Module 10 Assignment

Media Bias

Tonya Estes

1. A. A key idea I have learned is democracy can be an effective form of government only to the extent that the public (that rule the government in theory) is well-informed about national and international events and can think independently and critically about those events.

B. In other words, an effective democratic government requires that its citizens have access to objective, important, and relevant information about what is happening, or reasoned implications of what might happen, at home and around the word. Only then can they use that information to make independent and reasoned political decisions.

C. An example of this idea manifesting in the real world is that in the US, a democratic country, citizens are supposed to be actively involved in the governing of our cities, counties, states, and country. There are many ways to engage in our democracy, but the way the vast majority typically is involved is in voting. We vote for people to represent us, we vote on ways our taxes are spent, and we vote on other kinds of legislations that impact our communities. Ideally, each voter clearly understands the issues on the ballot and makes a reasoned decisions leading to their vote. If there are not objective sources providing information and implications about what is on the ballot, making a reasoned decision is impossible.

D. An analogy or illustration of this idea can be described as follows: Although every soccer team has a captain, who is instrumental in leading the team in practices and matcher, everyone on the soccer team needs to commit to the team, train regularly, and know the rules in order to be ready for the game.

1. A. A key idea I have learned is the Society for Professional Journalism has recently removed the term ‘objectivity’ from its list of primary purposes because the term now apparently means different things to different journalists.

B. In other words, journalists cannot agree on an objective definition of the term objectivity in relation to journalism; therefore, the Society for Professional Journalism removed the term from the primary purposes list of journalism.

C. (I’ve chosen a key idea that may not fit exactly into this assignment framework, but I can extrapolate for purposes of this assignment.) An example of this idea manifesting in the real world is that journalism has become so controlled by political and economic interests that journalists can’t agree on what objectivity in reporting is and it is no longer of primary concern to the reporting. There seems to be either an understanding of or resignation to the fact that objectivity is extraordinarily difficult in today’s money-driven society, including how money influences news outlets.

# D. An analogy or illustration of this idea can be described as follows: there is an annually updated chart on the political biases of news outlets – [sample chart here](https://guides.library.harvard.edu/newsleans/thechart) (Harvard Library, February 2024). On the same page as the chart, there are links to articles such as [Complex or clickbait?: The problematic Media Bias Chart](https://acrlog.org/2021/02/23/complex-or-clickbait-the-problematic-media-bias-chart/), outlining the problems of such a chart. One fascinating element of this website is the woman who created the first such chart, Vannessa Otero, commented in rebuttal to an article from the information librarians refuting the usefulness of the chart.

1. A. A key idea I have learned is “the news” and “history” have key differences.

B. In other words, although both retell events that have happened, there are important differences between the quality and form of the news and history.

C. An example of this idea manifesting in the real world is people read the news and think it is telling a complete story.

D. An analogy or illustration of this idea can be described as follows: in terms of the Israel-Hamas War, the news mainly reports on what is happening now, starting on October 7, 2023. A historian might start by telling of the events before 1923 when Britain assumed control of a Mandatory Palestine, and then what happened in that area during the 1940s when the Israeli State was declared. Then they might focus on the extreme challenges and instability in that region since then and how this history plays a direct role why many sympathize with the Palestinians.

Even a news story of a car wreck tells a very limited perspective/history of what happened, who was involved, what led to the wreck, and how this wreck fits in with other elements of the situation. If the car wreck were told as history, we would understand much more about the people, the car, the area of the wreck, and how this wreck fits in with other wrecks.