

Media & Democracy

Visual representation of concepts assignment

Objectives

- Students will understand and be able to explain the basic ideas of each topic of the course.
- Students will understand that these ideas are connected in important ways.
- Students will be skilled at putting main points into a visual format.
- Students will be skilled at making connections between and among ideas from class.

Performance Tasks

Take the information from the first module of the course (“What is democracy?,” “information formats and shape, content, quality rigor,” “Media effects: framing, priming and agenda setting”) to create a visual representation of the role of information in a democracy. Choose a perspective from which to write and write for a specific audience to produce the visual manifestation.

Examples might include something like one of these scenarios:

You are a candidate for a local political office and want to explain that you understand the role of information in a democracy to potential voters. Devise a visual representation (e.g., diagram, game, graphic, mind map, poster) that shows connections between ideas in readings for the first module of class as part of your campaign website. In a separate written document, explain why you made the choices that you did, incorporating your stance as the producer and your audience’s stance as the readers.

You are a content creator for a prominent social media site. Your boss has given you the task of creating an infographic that explains the role of information in a democracy that shows connections between ideas in readings for the first module of class for your site. Devise an infographic for the site. In a separate document, explain why you made the choices that you did, incorporating your stance as the producer and your audience’s stance as the readers.

You are a political cartoonist working for the *New York Times*. Create a storyboard (there are apps online that are free) that tells a story about the role of information in a democracy that shows connections between ideas in readings for the first module of class. In a separate document, explain why you made the choices that you did, incorporating your stance as the producer and your audience’s stance as the readers.

Requirements

3 pieces:

1. A document that outlines and explains the most important concepts from each of the assigned readings for each day of class in the first module (“What is democracy?,” “information formats and shape, content, quality rigor,” “Media effects: framing, priming and agenda setting”). Choose what you believe are the most important aspects of each of the readings and explain these in your own words in an outline format. You may integrate important quotations from the readings, too.
2. The visual representation of the role of information in a democracy and how the concepts from the first module of the course are connected. Document all your sources in the visual. These will be compiled into a class website, so please make sure they’re accessible for posting there.

3. A 1-2-page double-spaced document that explains why you made the choices that you did for the visual, incorporating your stance as the producer and your audience's stance as the readers. What constraints do you face in this situation and how did you mitigate them? Integrate at least 2-3 credible outside sources to explain your choices.
4. Include a reference page that documents outside sources.

Grading

Grading is based on the following criteria:

1. Most relevant and important information from each reading is included in the first document.
2. Visual is an accurate representation of the role of information in a democracy.
3. Visual shows connections between ideas in first module of the course.
4. Document explaining role and audience choices includes a clear argument for those choices and includes at least 2-3 credible outside sources.

Media & Democracy

Visual Representation of Concepts Assignment Rubric

Topics from articles:

- ☐ Traditional: Media should keep people informed (Curran)
- ☐ Traditional: Media should be watchdogs (Curran)
- ☐ Traditional: Media should provide platform of open debate (Curran)
- ☐ Traditional: Media should be voice of the people (Curran)
- ☐ Actual: media one of a number of institutions between government and governed (Curran)
- ☐ Actual: news in a context that renders it meaningful (Curran)
- ☐ Actual: media should strengthen already existing structures and processes of democratic system, not be solely responsible (Curran)
- ☐ Actual: media is not unitary – should be diverse and serve different publics (Curran)
- ☐ Market system vs. democracy (Curran)
- ☐ 3 characteristics of liberal model media system (Hallin & Giles)
- ☐ 4 major dimensions media systems differ from one another (Hallin & Giles)
- ☐ 3 pitfalls to recognize when understanding American journalism and its relationship to democracy (Schudson)
- ☐ Entman argument – acknowledge and nurture the contributions made to democracy across the entire media landscape (Entman)
- ☐ 4 areas of knowledge vital to effective democratic citizenship (Entman)
- ☐ Table 1 – media categories and commitment to key journalistic standards, core organizational values and missions, target analysis and market constraints, prototypical message content, performance of news functions (Entman)
- ☐ Definition of agenda setting (McCombs)
- ☐ Definition of agenda (McCombs)
- ☐ “degree of correspondence” between press agenda and public policy agenda (McCombs)
- ☐ “need for orientation” and relevance and uncertainty (McCombs)
- ☐ levels of agenda setting: attention and comprehension (McCombs)
- ☐ consequences of agenda setting – forming an opinion, priming opinions about public figures, shaping an opinion through an emphasis on particular attributes (McCombs)
- ☐ who sets the press agenda – traditions and routines of journalism, other publications/colleagues, public officials in government (McCombs)
- ☐ Definition of priming (Scheufele & Tewksbury)
- ☐ Definition of framing (Scheufele & Tewksbury)
- ☐ Differences between agenda setting and framing: 1) how news messages are created, 2) how they are processed, 3) how the effects are produced (Scheufele & Tewksbury)

	Part 1: Relevant and important information from each reading (25%)	Part 2: Visual of role of information in a democracy (40%)	Part 3: Clear argument for role and audience choices (35%)
4	Outline includes all topics from list above and writing shows student completely understands concepts.	Visual is comprehensive and shows connections between concepts in all articles.	Student articulates a clear and persuasive argument for role and audience choices and includes 2-3 credible and relevant outside sources to back up those choices.
3	Outline includes most of topics from list above and writing shows student mostly understands concepts.	Visual is accurate but may not show connections between concepts in all articles.	Student articulates argument for role and audience choices, but argument may not be clear or persuasive or student did not include 2-3 credible and relevant outside sources to back up choices.
2	Outline includes some topics from list above and writing does not show understanding of topics.	Visual may not include information from all articles and/or connections between concepts.	Student does not articulate very clear or persuasive argument for role and audience choices or does not include enough outside sources to back up choices.
1	Outline does not include very many topics from list above and writing is mostly copying information directly from the source.	Visual does not include information from all articles and/or any connections between concepts.	Student does not articulate clear or persuasive argument for role and audience choices or does not include any outside sources to back up choices.

Part 1: _____

Part 2: _____

Part 3: _____

Comments:

Media & Democracy

Visual Representation of Concepts Assignment Examples

GENERATION: SMARTER

Understand how your news gets to you
and make sure it's right

In the midst of the biggest technology boom ever, it's faster than ever before to get any information we need. Millennials and Post-Millennials have the potential to be the most connected and informed generation of voters in the history of American democracy. But in the midst of having thousands of ways to get the news and access to free speech, how do you sort through it all to get the best information to inform your vote? "Press and Democracies" (2)

What are the different types of journalism?

- 1 Traditional mainstream journalism: CNN, NPR, New York Times.
- 2 Advocacy journalism: Infowars, Occupy Democrats, Breitbart.
- 3 Tabloids: Chicago Sun-Times, The National Enquirer, The Examiner.
- 4 Entertainment journalism: People Magazine, TMZ, Entertainment Tonight, The Oprah Winfrey Show.

"Press and Democracy in Time and Space" (3)

Why should we critique what we read?

It is important to remember how many sectors influence the media: the government, citizens, political organizations and interest groups, and other outside sources. As a voter, you should be receiving the most balanced, holistic news story. Since the media can't always do that for you, it's important to remember all the difference ways you can get information and ask yourself why a media source might be telling this story.

"What democracy requires of the media" (1)

But why do all these types of journalism influence my information as a voter?

As an informed voter, it's important to understand four categories in the news: policy, the power of individuals and groups, ideology (the way decisions shaped based on power), and self-interest (how the issues in the news affect you). All of the types of journalism serve in one or more of these roles.

"The Nature of Sources of News" (4)

Three Things To Know When Critiquing a News Source

"The Agenda-Setting Function of the Press" (5) and "Framing, Agenda-Setting, and Priming" (6)

Agenda Setting Each media outlet decides what is most important for you to see.	<div style="font-size: 4em;">}</div>	<p>These are the ways that the media shapes how and what you see in your news. The media has a lot of power over you, right?</p>
Priming What the media includes and emphasizes when discussing a politician, for example.		
Framing influencing how audience thinks about issues by creating interpretive cues with a person's pre-existing reasoning.		

So... when we come across a new article, what kind of questions should we ask to think critically about what we're hearing?

The Role of Information in a Democratic Society

A STUDY FROM THE PEW RESEARCH CENTER SHOWS THAT:

57% of U.S. adults often get their news from T.V.

38% of U.S. adults often get their news online

20% of U.S. adults often get their news from print sources

The media is influenced by politicians.

The media is regulated by the government.

The media prioritizes certain political parties.

The media is funded by advertisers.

All media is biased.

Advertisers, politicians, the government, and political parties influence what the media portrays as **important news**. This is called the **agenda**.

If audiences are not responding to a topic (and not watching a station or reading a publication's articles) the **"news" will change**. This relationship between what the media considers news and how important the public finds it is called **agenda-setting**.

HOW TO FIND & USE CREDIBLE SOURCES

Seek traditional news sources that are bipartisan and appeal to national audiences. Examples: LA Times (print & online) and CNN (tv).

Use advocate sources to expand your opinions, but not as a primary source of information. Examples: The Nation (print & online) and documentaries (tv).

Avoid tabloid sources that spread "fake news" and/or are extremely biased to political parties. Examples: The National Enquirer (print) and Final Thoughts (tv).

Recognize that entertainment sources can be accurate...but they are primarily made for enjoyment rather than information. Examples: People (print) and The Today Show (tv).

Ultimate goal of the People: what people want to have their voices be heard

Open forum for Debate: what people is place to have their voices heard regardless of the type

Report Important Events and Events, only focuses on what is important to all

Objective Media: not influenced by personal biases

Watchdog: watches wrongdoing by state

Handout: Can Make Decisions for themselves, gives independence of thought

"Soft Journalism": entertainment-based media

Impartial news media does not take sides on issues, rather it reports facts

Traditional Narrative

Traditional Narrative of Media vs. Reality

What Democracy Requires of the Media Current

Reality

More Complex: more actors that play a part

More Resistant: restricted by Government control, limited access to information

Close Visit to Report: usually national language setting, framing, etc. 3

Should be Adversarial: Debate, Debate: conflict and discussion

Too Simple: should watch other threats

Influenced by Many Things: the media is a conglomerate of many sources and opinions

Social Pressures: should be generally biased

Biased media organizations rely on their own values rather than remaining impartial



The Role of Information in a Democracy

1. Information Formats and Shape, Content, Quality Rigo

The Facts and Democracy in Time and Space (Education)

4 Types of American Journalism

Traditional Mainstream: before the emergence of online media outlets

Advocacy: non-objective viewpoints, usually for social change

Talkback: sensational stories, celebrity focus

Entertainment: media entertainment

To understand is certain type of journalism, one must know how that specific democracy works because they differ based on location and culture etc

Journalism is changing rapidly (disrupted)

What Goal of Journalism

"... make power accountable, to keep ordinary citizens apprised of what government is doing and how it affects them both individually and with respect to the rights and values that they care about" (Graham 199)

Traditional Journalism faces pressure to make change

4 Core Functions of Media

Policy - specific public policy issues

Power - the actions of public officials and groups who exert political power

Identity - perspective that shape society, status, etc.

Self-Interest - individuals own political interests and stakes in policy issues and election and their role in society

The Nature and Sources of News (Education)

5 Key Standards in the Production of News

Accuracy - News organizations devote resources to avoid factual errors: Longwinded sources, Credibility Affiliation

Balance - News organizations provide equivalent treatment to conflicting sides in a debate: Keep political news impartial, Keep personal advertisements out

Checks on Pure Profit Maximization - News organizations don't profit: Decisions on stories to cover: How to play the stories: How much: Editors in a necessary: Professional news judgment

Democratic Accountability - News organizations hold the government accountable: Stop surveillance of public officials: Monitoring citizenship: Government watchdog

Editorial Separation - News organizations write, but not editorialized on editorial pages do not influence balance on news pages: Story selection is NOT determined by editors: Editors need to remain impartial and edit the content: Opinions do not matter

Main Points

Media is globalized and interconnected throughout the world

"News media around the world vary considerably in their styles, structures, and social and political roles" (Stratton & Gies 16)

Authoritarian: Concentrated in supporting authoritarian structure: Certain authority decides how people should think

Libertarian: Stresses individual liberties: People can make own decisions and think for themselves

Communist: Meant to expand a socialist system: Most media depict the government: Loyal to the government: Supports a regime

Social Responsibility: Goes beyond Libertarian model: Press more available as press responsibility to society: Social justice

Liberal Media: "Must punch expression in the United States" (Stratton and Gies 16): Common in Britain and 19th Century: Soviet Union, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand

Polarized Political Media: Common in both Europe: "Countries that had relatively long and conflictual transitions from feudalism and patronage to capitalism and representative democracy" (Stratton and Gies 16)

Democratic Capitalist Media: Common in north and central Europe: "Characterized by strong welfare states and political systems based on consociational power among organized groups" (Stratton and Gies 16)

4 Theories of the Press

Presses and Democracies (Stratton and Gies)

3 Models of Western Media Systems

Hint-Each visual representation follows a path! Follow the path and you will learn lots!



[Interactive ThingLink image]

Example of entire assignment:

Day Number One:

- General Traditional Narrative
 - Primary democratic tasks of the media are to inform, scrutinize, debate, and represent
 - Voice of the people
 - Open debate
 - Report important trends/events (global)
 - Objective media
 - Watchdog
 - Watches for wrong doings done by the state
 - Humans can make decisions
 - “Soft journalism”
 - Impartial
- How things really are
 - More complex/more actors
 - More restrictive/regulated
 - Choose what to report
 - Debate is diverse
 - Too simplistic watch over threats
 - It is influenced by a lot of things
 - Social processes need to be taken into consideration
 - Responsible to be ethical mediator
- The four theories of the press
 - Authoritarian
 - Tells citizens what to think
 - Libertarian
 - People can make their own decisions
 - Communist
 - Upholding views of the government
 - Social responsibility
 - Social justice; people are taken care of
- Four dimensions
 - The emergence of a mass-circulation press
 - The degree of nature of state involvement in the media
 - The degree of political parallelism
 - The degree of professionalization

Day Number Two:

- There are multiple types of Journalism in America each have multiple:
 - Purposes
 - Diverse audiences
 - Varying relationships to democracy
- The four types of journalism there are is:
 - Traditional main stream journalism
 - Performs the core news function
 - Has the highest probability of contributing to democratic citizenship
 - Advocacy Journalism
 - “News influenced by the organization’s commitment more to advancing particular political or policy agenda than to enhancing citizenship in general”
 - Tabloid journalism

- Shaped by commercial considerations and by mass audience's presumed taste, rather than commitment to democratic purposes
- Entertainment journalism
 - Not produced by journalists nor consciously consumed as news
- "...Media not bound by the canons and practices of traditional journalism can serve the core democratizing functions of news, the functions that help citizens hold government to account."
- News functions help show four areas of knowledge vital to effective democratic citizenship:
 - Policy
 - Power (actions of individuals)
 - Ideology
 - Self-interest
- Soft news bleeds into entertainment, but can serve a vital purpose to fulfill news functions
- You can measure the four types of journalism and which category a news source fits into based on:
 - Degree of commitment to key journalist standards
 - Accuracy
 - Balance
 - Checks on pure profit maximization
 - Democratic accountability
 - Editorial separation
 - Core organizational values and missions
 - Reporting on important events, people, and issues, particularly those involving governmental institutions and actors, in ways that are accurate and balanced
 - Generating sufficient advertising and circulation revenue to make a profit regarded by the stock market or private owners as acceptable
 - Target audiences and market constraints
 - Prototypical message content
- Traditional journalism faces pressure to grow and change, and while doing so not change credibility.

Day Number Three:

- The media uses three main functions when it comes crafting their stories:
 - Agenda Setting
 - The main idea is to go from one important story into the next
 - Uses public's knowledge to help guide the outline
 - Gives attributes to objects within their story
 - Correlation between the media and the public's interest
 - How stories are created
 - Priming
 - "occurs when news content suggests to news audiences that they ought to use specific issues as benchmarks for evaluating the performance of leaders and government"
 - How they are processed
 - Framing
 - The way in which stories are told, for the public to gain the best understanding of what is taking place.
 - How the effects are produced
- The activities of the groups who are interested in shaping media agendas and frames are the ones who can have a high impact on the volume and characteristics of news messages on an issue
- Audiences who pay close attention to a news story are likely to see the implications of framing.

Part 2: <https://bubbl.us/NDI1OTM5NC84Mzl2MjY0LzE0ZmE1MTVMITl5NjA3MGMzNjcyZig2YjNkYmY3NzNi-X>)

Part 3:

There is a growing importance for high schooler students to understand the need for media literacy. This year alone, 15.1 million students entered grades 9 through 12 (National Center for Education Statistics). It is this number that brings about the fact that there is a dire need to understanding in the role that the media plays in the democracy.

Luckily, because of this growing need for students to have a basic understanding of how they are getting their information, many schools have started to take it upon themselves to offer students courses in understanding this complex relationship. There have been hopes to get more teachers on board to bring news into the classroom and base discussions around it, but it has been stressed that now is the time to start having these discussions on news literacy and educating both the teacher and the students in the process (News Literacy vs. Media Literacy). It is because of this, that I decided to go with the role as a high school teacher trying to teach students the role that the media plays in democracy, and the many parts to it and how they are all relate in some way.

I chose to design my visual using a mind map, allowing me to create a visual that is entertaining for students to look at, bettering hold their attention. Normally teachers place information slides, but the downside is that this is not always the most visually appealing or entertaining for students to learn from. The mind map also allowed to me connect important points together, showing how everything connects in some way. In return, this can allow for students not to get lost, giving them something to easy to follow.

While making sure the layout was easy to follow, the information on the chart had to be easy to follow as well. I knew that it would be important for the students viewing the map to have an understanding what democracy is, and the role that journalism is usually thought to play. Everything had to be explained in a simple way that still got the information across. Once the information was explained, I could move onto the next bubble connecting the ideas together. The students needed to know that journalism differs from to another, because of their differences in their purpose, audiences, and their relationship with democracy in general. This also then helps the student understand why there are four different types of journalism, and then how these connect with that of the differing narratives for journalism.

While it is important for the students to understand the importance of the types of journalism, it is almost more important for them to understand the tactics that journalists use when they share news. By understanding these three main concepts, students can then infer if they are getting the whole story, what stories they are told are most

important, and if they have been primed prior to hearing the story. By ending with this, the students can see how these fit together in some way, showing the role that the media plays in shaping the democracy and their opinions.

There were some things that had to be omitted, because the information being presented had to be simple and just enough for students to gain a basic understanding of how journalism works. The information in the bubbles had to be condensed so that the students would not lose focus, but instead stay interested in the content and still understand the terms being presented to them.

As these students become older, they start being presented with more news and needing to form opinions about what they are hearing. It is important for them to have the main understanding of the role of information in a democracy. By having a simple map to follow that connects the important information, they can see how everything links together. These students can gain a basic understanding of how the media plays a role in the information that is received in a democracy.

Works Cited

"The NCES Fast Facts Tool Provides Quick Answers to Many Education Questions (National Center for Education Statistics)." *National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Home Page, a Part of the U.S. Department of Education*, Institute of Education Services

Jolly, Jihii. "News Literacy vs. Media Literacy." *Columbia Journalism Review*, Columbia Journalism Review, 4 Sept. 2014