**Analyzing Types of Media and Media Bias**

**Part I:** Your task is to choose a single news story that deals with a political issue that is currently in the media and analyze it on two levels.

A.  Analyze your chosen news story from three different newspapers - a liberal, centrist, and conservative newspaper. Compare and contrast the following elements:

* Length of article (amount of lines dedicated to article)
* Depth of article (how much detail, background information, evidence is provided)
* What facts are the same in each article; what facts are different. (what is omitted)
* Tone and language use (what phrases are used to create bias)
* Other observations
* Include a Chicago citation for the articles read

<http://camosun.ca/learn/subjects/history/style-guide.pdf>

B. Then, choose one bias and compare the coverage of the newspaper story to two other mediums. See list of mediums and publications below. (So,  if you choose a liberal article - then find a liberal magazine and radio/blog equivalent.)

* **How does the medium impact the message?**
  + Use the points listed above in part A as a guide to write a coherent answer.

**Part II:**  Watch one TV evening news broadcast.

* CBC National, CTV National News, Global National News, PBS News, ABC/NBC/CBS/FOX
* Complete the following:
* State the Date and channel watched
* Make a list of the stories chosen and how much time each story is given
* Use of “experts” to discuss stories - bias/message of story.
* Depth of information provided.

**Part III:** Social Media Analysis.

Choose the social media platform you use the most (Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram) and analyze your “news feed”/posts for 1 day.

Complete the following:

* Get an approximate number of total posts that came you are looking at.
* For each post, determine if it is non-political, liberal or conservative in its content. (include posts from friends i.e. “Tricky Hillary…  I can’t believe Trump…., Memes, sponsored articles etc. in your analysis. List out your counts. 50 non-political, 25 liberal 40 conservative….
* Write a paragraph that addresses the following prompt. Increasingly, experts talk about how we are live in information “bubbles,” and increasingly only see and hear information that fits with our **confirmation bias.** After analyzing your social media feed, to what extent do you think this claim is true? How do you think your result influences your thinking about politics?

**Part IV**: Overall Analysis.

Many critique the mass media as beholden to advertisers and the profit motive.  Critics claim that hard news is often presented in a superficial manner and there is more emphasis on human interest stories. They claim that this emphasis undermines democracy by changing the focus away from public issues so that citizens are unable to make well informed decisions on policy issues.

Based on your examination - what is your position on this issue?

Does the medium affect the quality of information that is presented? if so, how? Use specific examples from your research to defend your position.

Media is often considered serving a few roles - **Gatekeeper** aka- agenda-setter, telling the public what is important; **Scorekeeper** - the media keeps track of politicians and how they are doing in terms of public opinion, through their coverage they help to make or break political campaigns; **Watchdog**- the media investigates political personalities and stories and in so doing, helps to expose potential scandals; and lastly as **Mouthpiece** – generating public consensus on behalf of a government. What evidence of each of these roles can be seen in your examination and how successful do you think the media is in each of these areas? Use specific examples from your research to support your position.

3) Many argue that the media could be understood as the fourth branch of government- that is to say that the media themselves are in part responsible for the creation of public policy.  Using evidence from your examination would you support such an argument? Why or why not?

**Frequently Asked Questions:**

**Can the TV news broadcast be one of the other mediums for part I section B?** Yes the TV news counts as second medium- but that means you are following the centrist thread see below.

**Medium Liberal        Centrist          Conservative**

Newspapers: Globe and Mail National Post

Toronto Star

La Presse Vancouver Sun

Le Devoir Times Colonist

NY Times Wall Street Journal

Washington Post

USA Today

TV: PBS News Hour           ABC/CBS/NBC     FOX News

CBC The National Global National

CTV National News

Blogs:

Radio: NPR (USA)

CBC Word News (6pm)

Magazines: Maclean’s (CAN)

The Economist

Time

The Atlantic

Online News: The Tyee (BC Politics)