri Sewell, D-Ala., and members of her staff will not hold in-person meetings with people yet to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

6:10 PM · Feb 1, 2022 · TweetDeck

Discussion of bias can lead to deeper questions

 The Spectator World 
@TheSpectator

New from [@amber_athey](#): While the District of Columbia has one of the nation's strictest vaccine mandates, Congress is not bound by the rules of the city in which it is located, and does not have one. That isn't stopping Congresswoman Terri Sewell.



spectatorworld.com
Exclusive: House Democrat says no snacks for the unvaxxed
Congresswoman Terri Sewell, the Democratic representative for Alabama's 7th district, has instituted an office vaccine mandate

12:06 PM · Feb 1, 2022 · TweetDeck

- Originally published as commentary by the editor of The Spectator World. In what ways can reporting on published opinion pieces demonstrate bias?
- As an example of story selection, does this reflect bias on the part of orgs that reported it, or those that didn't? Is there a difference?
- What demographic factors might have influenced publishing this story?
- Is this partisan or big story bias as well? All of the above?


Images can influence our perception even when there is no overt bias, or it is debatable.



Which image is less biased?


Waterford Township resident Kaleb Franks, 27, will plead guilty to kidnapping conspiracy.

Read the plea deal:



detroitnews.com
Second Whitmer kidnap plotter to plead guilty, court records show Waterford resident Kaleb Franks will plead guilty to kidnapping conspiracy, punishable by up to life in federal prison, according to a court filing.

A second man pleaded guilty in an alleged plot to kidnap Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer. The plea by Kaleb Franks leaves four other men to face trial in March and gives prosecutors a second insider who would be a key witness.



2nd guilty plea expected in alleged plot to kidnap Whitmer
GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (AP) — A man charged in an alleged plot to kidnap Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer was expected Wednesday to be the second ...

9:16 AM · Feb 9, 2022 · SocialFlow

Which image is less biased?


Another Whitmer kidnap suspect to plead guilty: We 'were not entrapped'



2nd Whitmer kidnap suspect to plead guilty: He 'knowingly and voluntarily' join...
The prosecution now has two defendants who have agreed to testify against their cohorts in the Gretchen Whitmer kidnap plot trial.

2:33 PM · Feb 7, 2022 · SocialNewsDesk

A second man pleaded guilty in an alleged plot to kidnap Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer. The plea by Kaleb Franks leaves four other men to face trial in March and gives prosecutors a second insider who would be a key witness.



2nd guilty plea expected in alleged plot to kidnap Whitmer
GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (AP) — A man charged in an alleged plot to kidnap Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer was expected Wednesday to be the second ...

9:16 AM · Feb 9, 2022 · SocialFlow

Which image is less biased?

Chicago Tribune

QUESTIONS? CALL 1-800-TRIBUNE

SUNDAY, MAY 31, 2020

BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM



JOHN A. RIZO/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

A car is set ablaze in the 200 block of North State Street during protests Saturday in Chicago. The demonstration was in response to the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis Monday.

Protests give rise to chaos

IN CHICAGO

Lightfoot imposes curfew to curb demonstrators' 'criminal conduct'

By JEREMY GORNER, MADELINE BUCKLEY AND PAIGE FRY

After intense skirmishes overnight, a Loop protest escalated with thousands of demonstrators marching, burning at least one flag, climbing onto a CTA bus and a light pole, hurling bottles, overturning police cars and surrounding officers on Saturday evening.

Meanwhile, Mayor Lori Lightfoot held a news conference shortly after 8 p.m., saying the demonstration had "revolved into criminal conduct" as she imposed a curfew on the city, from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. until further notice.

Lightfoot said of the curfew that violators will be given a chance to disperse and then they will be arrested. The order exempts essential workers.

The mayor, who said she was "disappointed," said she had seen protesters use pipes, bats, hammers and other objects to damage property.

"I'm here to call you out for your recklessness," she said, directing her comments to some of the protesters.

"I've seen protesters hurt projectiles at our police department... bottles of water, urine and Lord knows what else," she said.

"I want to express my

AROUND THE NATION

Cities brace for more unrest as some areas call in National Guard

Anger over George Floyd's death spread across the country Saturday as protesters set police cars ablaze, smashed windows and skirmished with officers from Atlanta to Los Angeles. In Minneapolis, Gov. Tim Walz fully mobilized Minnesota's National Guard and promised a massive show of force to help quell unrest.

The Pentagon said it was ready to provide military help to assist authorities scrambling to contain protests.

Stories in Nation & World, Page 19

Turn to Protest 15, Page 12

CHICAGO SUN-TIMES

SUNDAY, MAY 31, 2020 | \$3 CITY/BURBS \$4 ELSEWHERE | LATE SPORTS FINAL

A Chicago Police SUV is set on fire during violent protests Saturday.

ASHLEY SEYMOUR/CHICAGO SUN-TIMES



SUN-TIMES SPECIAL REPORT

BURNING RAGE

Chicago goes under curfew as protest over Minneapolis police killing turns violent and looting ensues

COVERAGE, PAGES 8-11

PLUS: Tense protests lead to destruction, reports of injuries in cities across nation

NATION/WORLD, PAGES 28-29

The case of Pamela Moses

- Convicted in November 2021 of illegally registering to vote and sentenced in February 2022 to six years and one day in prison.
- Among numerous felony convictions, Moses plead guilty to tampering with evidence which caused her to permanently lose the right to vote in Tennessee.
- In 2019, the Tennessee Department of Corrections and the Shelby County Election Commission both signed off on her voter registration application certifying her probation had been completed and she was eligible to vote.
- Both agencies state that this was in error, and she was not in fact eligible.
- County prosecutors accused her of deceiving election officials, and she was convicted of perjury on a voter registration form.

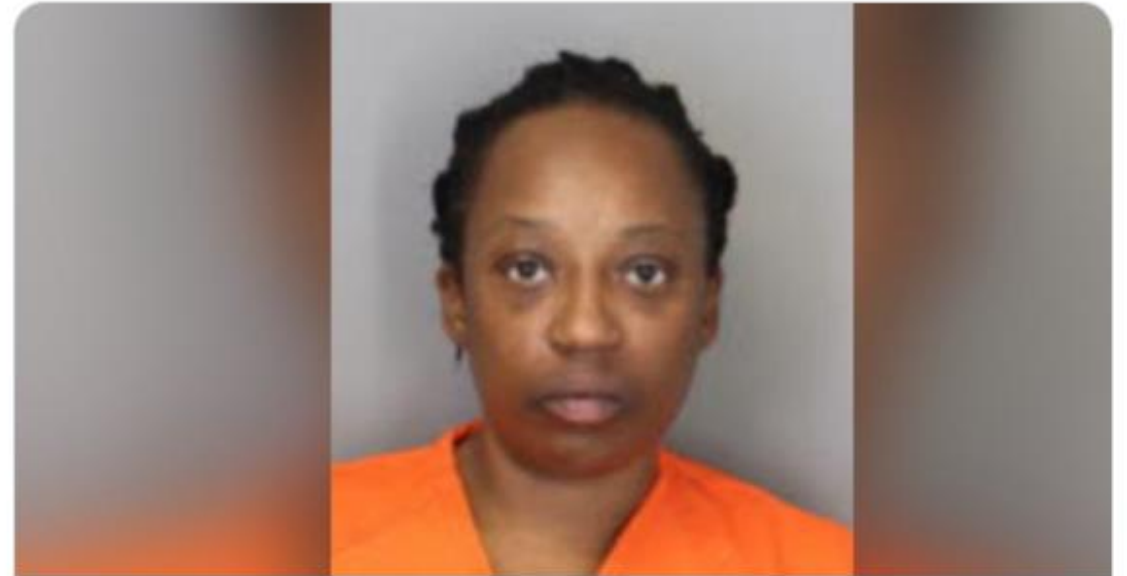
Memphis BLM founder Pamela Moses sentenced 6 years for illegally voting



7:52 AM · Feb 6, 2022 · SocialFlow

8,111 Retweets 1,357 Quote Tweets 28.7K Likes

BLM chapter founder sentenced to six years in prison for illegally registering to vote



Tennessee BLM founder sentenced to 6 years in prison for illegally voting
A Black Lives Matter chapter founder in Tennessee, Pamela Moses, sentenced to six years in prison for illegally registering to vote.

10:12 AM · Feb 6, 2022 · Twitter Web App

Framing Bias

Memphis BLM founder Pamela Moses sentenced 6 years for illegally voting



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Tennessee BLM founder sentenced to 6 years in prison for illegally voting
A Black Lives Matter chapter founder in Tennessee, Pamela Moses, sentenced to six years in prison for illegally registering to vote.

10:12 AM · Feb 6, 2022 · Twitter Web App

Ms. Moses was charged and convicted of perjury on a voter registration form. There is no evidence of, nor was she charged with casting a ballot illegally.

Demographic Bias and Tone

BLM chapter founder sentenced to six years in prison for illegally registering to vote



Tennessee BLM founder sentenced to 6 years in prison for illegally voting
A Black Lives Matter chapter founder in Tennessee, Pamela Moses, sentenced to six years in prison for illegally registering to vote.

10:12 AM · Feb 6, 2022 · Twitter Web App

Pamela Moses was convicted of voter fraud in Tennessee and sentenced to six years in prison, even though officials who signed off on her being eligible to vote acknowledged that they made an error in saying her rights had been restored.




She was told she could vote again after felony convictions. Now she's in prison ...
Pamela Moses was convicted of voter fraud in Tennessee and sentenced to six years in prison, even though officials who signed off on her being eligible to vot...

5:00 AM · Feb 5, 2022 · SocialFlow

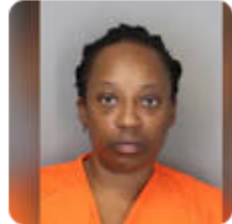
Image selection and including details such as being a “BLM chapter founder” can affect our perception of Ms. Moses and the nature of her conviction.

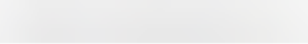
The headline, lede and image all influence our perception of a story and its subject.

Standards-based news orgs must be aware of this and work to minimize bias based on these perceptions.


 Tennessee BLM founder sentenced to 6 years in prison for illegally voting

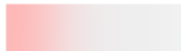
... in Memphis, Pamela Moses, on Monday. pamelamoses mug. Booking photo of Pamela Moses (Shelby County Sheriff's Office) (Shelby County Sheriff's Office).




 Pamela Moses sentenced to six years in prison for voting ...

Pamela Moses said she had taken all the steps to restore her voting rights in Tennessee. Moses, a Black Lives Matter activist and former Democratic mayoral...



 Who Is Pamela Moses? Black Woman Sentenced to Prison for Trying To Vote

Memphis activist Pamela Moses was sentenced to six years and one day in prison on Monday, having been convicted in November 2021 of illegally registering to...



Other common ways our perception is influenced when we first see a news report.



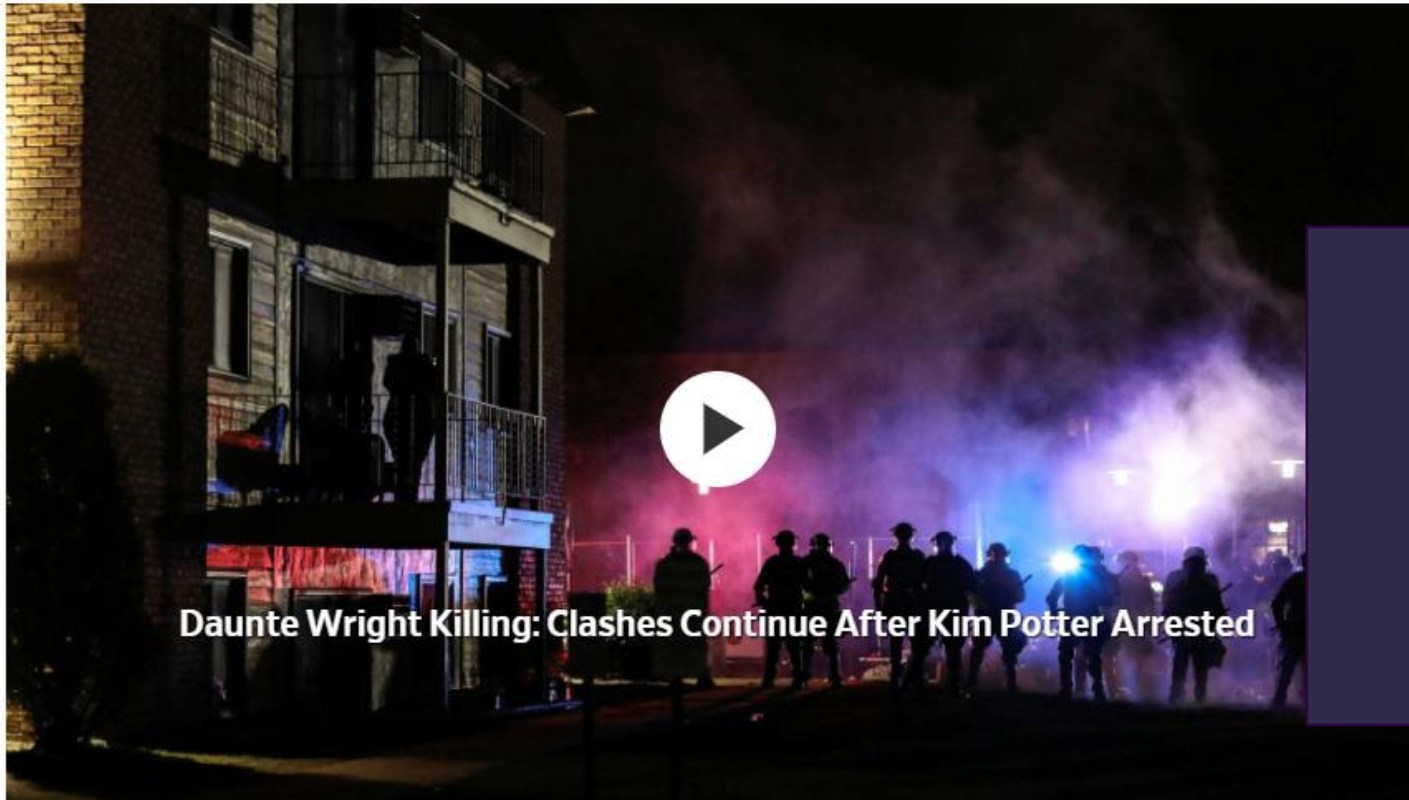
SHARE



U.S.

Police Say Fatal Shooting of Daunte Wright in Minneapolis Suburb Was Accidental

Body-cam video of traffic stop suggests officer thought she was using a Taser, not gun, on the 20-year-old Black man



Uncritically
amplifying
officials

Protesters clashed with police for a fourth night in the Minneapolis suburb of Brooklyn Center after Kim Potter, the former police officer who killed 20-year-old Daunte Wright, was arrested and charged with second-degree manslaughter on Wednesday. Photo: Scott Olson/Getty Images

Race & Reckoning



Opinions
President Biden is listening to communities on violence prevention. Congress...



Opinions
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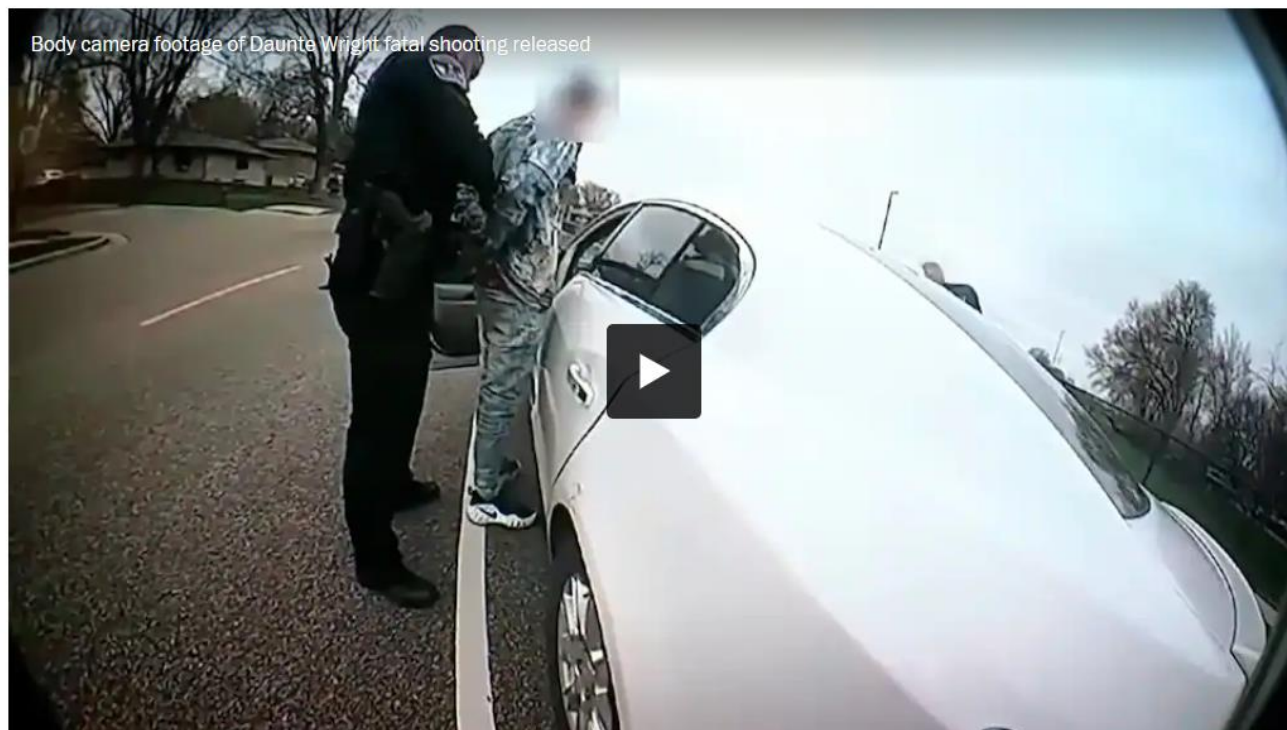
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13.4k

National

Minn. police officer who shot Daunte Wright apparently meant to use Taser but fired gun, police chief says



Warning, content is graphic. The Brooklyn Center Police Department released footage of the April 11 shooting of Daunte Wright, a 20-year-old Black man. (Reuters)

By [Kim Bellware](#), [Andrea Salcedo](#), [Sheila Regan](#), [Jared Goyette](#) and [Meryl Kornfield](#)

Add to list

April 12, 2021 at 8:55 p.m. CDT

[The latest: Daunte Wright's shooting death rouses emotion in Brooklyn Center, which put a sympathetic mayor in charge of police]

Uncritically
amplifying
officials

Passive voice
downplays the
seriousness of
a crime

 **CNN**  @CNN · Mar 27

Police said the girls, 13 and 15, assaulted an Uber Eats driver with a Taser while carjacking him, which led to an accident in which he was fatally injured.



Teen girls charged with murder, carjacking of Uber Eats driver in Washi...
Two teenage girls have been charged in the carjacking death of an Uber Eats driver this week in Washington, DC, police say.
[cnn.com](https://www.cnn.com)

15.2K 12.1K 10K

U.S. NEWS

dead, officials said. Anomari S. / NBC Washington

March 25, 2021, 8:28 AM CDT / Updated March 25, 2021, 9:57 AM CDT

By Elisha Fieldstadt

An Uber Eats delivery driver, described by relatives as a hardworking Pakistani immigrant grandfather, **was killed in a crash** after officials said he was carjacked by two teenage girls in Washington, D.C.

The 13-year-old and 15-year-old, who have not been identified because they are minors, allegedly used a stun gun on the driver on Tuesday, causing him to crash his car, according to the Metropolitan



Passive voice
downplays the
seriousness of
a crime

 **WSFA 12 News** ✓
@wsfa12news

Scottsboro officer killed, wife critically injured after shooting



wsfa.com
Scottsboro officer shoots wife, kills himself
Officers received reports of shots fired shortly after 8:50 p.m. on March 14

11:13 AM · Mar 16, 2022 · TweetDeck

18 Retweets 840 Quote Tweets 75 Likes

Remember:
Standards-based
news organizations
show a concern for
fairness and
accuracy

 **WSFA 12 News** @wsfa12news · 5m

A Scottsboro police officer, who was on leave, shot his estranged wife before killing himself, police confirmed.
wsfa.com/2022/03/15/sco... (Note: The story headline was updated to make the circumstances clear. We apologize for the previous headline, which was misleading.)



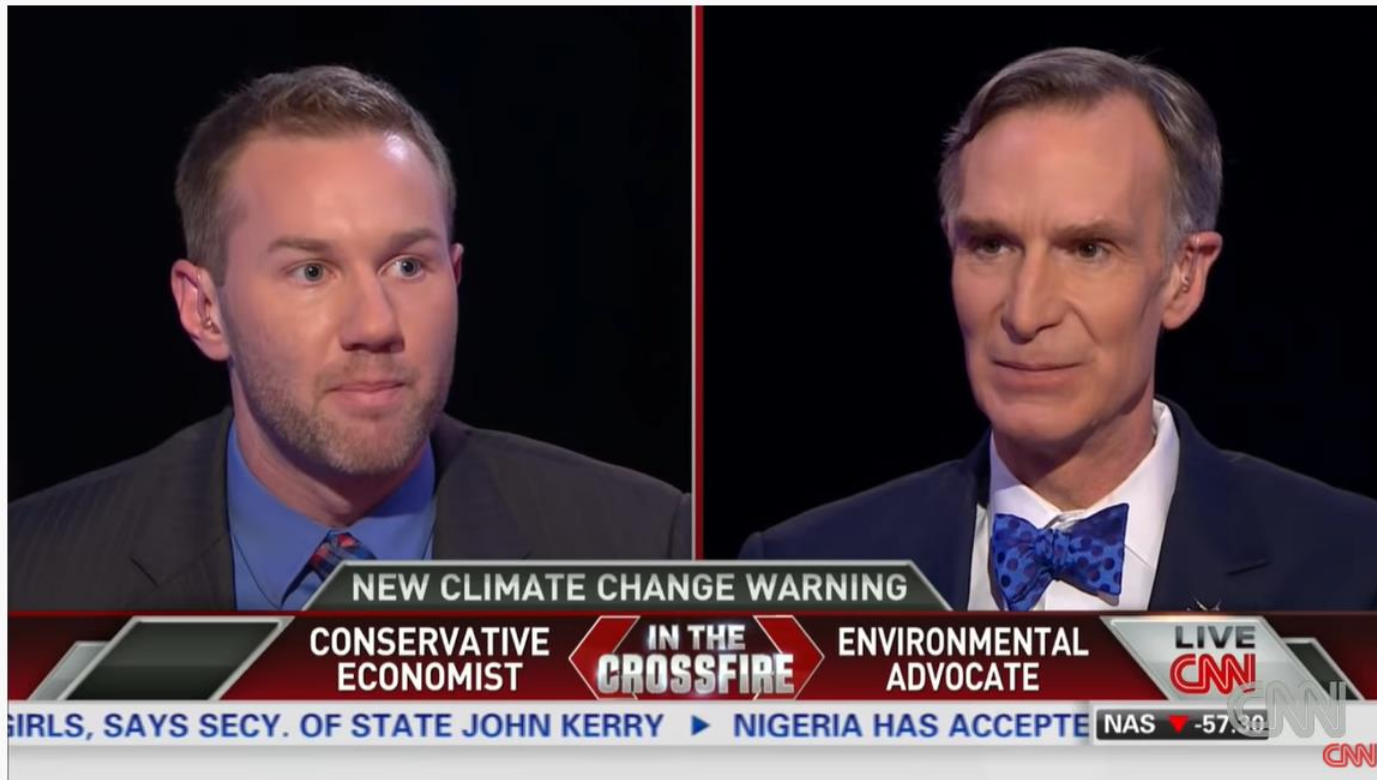
wsfa.com
Scottsboro officer shoots wife, kills himself
Officers received reports of shots fired shortly after 8:50 p.m. on March 14

7 5 4

Neutrality bias:

“ A type of bias in which a journalist or news outlet tries so hard to avoid appearing biased that the coverage actually misrepresents the facts. Also called “false balance” or “bothsidesism” ”

Neutrality bias: Having a “debate” about climate change



CNN Crossfire in 2014

“Debate” between Bill Nye and Nicolas Loris focused primarily on how many people “believe” in climate change and the views of skeptics (like Loris) rather than the actual science.

Neutrality bias : “Debate” about MMR vaccine and autism



Lakeland, MN PBS in 2017

Framing the MMR vaccine causing autism as a debate, giving equal weight to public health officials and parents who are opposed to vaccines.

The American Military's Newest Target: American Protesters

Military helicopters dropped to rooftop level in Washington. Tree limbs snapped. Signs were torn from buildings. Protesters hid in doorways. The helicopters were performing a “show of force” — a tactic used by military aircraft in combat zones to scatter insurgents.



Military police and other law enforcement officers on Monday outside the White House. Erin Schaff/The New York Times



Editing TheGrayLady
@nyt_diff

Replying to @nyt_diff

Change in Abstract

Military helicopters ~~dropped~~ sought to rooftop level in Washington. Tree limbs snapped. Signs were torn from buildings. Protesters hid in doorways. The helicopters were performing a “show of force” — a tactic used by discourage protesters, and retired senior military aircraft in combat zones to scatter insurgents. leaders condemned their successors for deploying such tactics.

11:30 AM · Jun 2, 2020 · nytdiff

3.5K Retweets 502 Quote Tweets 8.1K Likes

The American Military’s Newest Target: American Protesters

Military helicopters sought to discourage protesters, and retired senior military leaders condemned their successors for deploying such tactics.



Military police and other law enforcement officers on Monday outside the White House. Erin Schaff/The New York Times

The ~~American~~ Military's Newest Target: ~~American~~ Protesters

Military helicopters sought to discourage protesters, and retired senior military leaders condemned their successors for deploying such tactics.



Military police and other law enforcement officers on Monday outside the White House. Erin Schaff/The New York Times



Editing TheGrayLady @nyt_diff · Jun 2

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Change in Headline

The ~~American~~ Military's Newest Target: ~~American~~ Protesters

10

698

2.1K



Former Commanders Fault Trump's Use of Troops Against Protesters

Military helicopters sought to discourage protesters, and retired senior military leaders condemned their successors for deploying such tactics.



Military police and other law enforcement officers on Monday outside the White House. Erin Schaff/The New York Times

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Change in Headline

~~The Military's Newest Target:~~ Former Commanders Fault Trump's Use of Troops Against Protesters

11 469 1.5K

Former Commanders Fault Trump's Use of Troops Against Protesters

After military helicopters carried out a “show of force” mission to discourage protesters, retired senior military leaders condemned their successors for deploying such tactics.



Military police and other law enforcement officers on Monday outside the White House. Erin Schaff/The New York Times

Editing TheGrayLady @nyt_diff · Jun 2
Change in Abstract

Military After military helicopters sought carried out a “show of force” mission to discourage protesters, and retired senior military leaders condemned their successors for deploying such tactics.

1 54 322

Former Commanders Fault Trump's Use of Troops Against Protesters

After military helicopters carried out a "show of force" mission to discourage protesters, retired senior military leaders condemned their successors for deploying such tactics.



Military police and other law enforcement officers on Monday outside the White House. Erin Schaff/The New York Times

Even with rigorous standards, bias still leaks into coverage.

News organizations with a commitment to fairness and accuracy will respond.

The changes to this story demonstrate that commitment and are a positive signal of credibility.

Essential points to drive teaching about news media bias



Essential discussion points about news media bias

- Conversations about news media bias mostly apply to standards-based news.
- Our perceptions of news are highly subjective and influenced by confirmation bias.
- Bias in news is a spectrum, not a binary and is usually incidental and debatable rather than intentional and overt.
- Evaluating bias in news coverage in meaningful ways requires nuance and specificity.

Essential discussion points about news media bias

- “Fair and accurate” is more useful than “objective”.
- Being unbiased does not mean being neutral.
- Be wary of assumptions about intent and about hyperbolic or sweeping statements about “the media”.
- A perception of bias is the beginning, not the end, of student inquiry.

Questions?

Thank you for joining us!



A future founded on facts

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