

HAVE A NICE DAY

Uncovering the protest paradigm:

A media literacy lesson for college students

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Uncovering the Protest Paradigm Through Visual Framing: A Media Literacy Lesson for College Students

Much is made of the proliferation of fake news in media literacy education. With good reason, we worry about unreliable news reporting and its effect on political participation. However, instruction that focuses on the most sensational attempts to hijack political discourse misses the more routine way in which reliable news reporting influences the political process. From horse race journalism to social justice movements, news professionals frame issues in particular ways, and those representations affect public opinion. In our presentation, we share an interactive lesson plan demonstrating how to teach students to make sense of media framing, social justice movements, and the protest paradigm. Using images taken from the Black Lives Matter protests of 2020, we teach students how to use framing theory to uncover protest paradigms in mainstream media. This lesson plan will foster a deeper engagement with social justice movements and the news media ecosystem. Teaching students about framing theory will equip them to unpack news stories in any medium and to critically engage in the subtleties of news production and its effects.

Authors

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Sources

Corrigan-Brown, C., & Wilkes, R. (2012). Picturing protest: The visual framing of collective action by First Nations in Canada. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 58(2), 223-243.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/2F0002764211419357>

Entman, Robert. M. (1993). Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm. *Journal of Communication*, 43(4), 51-58.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2468.1993.tb01304.x>

Lippmann, W. (1946). *Public opinion* (Vol. 1). Transaction Publishers.

McLeod, D. H. (2007). News coverage and social protest: How the media's protest paradigm exacerbates social conflict. *Journal of Dispute Resolution*, 2007(1).

01

The Lesson Plan

- Introductory Activity on the Protest Paradigm:**
 - Students will look at images of different social protests, including the Civil Rights Movement, Hong Kong Protests, and Dakota Access Pipeline Protests.
 - Students will respond to what they see in the images by doing a visual reading and discussing in pairs what they think the images convey.
 - Instructors will discuss the protest paradigm and explain its presence in journalism.
- Media Effects and Visual Framing Mini-Lecture**
 - Teachers will share a mini-lecture on media effects and visual framing.
- Modeling Content Analysis in News Images**
 - Teachers will introduce content analysis to students and share with them the content analysis coding worksheet.
 - Teachers will model how to use the content analysis coding worksheet with an image shared in the introductory activity.
 - Students will work in pairs using the worksheet to identify the visual frames in images from the Black Lives Matter Protests of 2020.
- Think-Pair-Share on the images from the Black Lives Matter Protests and the Protest Paradigm**
 - Students will share their findings in class of what they see in the images.
 - Students will answer in pairs and then as a whole group:
 - What is the news media saying through these images about what is going on during these demonstrations?
 - Do you think that these images are protecting the status quo? Why or why not?
 - Do you see the protest paradigm at work in these images? How do they compare to the images in the introductory activity?
- Summing Up the Lesson**
 - Review the protest paradigm and how it can affect audience's opinion of protests.
 - Review how using the content analysis coding worksheet can help students continue to uncover the protest paradigm in news images.
 - Ask students to sum up what they learned in an exit slip by writing three things they learned in the lesson.

02

Student Learning Outcomes

- Students will be able to explain the protest paradigm and its role in news coverage of social justice movements.
- Students will be able to define media framing and can apply content analysis to recognize what frames are conveying about social justice protests in the news.

03

Visual Frames & The Protest Paradigm

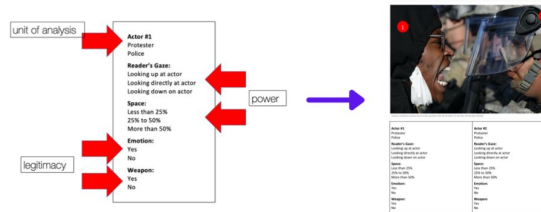
A main takeaway we want for our students is to help them see how the media depict what is happening in news stories through particular framing devices. In this lesson, students learn how to see through news images' visual frames of protests and uncover the protest paradigm.



04

Content Analysis Coding Worksheet

This worksheet helps students learn how to apply content analysis to visual frames.



05

Connection to Social Justice:

- This lesson plan teaches students how to conceptualize power and privilege, and recognize media practices and conventions that implicitly delegitimize social justice movements.
- Through this lesson, we hope students continue to use analytical thinking when viewing news images and read further to learn the messages at the center of social justice movements.

Link: <https://bit.ly/3j8dyd8>

Session Outline

1. Protest Paradigm
2. Media Effects
3. Framing
4. Content Analysis
5. The Lesson Plan
6. Student Takeaways
7. Connection to Social Justice



The Protest Paradigm



McLeod, D. M. (2007). News coverage and social protest: How the media's protest paradigm exacerbates social conflict. *Journal of Dispute Resolution*. 2007(1).



Walter Lippmann's *Public Opinion* (1922): "The world outside and the pictures in our heads"

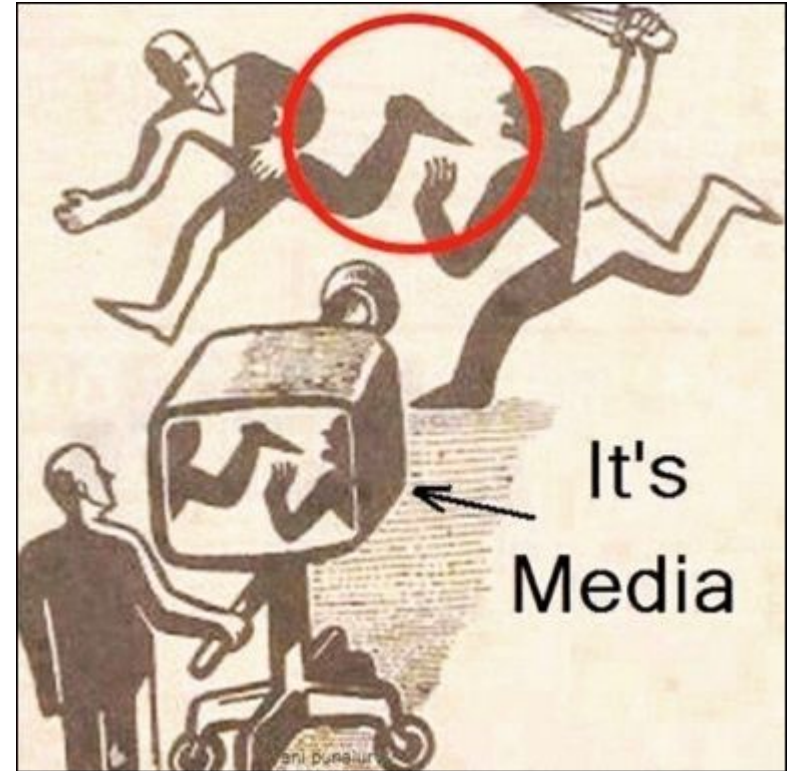


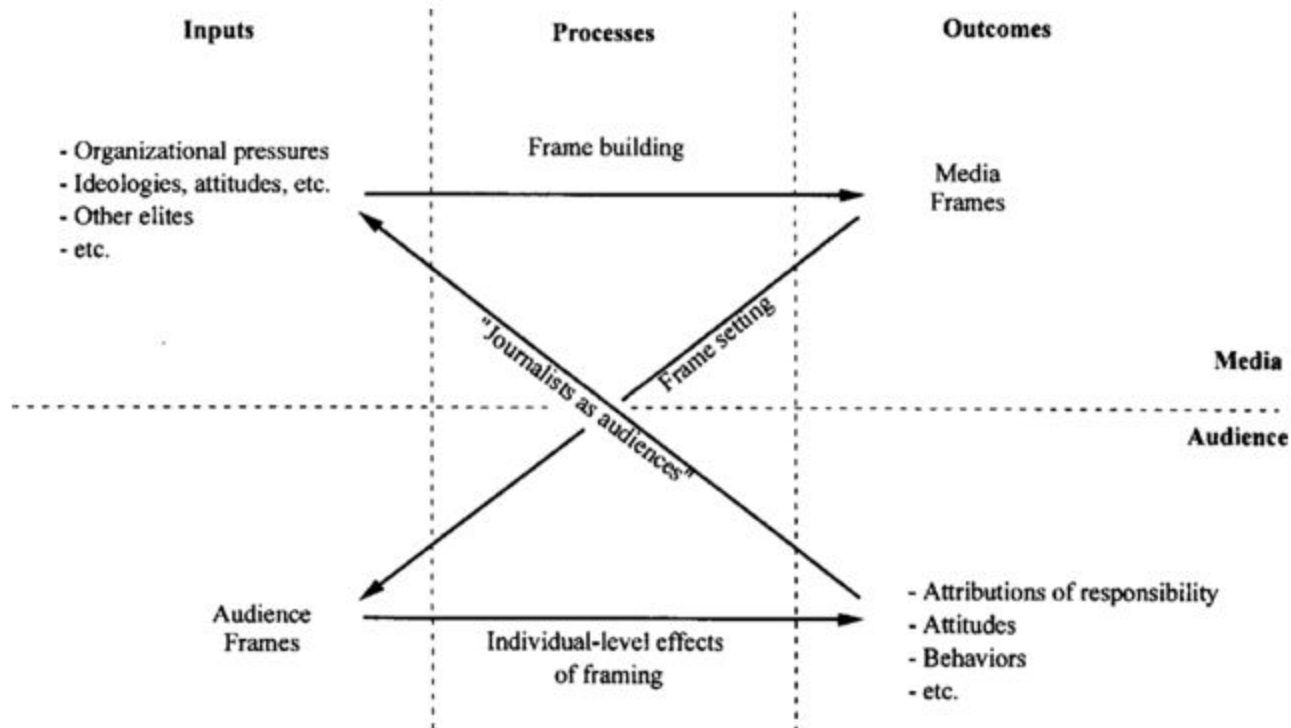
Media Effects

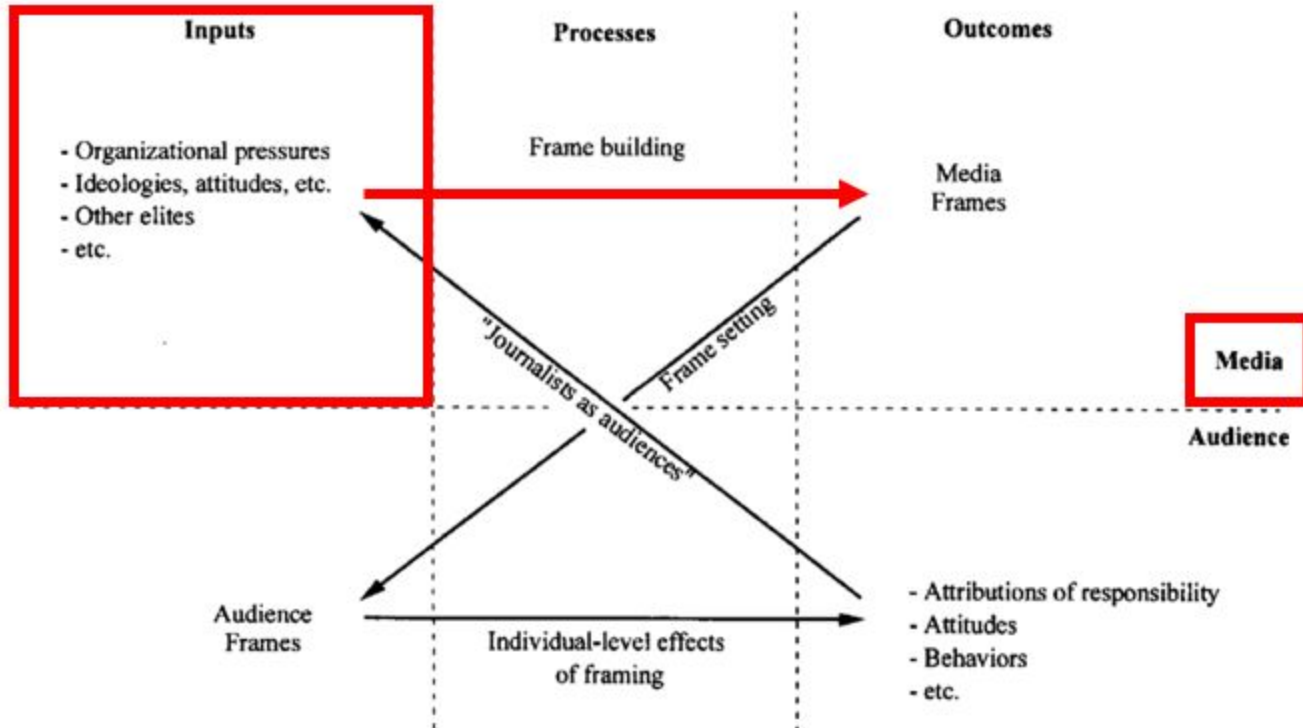
Social or psychological responses occurring in individuals as a result of exposure to media messages.

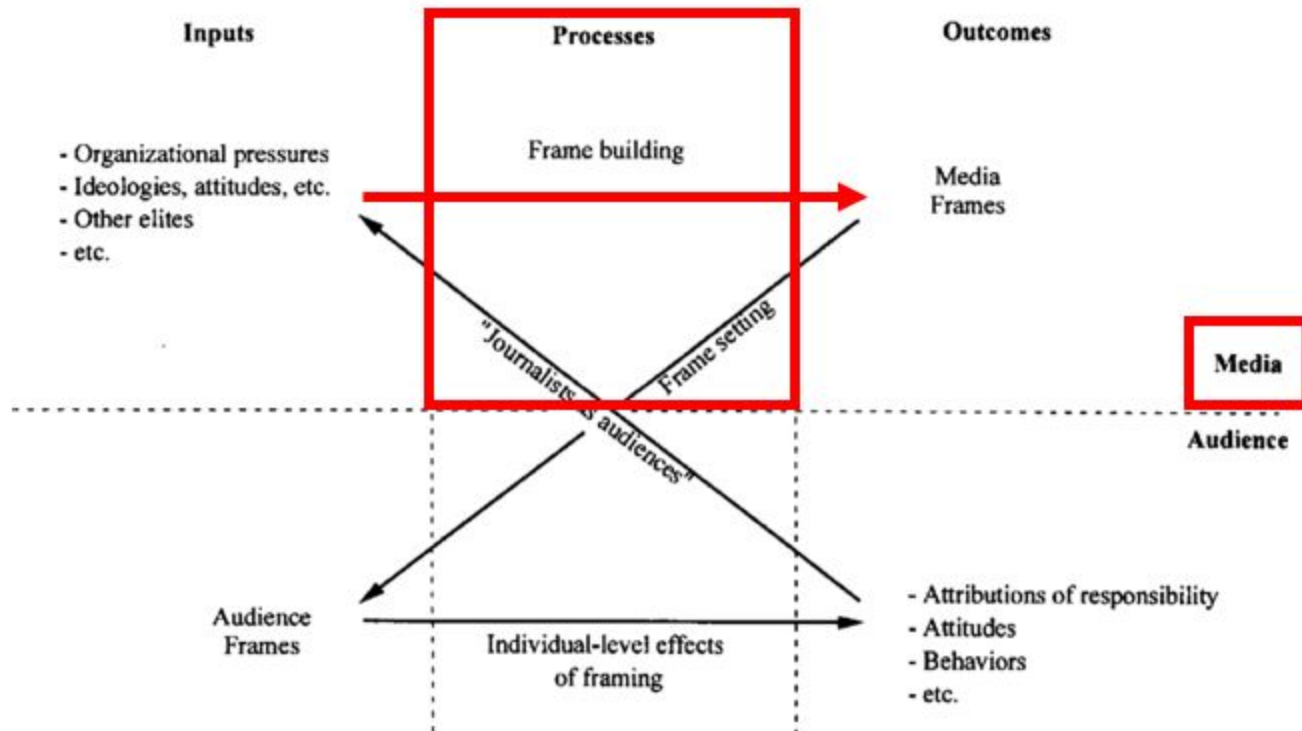
Framing

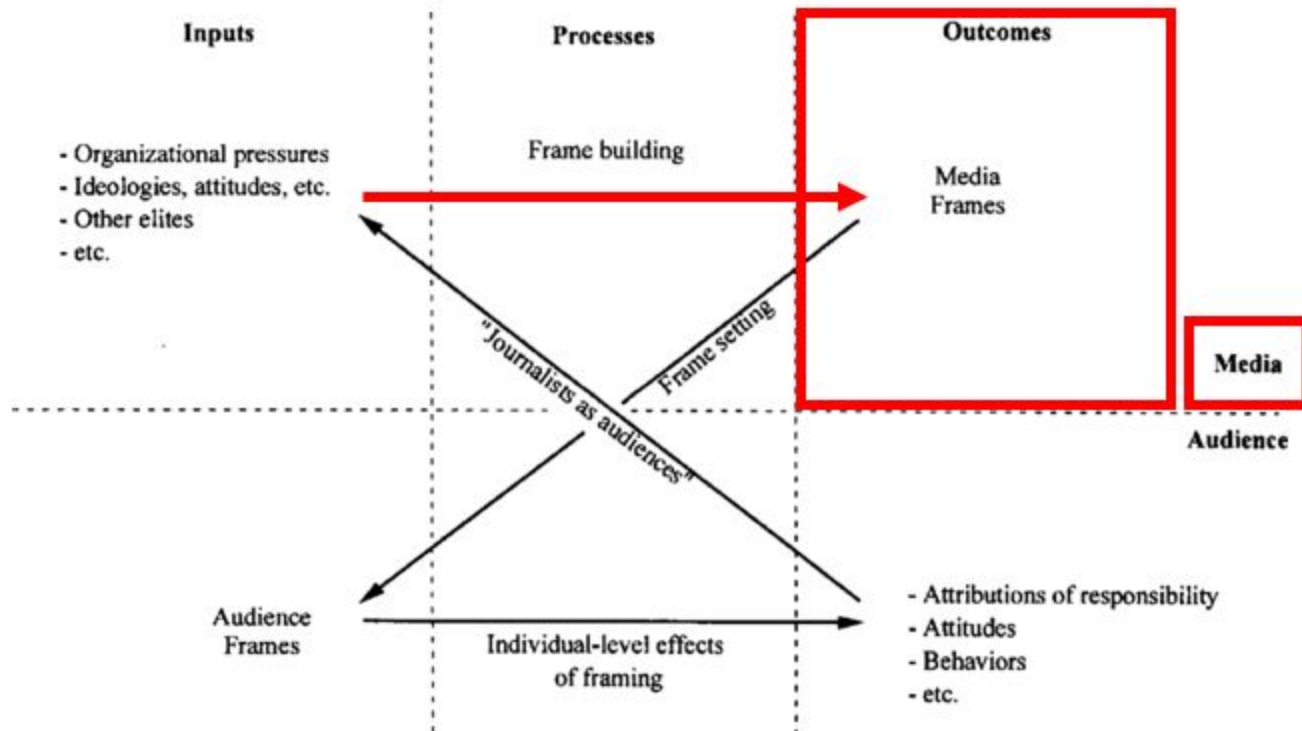
•“to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described.”

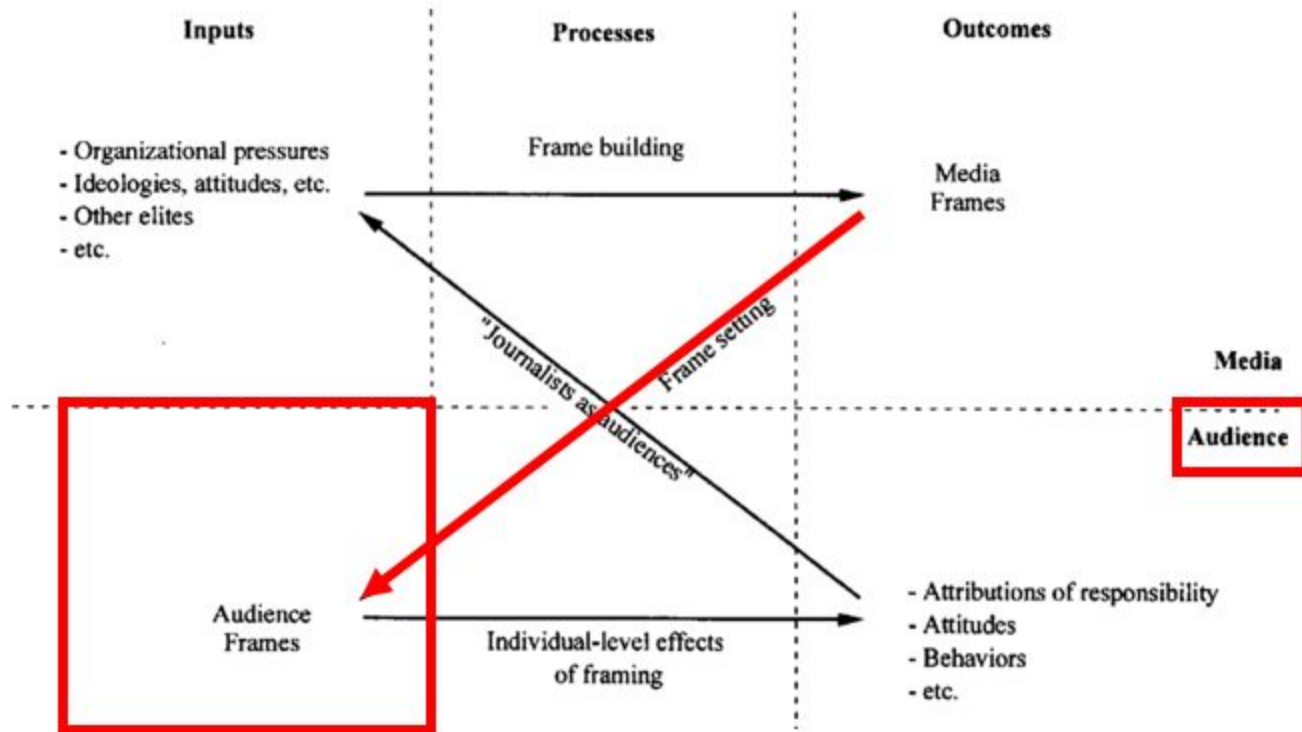


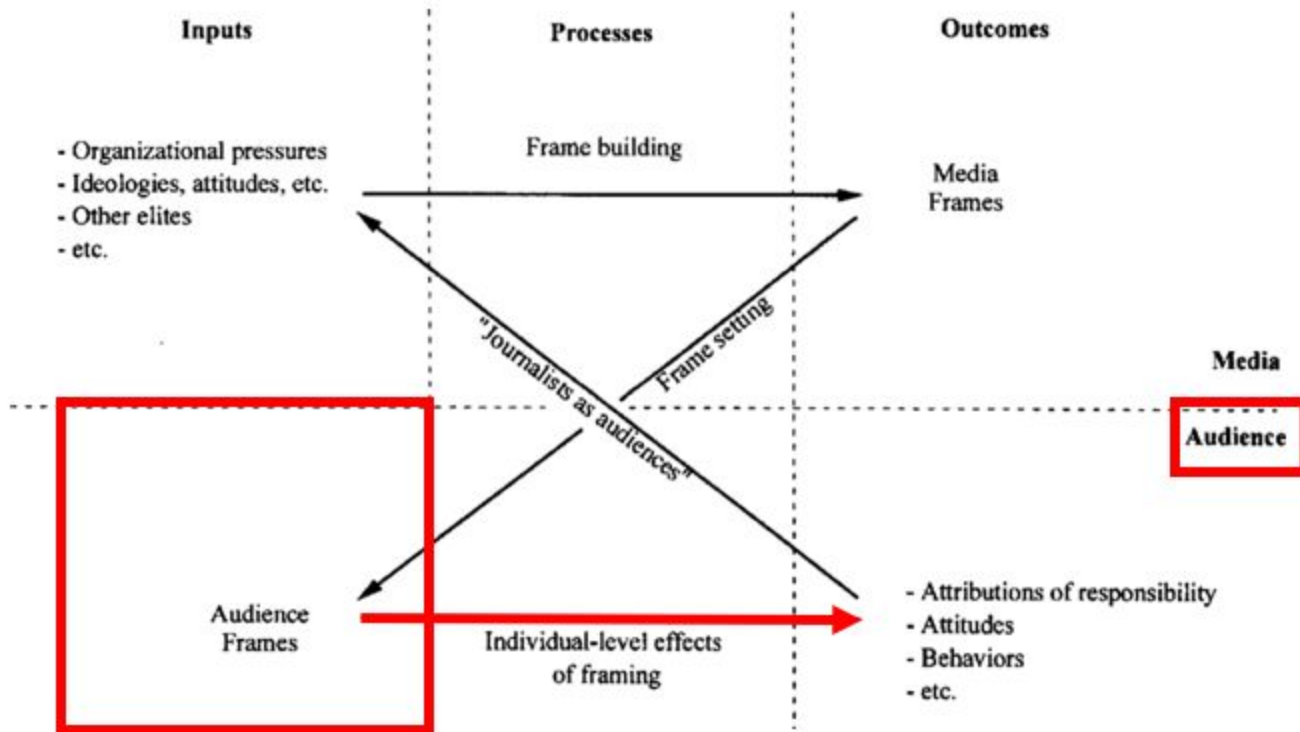


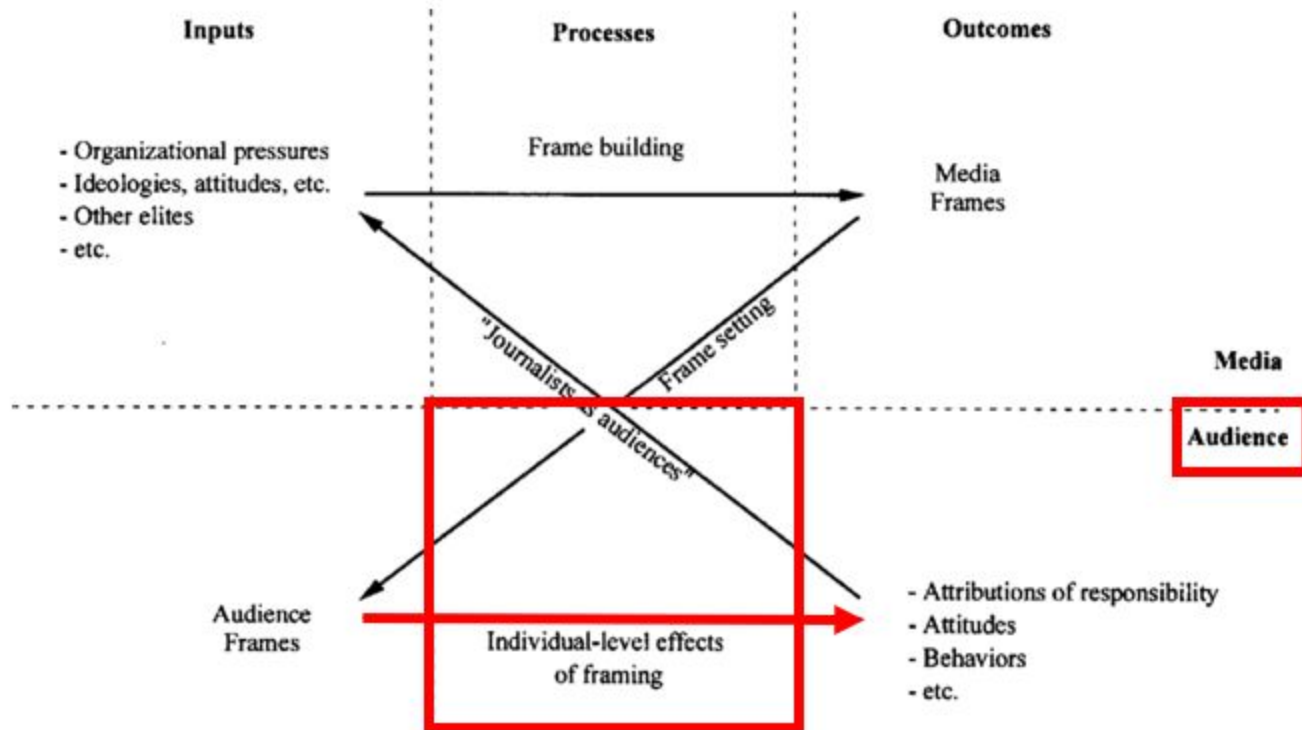


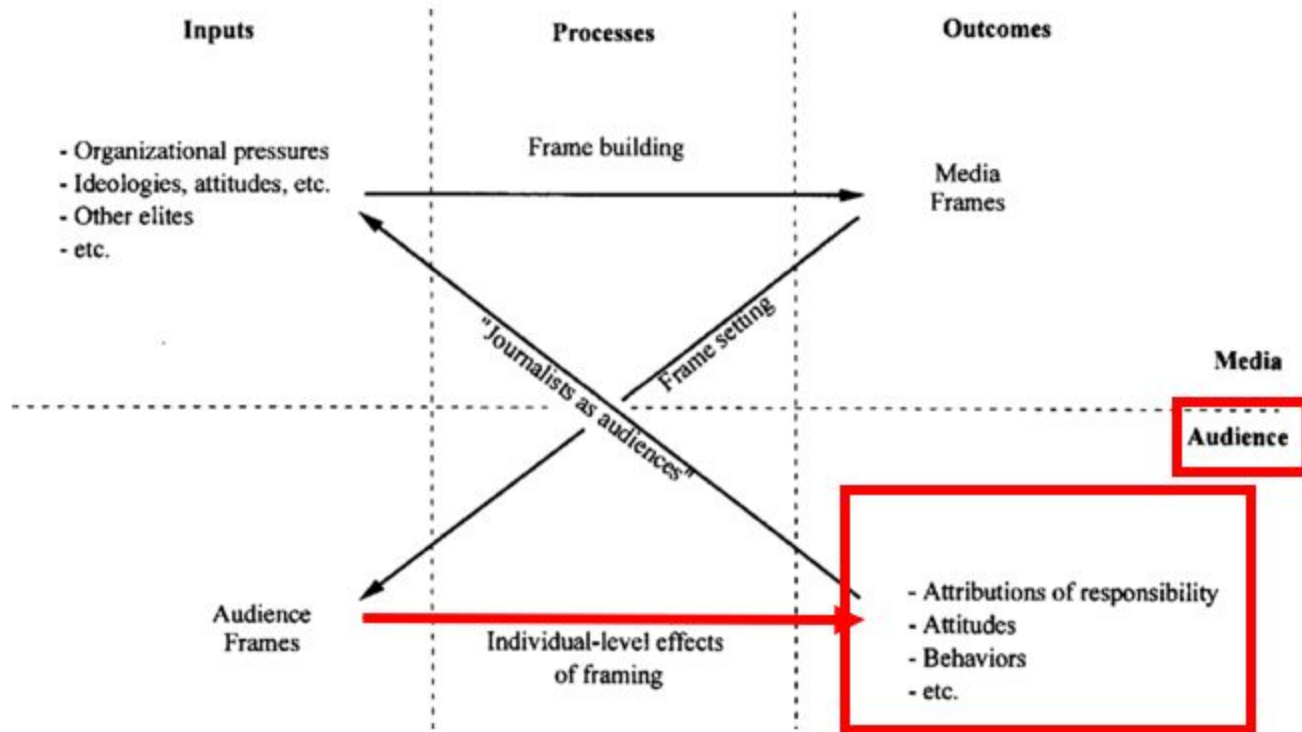






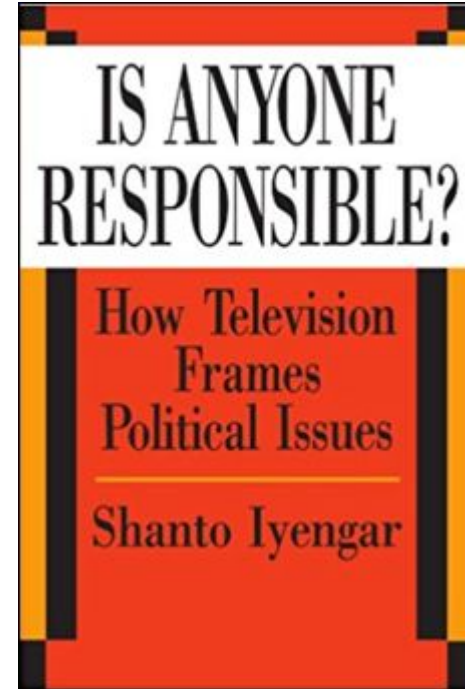






Types of frames

- Episodic frames
 - Event-based news reporting
 - Focused on individual actors
- Thematic frames
 - Broad perspective, highlighting context
 - Focusing on trends and collective outcomes



Types of frames

Episodic frames

Local

Five arrested after protesters march through D.C., start small fires and engage in tense standoff with police

Police said five officers were injured and the union said at least one officer was hospitalized after the latest confrontations in the nation's capital.

NATION

Oakland protesters set fire to courthouse, smash windows

Black Lives Matter protesters block traffic in Fairfax District

Types of frames

Thematic frames

A movement, a slogan, a rallying cry: How Black Lives Matter changed America's view on race

How Systemic Racism Exists In U.S. Housing Policies

**Black Lives Matter
Louisville Trying To
Improve Community Health**

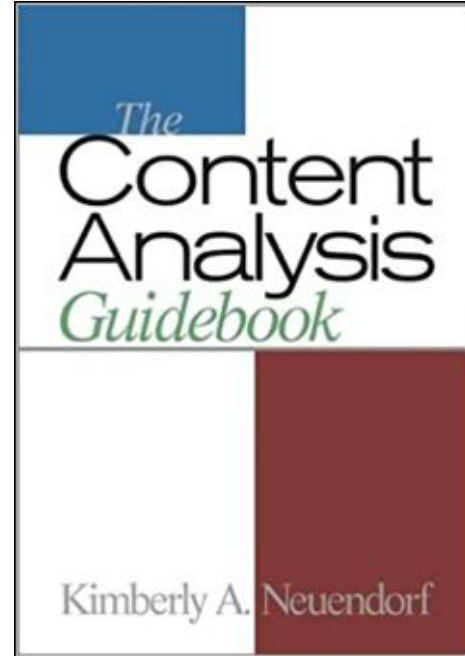
Visual framing

- Images
 - Accessible
 - Less intrusive than words
 - Powerful
 - Emotional reactions



Visual framing and content analysis

- “the systematic,
objective, quantitative
analysis of message
characteristics”



Visual framing and content analysis

Article

Picturing Protest: The Visual Framing of Collective Action by First Nations in Canada

**Catherine Corrigan-Brown¹
and Rima Wilkes²**

American Behavioral Scientist
56(2) 223–243

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DOI: 10.1177/0002764211419357

<http://abs.sagepub.com>



Visual framing and content analysis

- Actors
 - Protester
 - Police
- Power
 - Readers gaze
 - Space
- Legitimacy
 - Emotion
 - Weapon

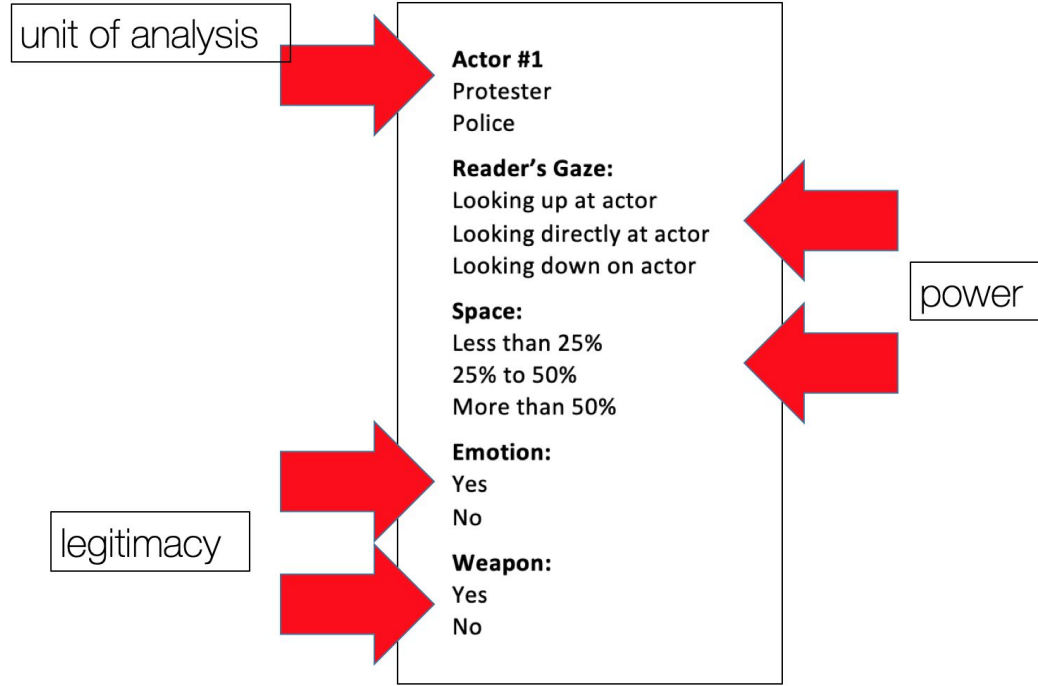


Visual framing and content analysis

- Actors
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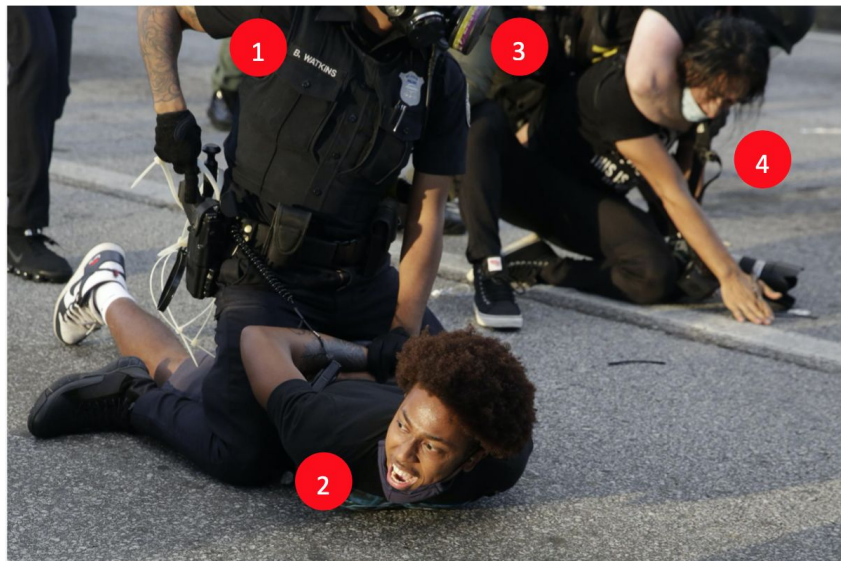


Our worksheet





Protesters and National Guardsmen face off on East Lake Street, Friday, May 29, 2020, in St. Paul, Minn. (AP Photo/John Manchillo)



Demonstrators are detained by Atlanta Police during a protest, Saturday, May 30, 2020 in Atlanta. (AP Photo/Brynn Anderson)

Actor #1
Protester
Police

Reader's Gaze:
Looking up at actor
Looking directly at actor
Looking down on actor

Space:
Less than 25%
25% to 50%
More than 50%

Emotion:
Yes
No

Weapon:
Yes
No

Actor #2
Protester
Police

Reader's Gaze:
Looking up at actor
Looking directly at actor
Looking down on actor

Space:
Less than 25%
25% to 50%
More than 50%

Emotion:
Yes
No

Weapon:
Yes
No

Actor #1
Protester
Police

Reader's Gaze:
Looking up at actor
Looking directly at actor
Looking down on actor

Space:
Less than 25%
25% to 50%
More than 50%

Emotion:
Yes
No

Weapon:
Yes
No

Actor #2
Protester
Police

Reader's Gaze:
Looking up at actor
Looking directly at actor
Looking down on actor

Space:
Less than 25%
25% to 50%
More than 50%

Emotion:
Yes
No

Weapon:
Yes
No

Actor #3
Protester
Police

Reader's Gaze:
Looking up at actor
Looking directly at actor
Looking down on actor

Space:
Less than 25%
25% to 50%
More than 50%

Emotion:
Yes
No

Weapon:
Yes
No

Actor #4
Protester
Police

Reader's Gaze:
Looking up at actor
Looking directly at actor
Looking down on actor

Space:
Less than 25%
25% to 50%
More than 50%

Emotion:
Yes
No

Weapon:
Yes
No



Arrested protesters are loaded onto a transport bus by police on South Washington Street, Sunday, May 31, 2020, in Minneapolis. (AP Photo/John Manchillo)

Actor #1
 Protester
 Police

Reader's Gaze:
 Looking up at actor
 Looking directly at actor
 Looking down on actor

Space:
 Less than 25%
 25% to 50%
 More than 50%

Emotion:
 Yes
 No

Weapon:
 Yes
 No

Actor #2
 Protester
 Police

Reader's Gaze:
 Looking up at actor
 Looking directly at actor
 Looking down on actor

Space:
 Less than 25%
 25% to 50%
 More than 50%

Emotion:
 Yes
 No

Weapon:
 Yes
 No



A demonstrator is taken into custody by police after a curfew took effect during a protest over the death of George Floyd, Monday, June 1, 2020, near the White House in Washington. (AP Photo/Alex Brandon)

Actor #1
 Protester
 Police

Reader's Gaze:
 Looking up at actor
 Looking directly at actor
 Looking down on actor

Space:
 Less than 25%
 25% to 50%
 More than 50%

Emotion:
 Yes
 No

Weapon:
 Yes
 No

Actor #2
 Protester
 Police

Reader's Gaze:
 Looking up at actor
 Looking directly at actor
 Looking down on actor

Space:
 Less than 25%
 25% to 50%
 More than 50%

Emotion:
 Yes
 No

Weapon:
 Yes
 No

Actor #3
 Protester
 Police

Reader's Gaze:
 Looking up at actor
 Looking directly at actor
 Looking down on actor

Space:
 Less than 25%
 25% to 50%
 More than 50%

Emotion:
 Yes
 No

Weapon:
 Yes
 No

Actor #4
 Protester
 Police

Reader's Gaze:
 Looking up at actor
 Looking directly at actor
 Looking down on actor

Space:
 Less than 25%
 25% to 50%
 More than 50%

Emotion:
 Yes
 No

Weapon:
 Yes
 No

Two pencils, one light blue and one dark blue, are positioned diagonally on the left side of the slide. The light blue pencil is on top, and the dark blue pencil is below it. Both pencils are sharpened and point towards the top right.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Students will be able to explain the protest paradigm and its role in news coverage of social justice movements.
2. Students will be able to define media framing and can apply content analysis to recognize what frames are conveying about social justice protests in the news.



The Lesson Plan

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5. Summing up the Lesson

*Thank
you!*