Aim #2b: How can we overcome bias?
Uncovering Bias

Mini Lecture
- Bias is very common in history, as well as in current news reporting.
- As critical thinkers, we must train ourselves not to simply accept what's being told to us as *facts*, but to question what's being told to us. Who is telling it, and what their motives are.
- We must think about where we get out information from, and how do we know that that information is accurate.
- There are 3 different types of bias
  - Explicit Bias
  - Implicit Bias
  - Confirmation Bias

Resources/Documents:
- Michael Brown Case
- Headlines- Bias Vs. Israel
- Newsday: *Singapore Summit*

Types of Bias

Explicit bias
- Expressed directly
- Aware of bias
- Operates consciously
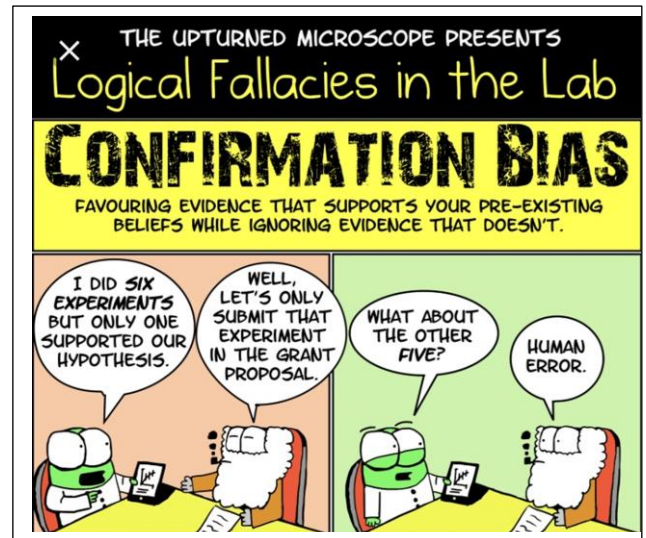- Example -- "I like whites more than Latinos."

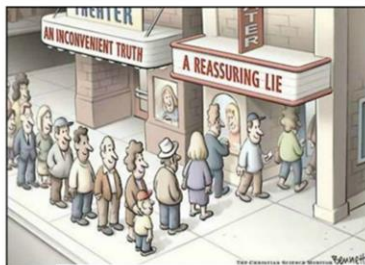### Implicit bias
- Expressed indirectly
- Unaware of bias
- Operates sub-consciously
- Example -- sitting further away from a Latino than a white individual.
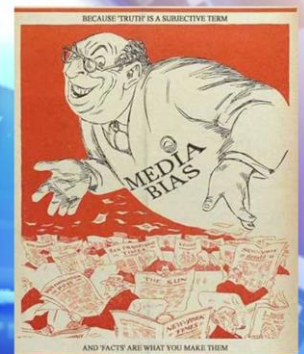

Confirmation Bias
the tendency to interpret new evidence as confirmation of one's existing beliefs or theories

What is Bias?
- Mental leaning for or against something
- Prevents impartial judgment

MY NOTES

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How do historians determine if a source is reliable?

Vocabulary
bias: a strong opinion that is based more on emotion than in evidence
limitation: something that prevents a source from being reliable
reliability: the usefulness of information in a source for a given purpose

Lunchroom Fight; Directions: Read each of the responses from students below and write why you think the principal found the response unreliable for his purpose.

The principal interviewed many students about the lunchroom fight. He asked each one,
What happened during the fight?
Below are three responses that the principal determined were *unreliable for his purpose to determine who caused the fight*.

Student's response to the question, "What happened during the fight?"	Why do you think the principal found this response *unreliable for his purpose*?
Sam: "Justin started it, but Max totally won, he's the coolest! Justin is a jerk who never stops picking on me in Math, but Max is one of the greatest guys in school and my best friend!"	
Reggie: "The fish sticks were great! What do you think they put in that tartar sauce? It's got to be addictive."	
Harper: "I don't know, I wasn't in lunch...Err...I wasn't skipping either. I couldn't see what was happening from my table, but I could see that Justin wasn't holding back."	

Point of View vs. Bias

| bias | a strong and one-sided opinion that is based more on emotion than in evidence |

Every source has a point of view, but when that point of view is expressed through a **strong and one-sided opinion**, it is called **bias. Bias** can limit the usefulness of a source, depending on the reader's purpose for reading.

Bias is usually expressed in the following ways:

✓ **"loaded" language** that is overwhelmingly *positive* or *negative*

✓ author intentionally **adds and emphasizes or leaves out information** to support their opinion

✓ **language that is offensive** based on gender, race, sexual orientation, nationality, ethnicity, or other characteristics

Directions: Examine the two responses below and answer the questions about each one.

Account	Is this source biased?		If this source is biased, what evidence do you see of the bias? If not, why do you think the source is not biased?
Sam: "Justin started it, but Max totally won, he's the coolest! Justin is a jerk who never stops picking on me in Math, but Max is one of the greatest guys in school and my best friend!"	Yes	No	
Anthony: "I was pretty far back in the line, but Max and his friends were being kind of loud and joking around. I couldn't really hear what they were saying. And then all of a sudden I saw people pulling Justin and Max apart."	Yes	No	

Reliability
Usefulness and Limitations Depend on an Author's **Purpose** and Intended **Audience**
An author's purpose and intended audience of a source can make it useful or limit its reliable for a historian.

If a historian 150 years from now wrote a book about the president, they might evaluate the following source in this way...

Type of Source	Author's Purpose	Intended Audience	Could be useful for a historian whose purpose is to...	Limitations
President's Speech	To convince their audience of something	Whomever they are speaking to- usually people who agree with them	Find out the speaker's point of view on an issue	Information could be added or left out to make argument more convincing Could use biased language
President's Diary Entry	Reflection	The author	Get an eyewitness account of an event Find out how the president felt about an event	Leaves out other perspectives on an event President will probably write about themselves in a positively, so they will leave out some details and include others
Autobiography Written Two Years After They Left Office	To tell their side of a story To document an event for the future	Whomever reads the book	Get an eyewitness account of an event Find out how someone felt about an event	Leaves out other perspectives on an event Author will probably write positively about their involvement in an event, so they will leave out some details and include others

Practice
Imagine a historian 150 years in the future writes a book about you. How would they fill in the chart about the sources listed below that you created?

➡ **Directions:** Choose **TWO** of the following sources, then fill out the chart below as a future historian researching your life. Source options: The Last Text Message Conversation You Had, Your Last Social Media Post, The Last Classwork You Completed, or The Last Note You Wrote, or the Last Drawing You Created.

Type of Source	Author's Purpose	Intended Audience	Could be useful for a historian whose purpose is to...	Limitations

Michael Brown Case

2014

August 9 • Michael Brown is shot

August 10 • Protests begin

August 14 • State trooper takes over operations from local police

August 15 • Officer who shot Michael Brown identified

September 3 • Justice Department opens inquiry

November 24 • Grand jury decides not to indict Darren Wilson

2015

March 4 • Department of Justice releases reports

Fox News now
BREAKING NEWS: Grand jury does not indict officer in Ferguson case

CNN now
No indictment for Darren Wilson, the white police officer who fatally shot Michael Brown, an unarmed black teen.

Do Now!
Fergusson…You're the editor, which photo would you run on the front page? Why?

Bias vs. Israel

ON THE PHONE:
BEN WEDEMAN
Sr. Intl. Correspondent
ON REPORTING

BREAKING NEWS
4 ISRAELIS, 2 PALESTINIANS DEAD IN JERUSALEM

BBC   Sign in   News   Sport   Weather   Shop   Earth   Trav

NEWS

Home   Video   World   US & Canada   UK   Business   Tech   Science   Magazine   En

World   Africa   Asia   Australia   Europe   Latin America   Middle East

Middle East

Palestinian shot dead after Jerusalem attack kills two

⊙ 8 minutes ago   Middle East

IS THERE A BIAS AGAINST ISRAEL AT THE UN?

RESOLUTIONS SINGLING OUT

ISRAEL: 21 (A LIBERAL DEMOCRACY)

SYRIA: 1 (GOVERNED BY A REGIME THAT HAS MURDERED 40,000 OF ITS OWN PEOPLE)

IRAN: 1 (WIDESPREAD TORTURE, RAPE, AND EXECUTION OF POLITICAL PRISONERS)

NORTH KOREA: 1 (OVER 200,000 POLITICAL PRISONERS ARE HELD IN TORTUROUS CONDITIONS)

BURMA: 1 (FORCED LABOUR, HUMAN TRAFFICKING, AND CHILD LABOUR ARE COMMON)

SAUDI ARABIA: 0 (WOMEN ARE NOT ALLOWED TO VOTE OR LEAVE THE HOUSE WITHOUT A MALE RELATIVE)

ZIMBABWE: 0 (GOVERNMENT USES CHILD SOLDIERS AND STATE TERRORISM TO SUPPRESS OPPOSITION)

THE UN ALSO FAILED TO ACT ON EGREGIOUS HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSERS LIKE VENEZUELA, CUBA, PAKISTAN, SUDAN, AND OTHER NOTORIOUS HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSERS

SUN NEWS   From UN WATCH's study of the 2012 UNGA session. For more info, or to support more charts: www.unwatch.org

The Israel Project
December 22, 2017 · ⚙

UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTIONS
2012–2015

14%   Against Israel
Against other countries
86%
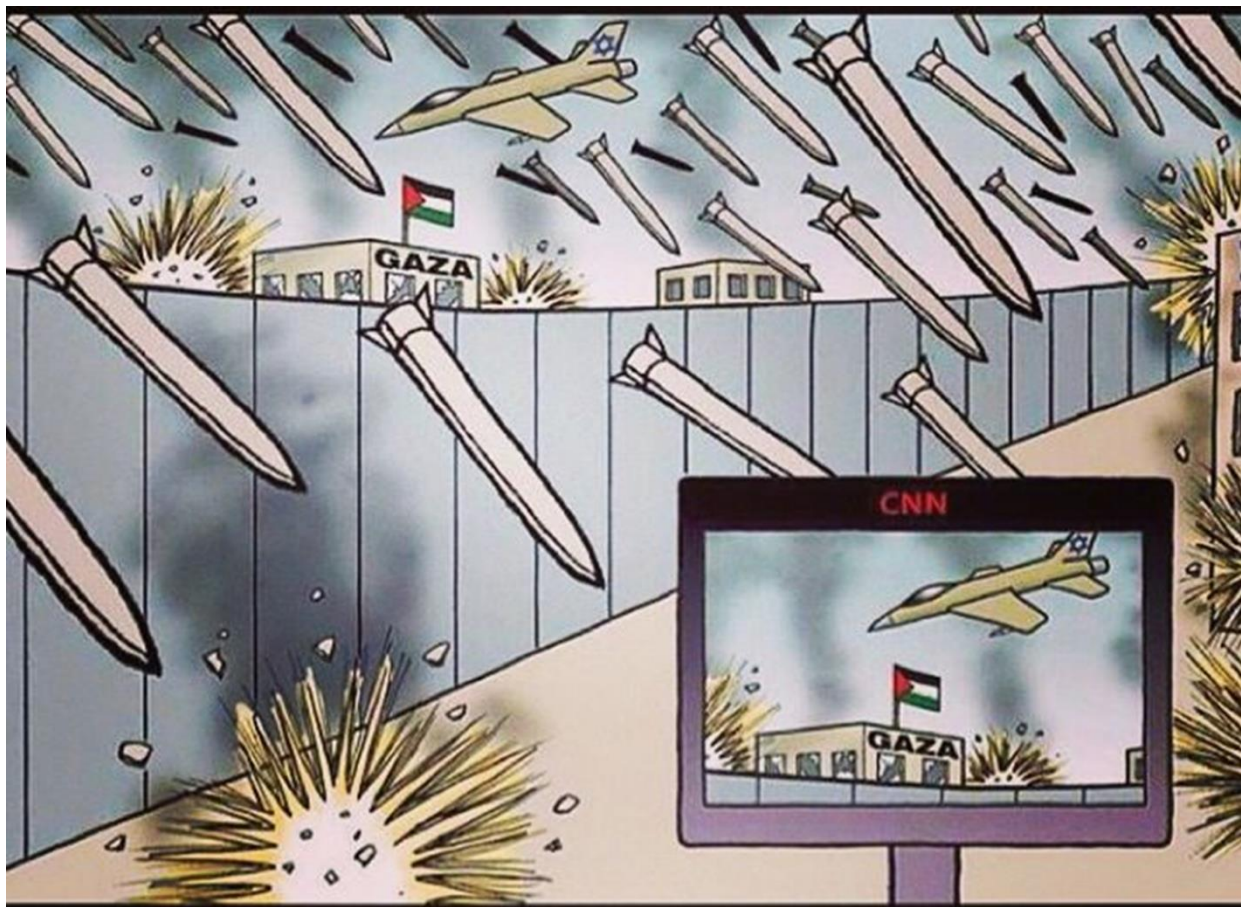
U.N. WATCH

CNN
NAS ▲ 4.40
THE LEAD

A Must Watch: Finally, after all this time, m... See More

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WORK IN PROGRESS

Trump-Kim agreement lacks details, leaving path ahead unclear

A2-6 | UPDATES AT NEWSDAY.COM

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Senate Republican leader **Mitch McConnell** called the meeting a "major first step," in U.S.-North Korea relations, but not a decisive one if North Korea does not follow through.

❝ The next steps in negotiations will test whether we can get to a verifiable deal," **McConnell** said on the Senate floor.

❝ President Trump has granted a brutal and repressive dictatorship the international legitimacy it has long craved," Senate Minority Leader **Chuck Schumer** (D-N.Y.) said.

Tips for News Accuracy & Detecting Bias

- Acknowledge it is a confusing environment w/ a lot of information
- Ask Questions about the source
  - ➢ Become a **critical reader**
  - ➢ **Who is the author?**
- Understand manipulation
  - ➢ the more something evokes an emotional reaction, the more you should be skeptical
  - ➢ Key words to look out for "*I think, I feel angry, extraordinary*"
- Research other sources' take

Critically Analyze Document to Detect Bias

- **H**= Historical Context
- **A**= Audience
- **P**= Purpose
- **P**= Point of View
- **Y**= Why

- Year? What was happening at the time document was written?
- For whom was the document created, & how might this affect the reliability or accuracy of the document?
- WHY or FOR WHAT REASON was the source produced? What was the author's GOAL in writing it?
- Can you identify an important aspect of WHO the author is, & explain HOW this might have impacted what they wrote? • Can you identify an influence that shaped the author or source, & EXPLAIN HOW THAT INFLUENCE specifically affected the document's content?
- Why does this document help you answer your question? How does the document impact/shape/reflect popular arguments on the subject? • What are the limitations of the document?

Follow Up

- Think about iconic images from historical or more recent events and reflect on the lasting impact of these images.
- What roles have these images played in the legacy of the events?
- How do they affect how you think and feel about these events?
- Research a recent event from 2 different sources & analyze the way each source covers that same story.