



# Media Bias

Stony Brook University's Center for News Literacy defines **media bias** as “a pattern of unfairness or willful inaccuracy over time by a specific journalist or news outlet.” However, the creators of AllSides.com believe that everyone is biased: “All news sources and their writers are biased by what they know, what they don't know, and what their own unique life experiences have been.” In other words, unconscious bias can affect how even the most responsible writers report the news.

Getting your news from several different reliable sources is one way to avoid the negative consequences of media bias.

## Conversation Starters

- Where do you get your news?
- How do you decide what news sources are trustworthy?

## Watch

“How to Choose Your News” by Damon Brown/TedEd.

<https://youtu.be/q-Y-z6HmRgl>

## Read

“Media Bias is Nothing New” by Amanda Bennett.

<https://tinyurl.com/ybbr8kyt>

The history of bias in American newspapers.

## Explore Different Perspectives

AllSides

[www.allsides.com](http://www.allsides.com)

This news aggregator aims to give you a balanced news diet by using “its media bias ratings to provide a breadth of perspectives on today's news, issues, and opinions.” Check out this site to see what news websites across the political spectrum are saying about an issue.

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## Read Newspapers & Magazines Available at the Library

### Print Newspapers

*The Jessamine Journal*  
*Lexington Herald-Leader*  
*Courier Journal*  
*The New York Times*  
*USA Today*  
*The Wall Street Journal*

### Print Magazines

*The Atlantic*  
*Bloomberg Businessweek*  
*The Lane Report*  
*Time*

### Digital Newspapers & Magazines

Visit <https://www.jesspublib.org/databases-by-subject> and click Newspapers & Magazines to access our databases for finding newspapers and magazines, including the following:

#### Alt-Press Watch

This full-text database includes newspapers, magazines, and journals of the alternative and independent press. Providing an alternative to corporate controlled media, the Alt-Press Watch database presents big stories from small sources.

#### Kentucky Libraries Unbound

Checkout magazines such as *Bloomberg Business Week* and *Newsweek*.

#### NewsBank

Search the *Jessamine Journal* from 2005 to the current issue or the *Lexington Herald-Leader* from 1983 to the current issue. If you are using the database from home, enter your library card number as your password. For a demonstration video, visit <https://youtu.be/uqi7Sjy0hzi>.

#### Newspaper Source

Provides full-text articles from more than 40 U.S. and international newspapers.

#### RBdigital Magazines

Checkout magazines on news and current affairs from a variety of viewpoints. Sources include *Mother Jones*, *The Economist*, and *The New Yorker*.

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# Check Your Bias

Did you notice what Allsides.com said on the first page of this handout? *Everyone is biased.* Yes, that means you.

According to the News Literacy Project, people tend to be less critical of information if it confirms their beliefs. Do you *want* to believe that story? Are you assuming that it's true—or false?

## Rate Your Own Bias

<https://www.allsides.com/rate-own-bias>

AllSides.com offers a bias rating tool and links to several other quizzes that let you compare your political leanings to other Americans.

## Read Across the Aisle

<http://www.readacrosstheaisle.com/>

Available as a browser extension for Chrome and an iOS app, this tool notices when you're stuck reading one point of view and periodically reminds you to read news from the other side.

***Factfulness: Ten Reasons We're Wrong About the World—And Why Things Are Better Than You Think*** by Hans Rosling with Ola Rosling and Anna Rosling Rönnlund. SOCIETY GENERAL 302.12 ROSL

## Bias and Social Media

Our biases can also affect what we see in our social media feeds, creating what *The Wall Street Journal* describes as “echo chambers” that limit our ability to understand different points of view.

## Blue Feed, Red Feed

<http://graphics.wsj.com/blue-feed-red-feed/>

See liberal Facebook and conservative Facebook side by side on this interactive graphic from *The Wall Street Journal*.

## PolitEcho Browser Extension

<http://politecho.org/>

PolitEcho is a browser extension for Chrome that shows you the political biases of your Facebook friends and news feed.

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*#republic: Divided Democracy in the Age of Social Media* by Cass R. Sunstein.  
SOCIETY GENERAL 303.4833 SUNS

*“If a nation expects to be ignorant and free in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be. An informed citizenry is at the heart of a dynamic democracy.”*

—Thomas Jefferson

### Bias Activities

For each activity you submit, you'll be entered to win a \$75 gift certificate to Amazon.com. Submit your activities in the entry box in the main library by Sept. 30, 2018. JCPL employees and their families are ineligible to win prizes.

#### Bias Activity 1

Read one article from a news publication that you don't normally read, preferably one with a different political leaning from you.

Title of publication: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Bias Activity 2

Complete one of the quizzes on AllSides.com's Rate Your Own Bias web page at <https://www.allsides.com/rate-own-bias>

Quiz completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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