



“I’m Sensing Some Hostility”: Teaching Students to Overcome Personal Biases When Evaluating Sources

Jaclyn Spraetz & Nate Floyd, Miami University

Presentation Outline

1. Hostile Media Effect: Examples, Definition, and Studies
2. HME and Information Literacy Classroom Activities
3. Student Learning Outcomes and Benefits



Media Effects in Information Literacy

Metaliteracy

“Metaliteracy demands **behavioral**, **affective**, **cognitive**, and metacognitive engagement with the information ecosystem.

This Framework depends on these core ideas of metaliteracy, with special focus on metacognition, or critical self-reflection, as crucial to becoming more self-directed in that rapidly changing ecosystem.”

(ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education)

Media Effects

Media effects “are social or psychological responses occurring in individuals as a result of exposure to or processing of media messages” (Tsfati, 2011).

There are three important types of media effects--**behavioral**, **affective**, **cognitive**. (Perse, E. M., & Lambe, J. (2016)



Joe Buck



Buck in 2018

Born Joseph Francis Buck
April 25, 1969 (age 52)
St. Petersburg, Florida, U.S.^[1]

Education Indiana University Bloomington
(did not graduate)

Spouse(s) Ann Archambault (m. 1993; div. 2011)
Michelle Beisner (m. 2014)

Children 4

Parent(s) Jack Buck and Carole Lintzenich

Sports commentary career

Genre(s) Play-by-play

Sports NFL, MLB, USGA

Joseph Francis Buck (born April 25, 1969) is an American [sportscaster](#) and the son of sportscaster [Jack Buck](#).

He worked for [Fox Sports](#) from its 1994 inception through 2022, including roles as lead play-by-play announcer for the network's [National Football League](#) and [Major League Baseball](#) coverage. From 1996 to 2021, he served as the play-by-play announcer for the [World Series](#), with the exceptions of 1997 and 1999, when [Bob Costas](#) called those particular World Series for [NBC](#). In 2022, Buck moved to [ESPN](#), where he will serve as the lead play-by-play announcer for [Monday Night Football](#).^[2]











It could always be worse:
Joe Buck could be on tv
giving us virus updates...







Joe Buck & Kyle Schwarber Wedding



Hostile Media Effect

“They want to hear **their guys** and then I show up and **I’m not rooting for either side** and **each side thinks I’m somehow rooting against their team.**”

Joe Buck, *Conan*, 2016.

“The tendency for individuals with a **strong pre existing attitude on an issue** to perceive that **ostensibly neutral, even-handed** media coverage of the topic is **biased against their side and in favor of their antagonists’ point of view.**”

Richard M. Perloff, “A Three-Decade Retrospective on the Hostile Media Effect,” *Mass Communication & Society*, 2015, p. 707.



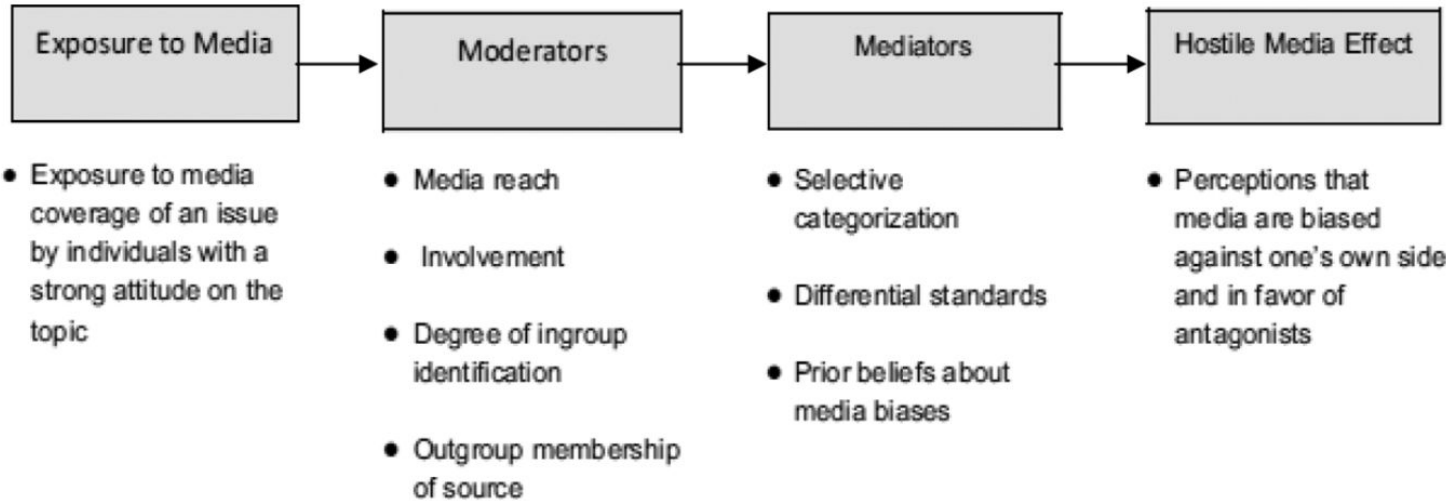


FIGURE 1 Model of the hostile media effect.



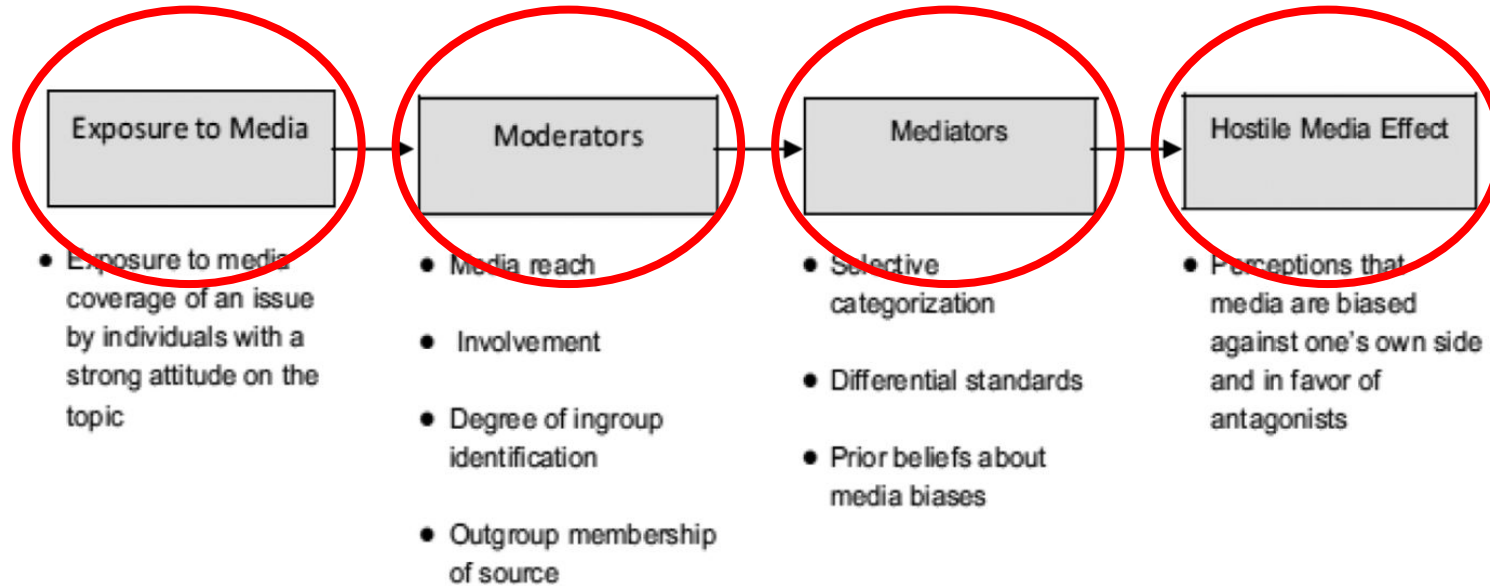


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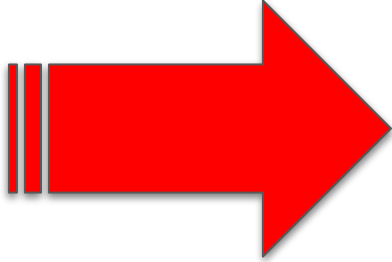


A causal relationship beginning with **exposure to media** and ending with the **hostile media effect**.

Exposure to Media

- Exposure to media coverage of an issue by individuals with a strong attitude on the topic

FIGU



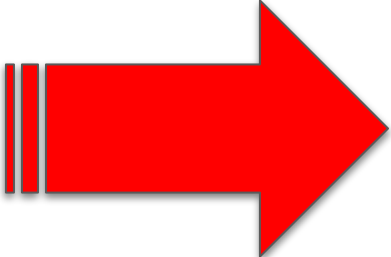
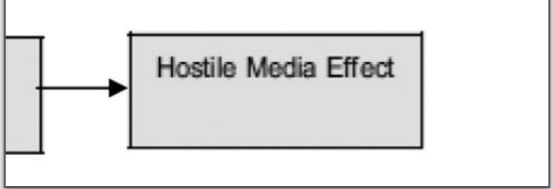
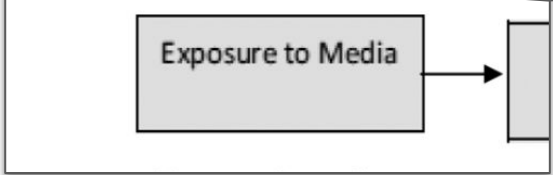
Hostile Media Effect

- Perceptions that media are biased against one's own side and in favor of antagonists

effect.



A causal relationship beginning with **exposure to media** and ending with the **hostile media effect**.



In between this causal relationship are **moderating** and **mediating** variables that predict **whether** and **how** the hostile media effect might materialize.

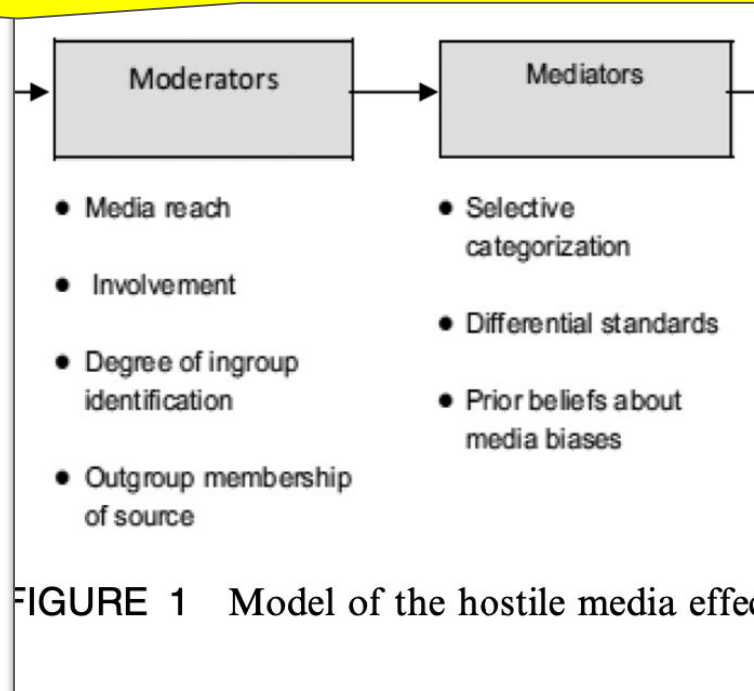


FIGURE 1 Model of the hostile media effect



In between this causal relationship are **moderating** and **mediating** variables that predict **whether** and **how** the hostile media effect might materialize.

A **moderator** is a variable that modifies a causal relationship.

A moderator is asking the question:

Under what conditions and for whom will this causal relationship materialize?

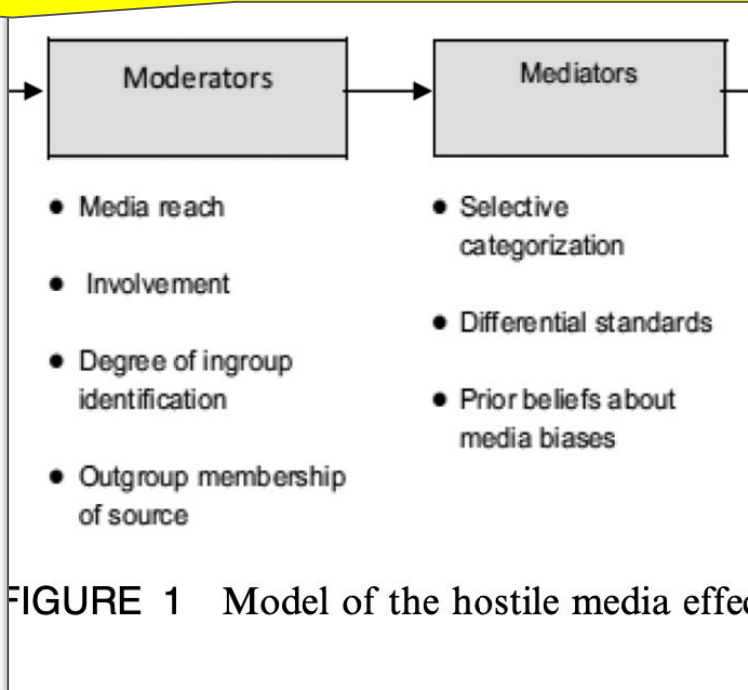
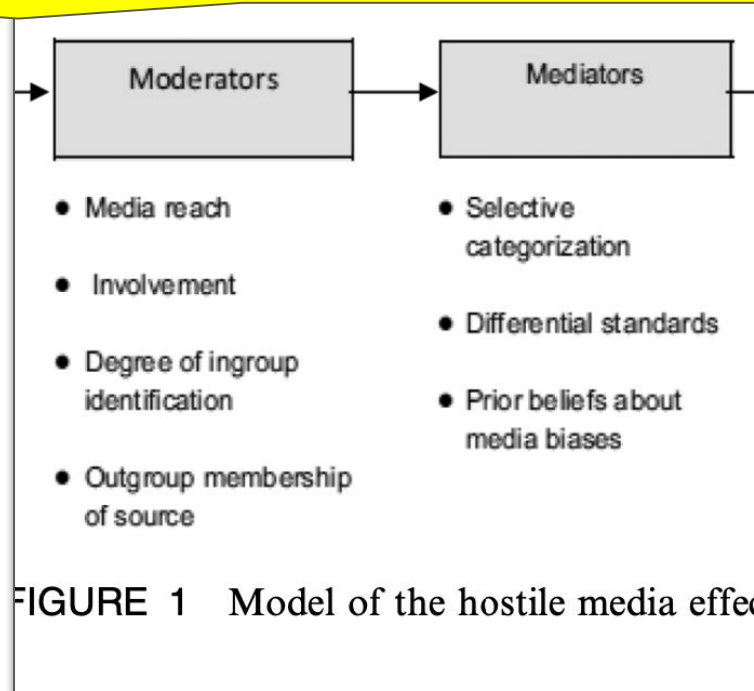


FIGURE 1 Model of the hostile media effect

In between this causal relationship are **moderating** and **mediating** variables that predict **whether** and **how** the hostile media effect might materialize.



A **mediator** is a variable that links a cause and an effect.

A mediator is asking the question:

**How will this causal relationship materialize?
Through what mechanism?**



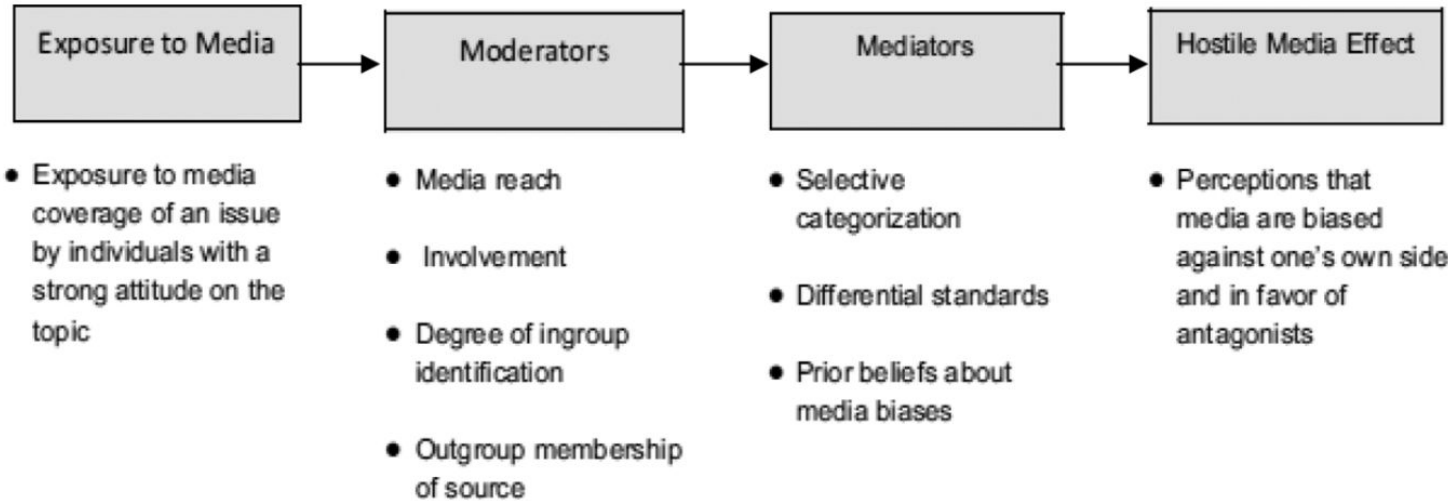


FIGURE 1 Model of the hostile media effect.



Exposure to Media

- Exposure to media coverage of an issue by individuals with a strong attitude on the topic

Moderators

- Media reach
- Involvement
- Degree of ingroup identification
- Outgroup membership of source

Mediators

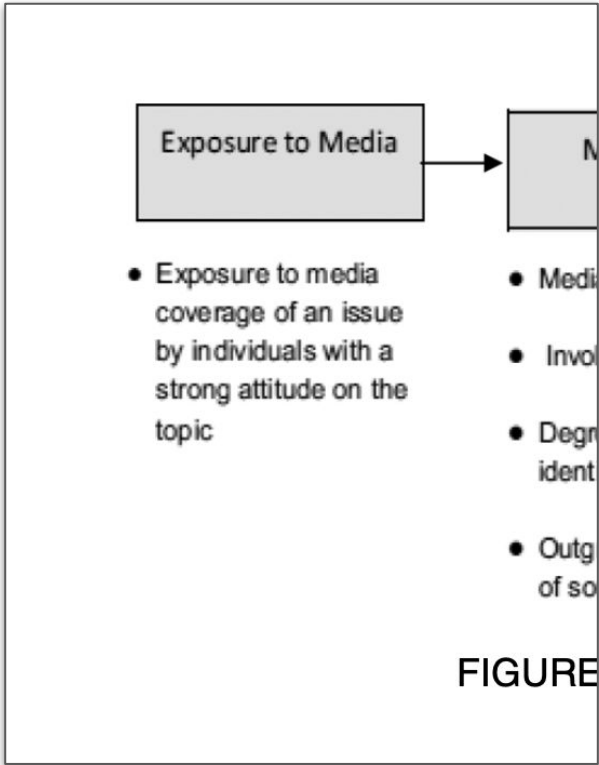
- Selective categorization
- Differential standards
- Prior beliefs about media biases

Hostile Media Effect

- Perceptions that media are biased against one's own side and in favor of antagonists

FIGURE 1 Model of the hostile media effect.





VS.



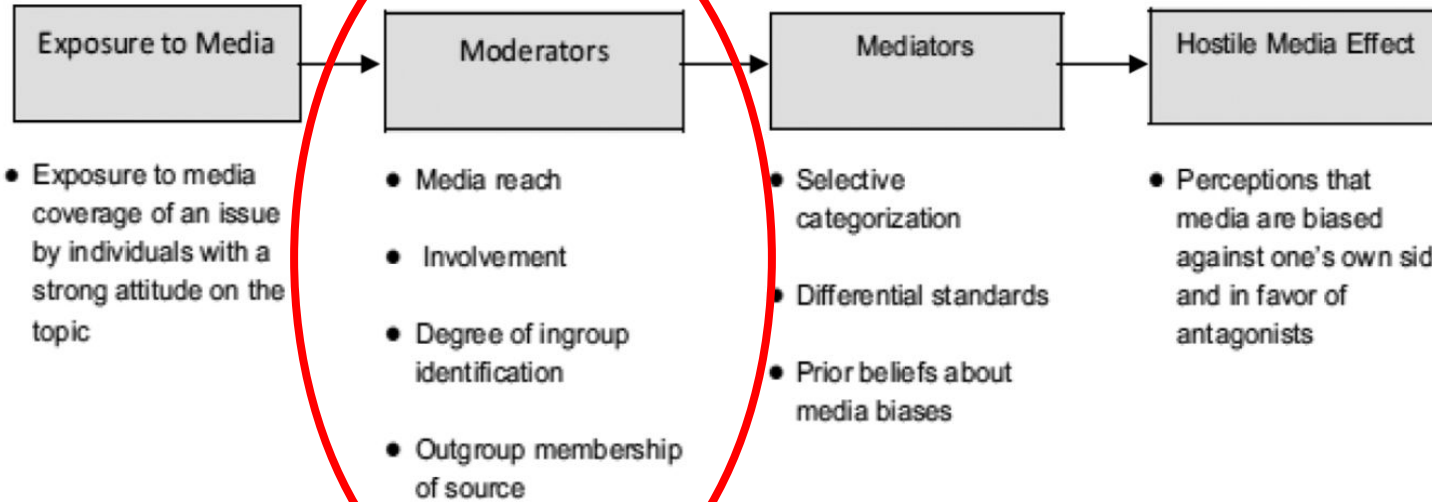


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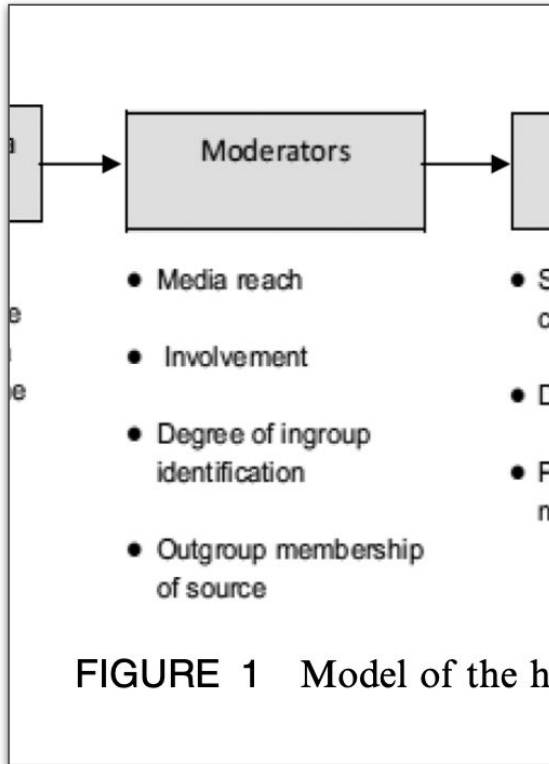


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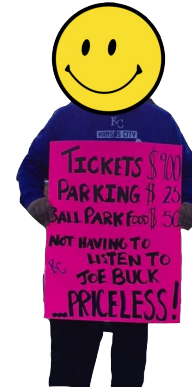
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VS.



Baron & Kenny, 1986; Magill, 2011.

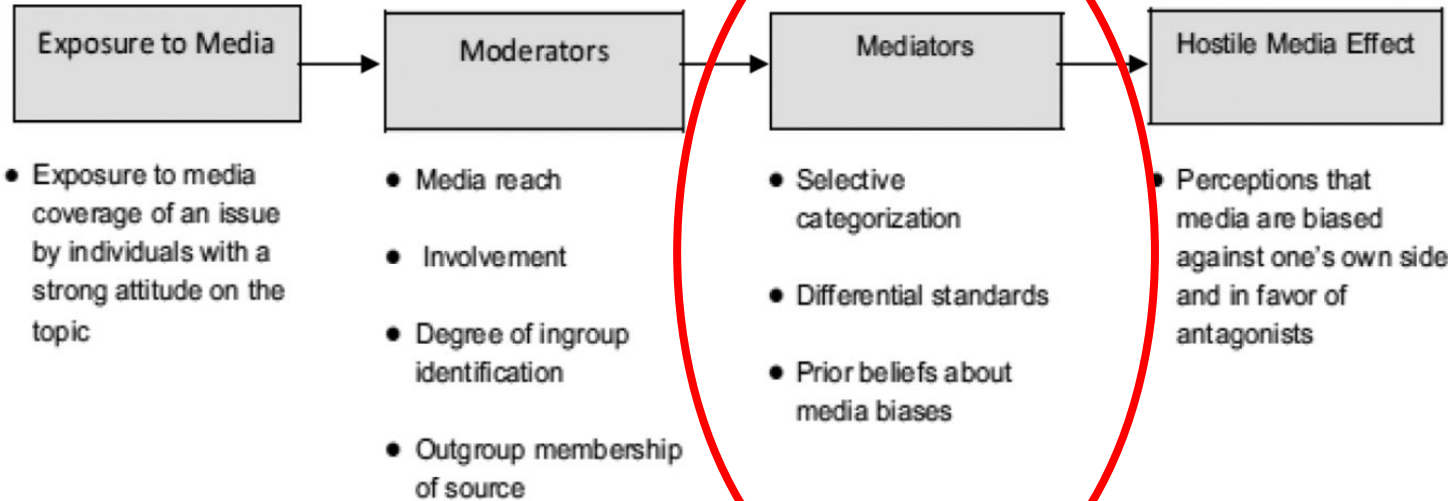
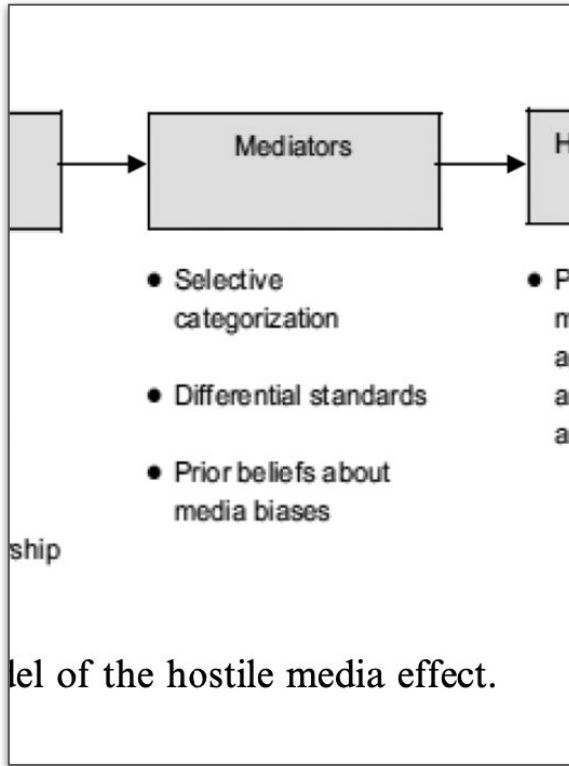


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Baron & Kenny, 1986; Magill, 2011.

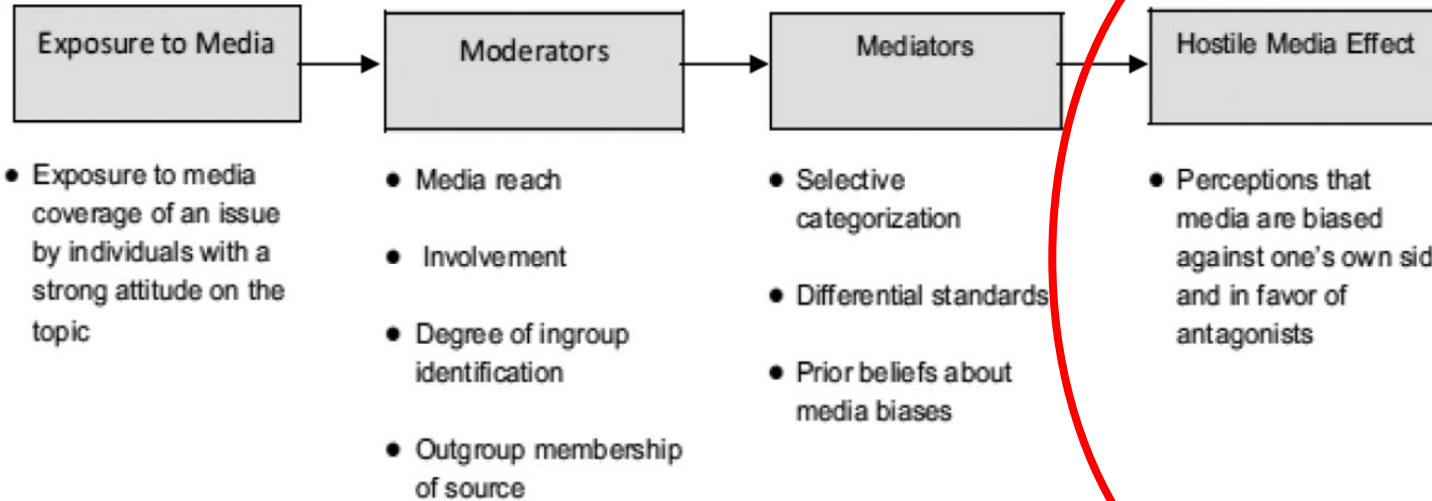


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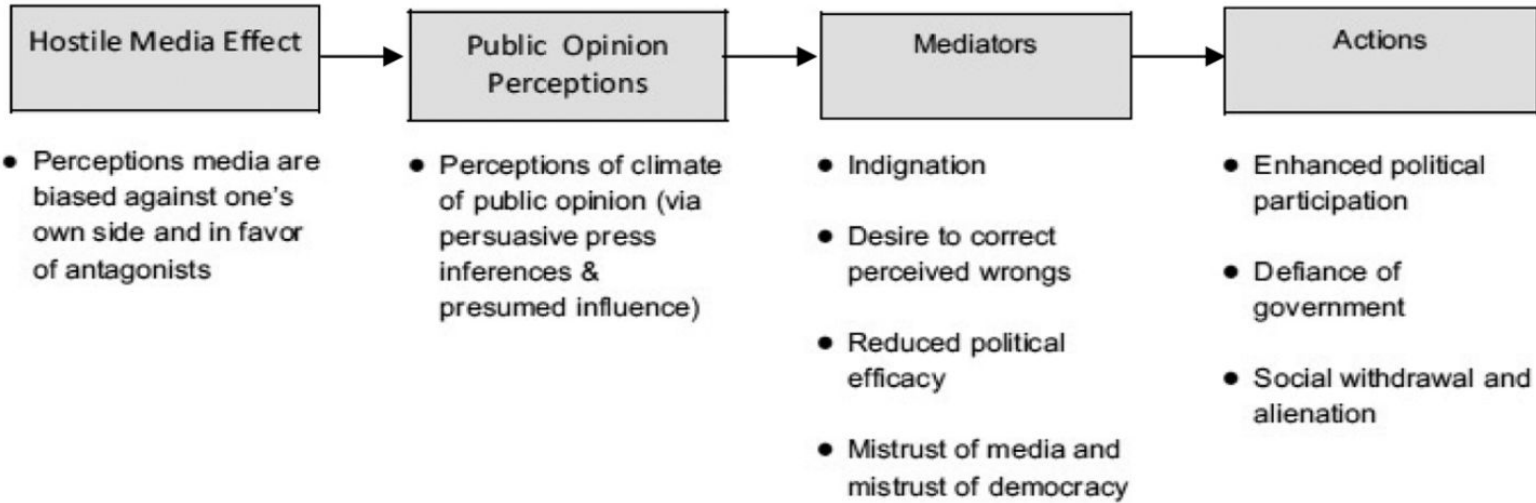


FIGURE 2 Influences of the hostile media effect.





CASE REPORTS

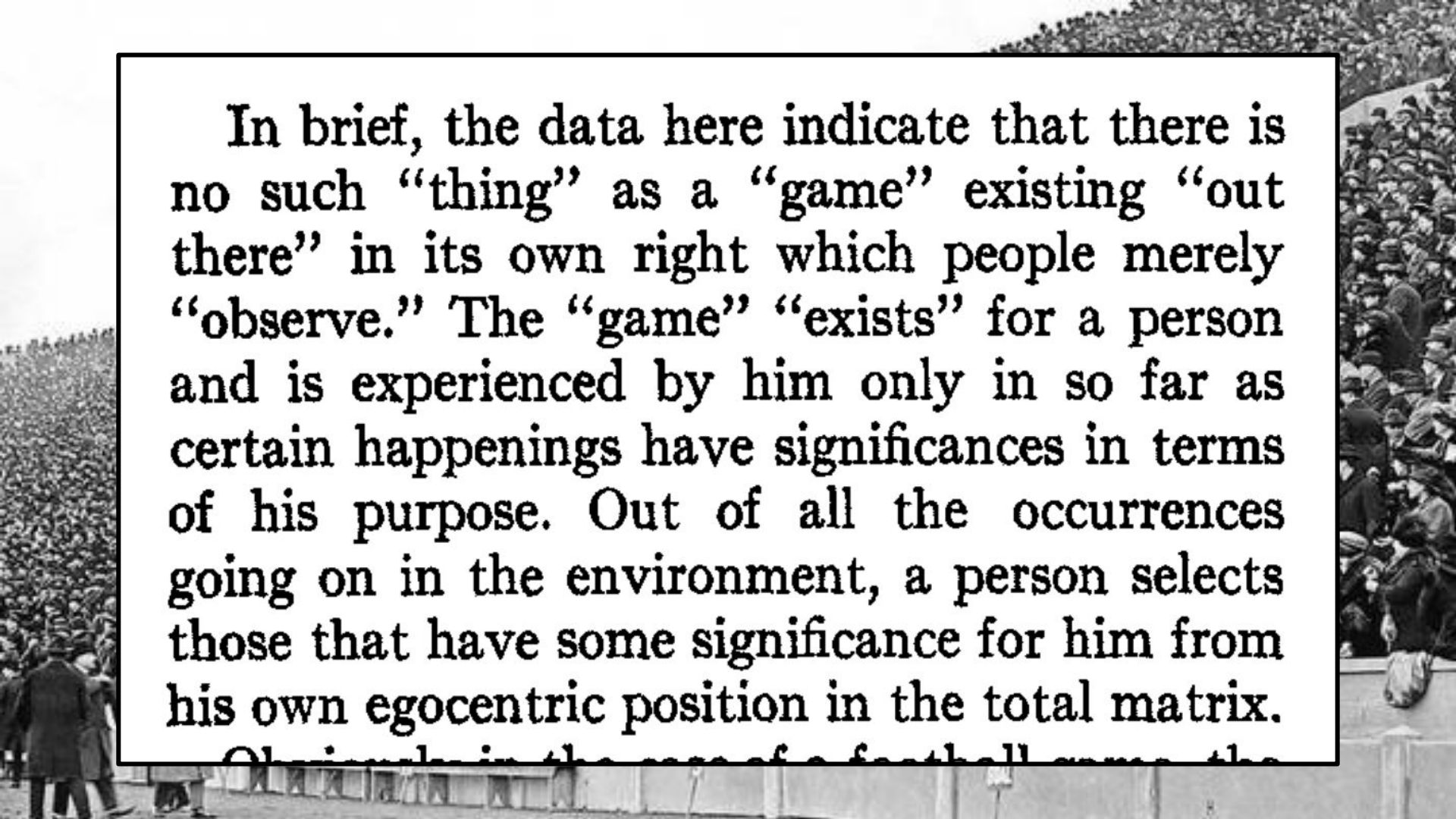
THEY SAW A GAME: A CASE STUDY

ALBERT H. HASTORF AND HADLEY CANTRIL

Dartmouth College

Princeton University

ON A brisk Saturday afternoon, November 23, 1951, the Dartmouth football team played Princeton in Princeton's Palmer Stadium. It was the last game of the season for both teams and of rather special significance because the Princeton team had won all its games so far and one of its players, Kazmaier, was receiving All-American mention and had just appeared as the cover man on *Time* magazine, and was playing his last game.



In brief, the data here indicate that there is no such "thing" as a "game" existing "out there" in its own right which people merely "observe." The "game" "exists" for a person and is experienced by him only in so far as certain happenings have significances in terms of his purpose. Out of all the occurrences going on in the environment, a person selects those that have some significance for him from his own egocentric position in the total matrix.

Obviously in the case of a football game, the

The Hostile Media Phenomenon: Biased Perception and Perceptions of Media Bias in Coverage of the Beirut Massacre

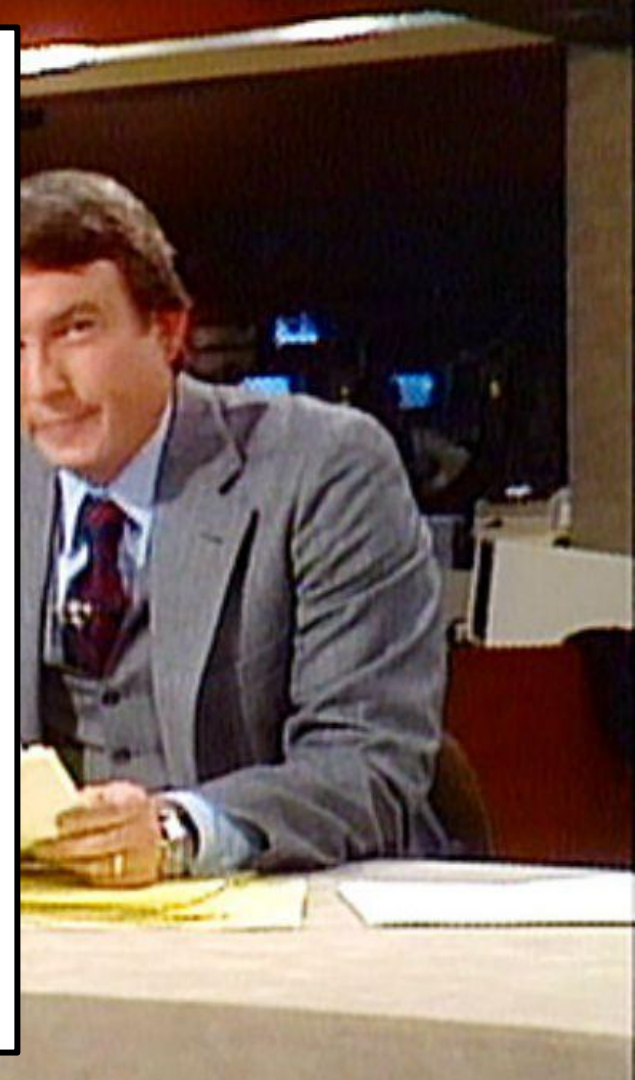
Robert P. Vallone, Lee Ross, and Mark R. Lepper
Stanford University

After viewing identical samples of major network television coverage of the Beirut massacre, both pro-Israeli and pro-Arab partisans rated these programs, and those responsible for them, as being biased against their side. This *hostile media phenomenon* appears to involve the operation of two separate mechanisms. First, partisans evaluated the fairness of the media's sample of facts and arguments differently: in light of their own divergent views about the objective merits of each side's case and their corresponding views about the nature of unbiased coverage. Second, partisans reported different perceptions and recollections about the program content itself; that is, each group reported more negative references to their side than positive ones, and each predicted that the coverage would sway nonpartisans in a hostile direction. Within both partisan groups, furthermore, greater knowledge of the crisis was associated with stronger perceptions of media bias. Charges of media bias, we concluded, may reflect more than self-serving attempts to secure preferential treatment. They may result from the operation of basic cognitive and perceptual mechanisms, mechanisms that should prove relevant to perceptions of fairness or objectivity in a wide range of mediation and negotiation contexts.



Discussion

Our results provide a compelling demonstration of the tendency for partisans to view media coverage of controversial events as unfairly biased and hostile to the position they advocate. Our results also highlight two mechanisms—one apparently evaluative or cognitive, the other apparently more perceptual in character—that combine to produce the partisans' conviction that they have been treated unfairly. According to the first mechanism, in which opposing partisans believe, respectively, that the truth is largely “black” or largely “white,” each complain about the fairness and objectivity of mediated accounts that suggest that the truth might be at some particular hue of gray. According to the second mechanism, opposing partisans further disagree about the color of the account itself: One side reports it to be largely white (instead of the blackish hue that the other side thinks it should be), the other side reports it to be largely black (instead of the whitish hue that the first side thinks it should be), and both sides believe the discrepancy between the mediated account and the unmediated truth to be the intended result of hostile bias on the part of those responsible.





Jordan L. @JordanL
What's going



Mass Communication and Society

ISSN: 1520-5436 (Print) 1532-7825 (Online) Journal homepage: <http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/hmcs20>

When Social Media Become Hostile Media: An Experimental Examination of News Sharing, Partisanship, and Follower Count

Tae Kyoung Lee, Youngju Kim & Kevin Coe

Jordan L

@JordanL

Democrat

Let's make the

jordanl.com

Joined March 2009

Act?
Read this ne

jordanl.com

Joined March 2009



Jordan L. @JordanL

What's going
Act?

Read this ne

First, our results clearly illustrate that who shares a news article on Twitter can lead to HME. Consistent with our expectations, both Republicans and Democrats perceived more bias in an article when it was shared by someone of the opposing party. At the most basic level, this finding helps reinforce HME as an intergroup phenomenon (Hartmann & Tanis, 2013; Matheson & Dursun, 2001; Reid, 2012).

@JordanL

Democrat

Let's make the world better

jordanl.com

Joined March 2009



Jordan L. @JordanL

What's going
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@JordanL

Republican

Let's make the world better

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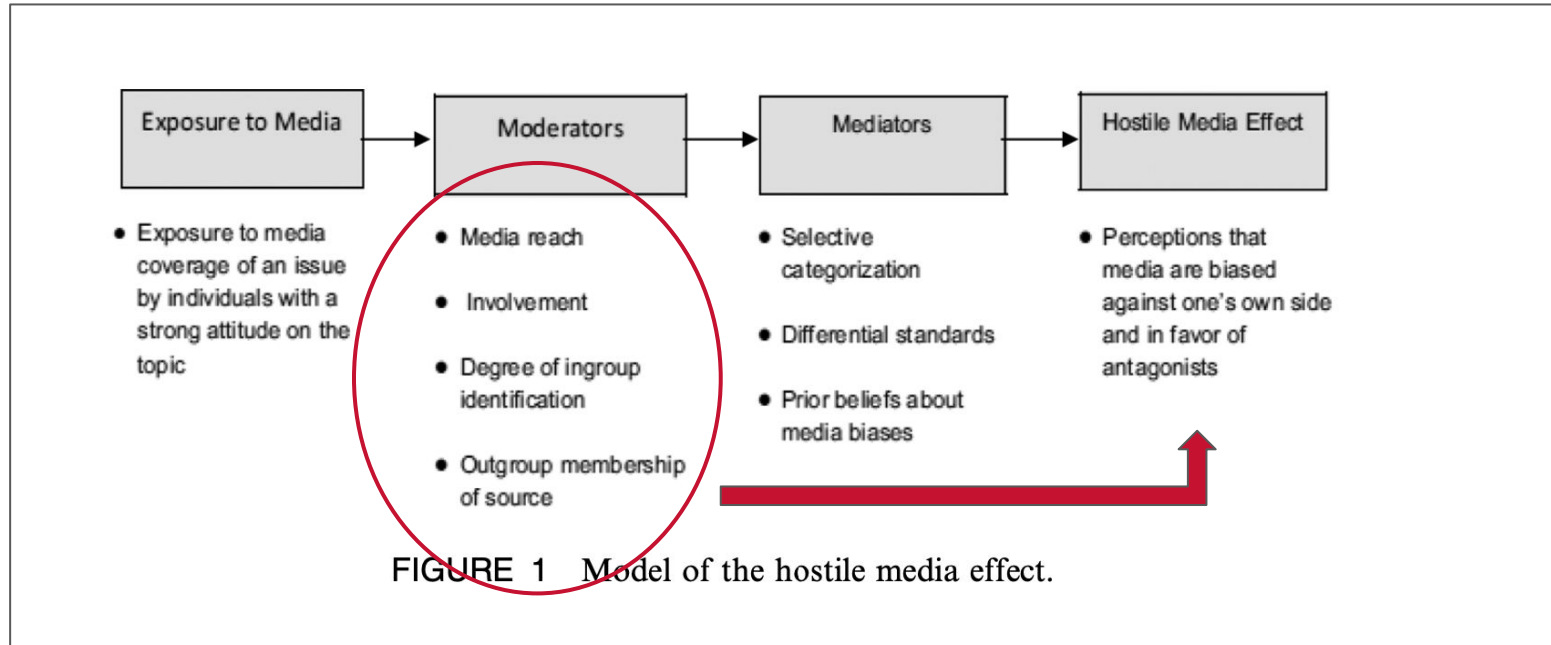
Classroom Activities



- Introductory reflection:
 - How do you define bias?
 - What is something that you read recently that you felt was biased?
 - *How important was the topic to you? Did what you read go against your beliefs/knowledge/perceptions about that topic?*



Classroom Activities



Classroom Activities

1. Think of an issue that is important to you and you feel comfortable sharing with others in this class.

(Can be a movie/band/actor/political issue/etc.)

2. Find an issue from the given list that is not so important to you.


3. Look up each issue on Google News and find at least one article for each issue.

4. Use the following worksheet as you read through each article...



Name _____ Issue #!:

Hostile Media Effect



Tracking biases & perceptions in what we read.

Article Title	
Media Reach	Is the article coming from a popular source? Are a lot of people likely to come in contact with it? Small Reach 1 2 3 4 5 Large Reach
Involvement	How much have you read/watched about this issue? How long have you known about it? How important is it to you? Not Very Important 1 2 3 4 5 Very Important
Ingroup Identification	Do you have a sense of belonging with this issue/topic? Are you very connected to this community? Weak Sense of Belonging 1 2 3 4 5 Strong Sense of Belonging
Outgroup Membership of Source	How do you view the source? Do they have any expertise on this issue/topic? Should they be writing about it? Are they a part of the community? Not a Part of the Community 1 2 3 4 5 Part of the Community
Overall Amount of Bias Against Your Issue	What is your overall feeling toward this article? Do they have a positive outlook or a negative outlook on your topic? Is it biased against your issue/topic? Not Biased 1 2 3 4 5 Very Biased Explain your thoughts about this topic:

Classroom Activities: List of Possible Topics

Pulled from Pew Research Center: Top Issues for Voters *Other possible topics:*


- Economy
- Health care
- Supreme court
- Coronavirus
- Violent crime
- Foreign policy
- Gun policy
- Race and ethnic inequality
- Immigration
- Economic inequality
- Climate change

Students can choose a particular ...

- Celebrity
- Band
- Book
- Movie
- Brand
- Event
- TV show

Name _____ Issue #1: _____

Hostile Media Effect



Tracking biases & perceptions in what we read.

Article Title	
Media Reach	<p>Is the article coming from a popular source? Are a lot of people likely to come in contact with it?</p> <p>Small Reach 1 2 3 4 5 Large Reach</p>
Involvement	<p>How much have you read/watched about this issue? How long have you known about it? How important is it to you?</p> <p>Not Very Important 1 2 3 4 5 Very Important</p>
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Outgroup Membership of Source	<p>How do you view the source? Do they have any expertise on this issue/topic? Should they be writing about it? Are they a part of the community?</p> <p>Not a Part of the Community 1 2 3 4 5 Part of the Community</p>
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Name _____

Issue #1: _____

Hostile Media Effect

Tracking biases & perceptions in what we read.



Article Title

Media Reach

Is the article coming from a popular source? Are a lot of people likely to come in contact with it?

Small Reach 1 2 3 4 5 Large Reach



Involvement

How much have you read/watched about this issue? How long have you known about it? How important is it to you?

Not Very Important 1 2 3 4 5 Very Important



**Ingroup
Identification**

Do you have a sense of belonging with this issue/topic?
Are you very connected to this community?

Weak Sense of
Belonging

1

2

3

4

5

Strong Sense of
Belonging



**Outgroup
Membership
of Source**

How do you view the source? Do they have any expertise on this issue/topic? Should they be writing about it? Are they a part of the community?

Not a Part of
the Community

1

2

3

4

5

Part of the
Community



**Overall
Amount of
Bias Against
Your Issue**

What is your overall feeling toward this article? Do they have a positive outlook or a negative outlook on your topic? Is it biased against your issue/topic?

Not Biased 1 2 3 4 5 Very Biased

Explain your thoughts
about this topic:



Name _____

Issue #: _____

Hostile Media Effect



Tracking biases & perceptions in what we read.

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Small Reach 1 2 3 4 5 Large Reach

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How do you view the source? Do they have any expertise on this issue/topic? Should they be writing about it? Are they a part of the community?

Not a Part of the Community 1 2 3 4 5 Part of the Community

Overall Amount of Bias Against Your Issue

What is your overall feeling toward this article? Do they have a positive outlook or a negative outlook on your topic? Is it biased against your issue/topic?

Not Biased 1 2 3 4 5 Very Biased

Explain your thoughts about this topic:



Debrief After the Activity

- Students share their findings in pairs
- Questions for pairs:
 1. What was your overall rating of bias between the two articles?
 2. Was there a difference in the amount of bias you associated with the article depending on your level of involvement and sense of belonging with the issue? What about the amount of reach the article has or whether or not the writer is a valid representation of the issue?
 3. What other factors do you think played into your perception of bias or objectivity in the articles you read?



Classroom Activities

Reflection component is paramount:

1. What is the hostile media effect? Describe when you have seen or experienced actions resulting from the HME.
2. Why do you think it is important to know about the hostile media effect?
3. Does knowing about HME change how you will interact with news and other information sources? Why or why not?



Classroom Activities

JOURNAL ENTRY:

- a. Throughout the next week, (1) write down when you have strong reactions to media content being shared with you or that you encounter on your own. (2) Write down when you see others reacting strongly to media content.
- b. Can the Hostile Media Effect help explain your or their reactions? Do any of the moderators we discussed in class come into play, such as media reach, involvement, ingroup identification, or lack of outgroup membership?



Mike Wagner

University of
Wisconsin Madison

Journ 201



Student Learning Outcomes

Students reflect on how media influences them in order to think critically and analytically about the consumption, production, and dissemination of information.

Students can implement strategies to help them make sense of the mixed, and at times chaotic, information landscape of bad faith actors and political partisanship.

Students practice strategies they learn from the hostile media effect, as well as other media effects, and can apply them in their daily lives.



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