

After this lecture, students will be able to:

1. Identify the distinguishing characteristics of the subset of Journalism known as "opinion Journalism"
2. Cite examples that illustrate the value of opinion Journalism
3. Understand differences between historical and modern uses of opinion Journalism.
4. Distinguish between opinion Journalism and "mere bloviation"
5. Identify causes behind the massive increase in bloviation
6. Examine evidence and analyze arguments presented in opinion Journalism compared to bloviation

These skills relate to course outcomes 5, 4 & 2

Moynihan's Maxim:
*"Everyone is entitled to the
 own opinions, but they are
 not entitled to their own
 facts."*



Daniel Patrick Moynihan
 (deceased)
 U.S. Senator from New York

Actionable information?



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Actionable Information?



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The New York Times

The Opinion Pages

OP-ED COLUMNIST

The Ignorance Caucus

By PAUL KRUGMAN

Published: February 10, 2013 | 891 Comments

Last week Eric Cantor, the House majority leader, gave what his office told us would be a major policy speech. And we should be grateful for the heads-up about the speech's majorness. Otherwise, a read of the speech might have suggested that he was offering nothing more than a meager, warmed-over selection of stale ideas.

Comment is free

Finland has an education system the US should envy – and learn from

Finland's test scores top global charts, but the country doesn't obsess about tests like the US, and it pays teachers adequately



Linda Moore
guardian.co.uk Friday, 15 February 2013 10:57 EST
[Jump to comments \(36\)](#)



Danish Governor at a charter school in Washington, DC. Photograph: Jim Hollander/Fluke Images



Four Questions:

1. How do you tell the difference between News Reporting and Opinion Journalism?
2. Why should you care which is which?
3. What is the value of Opinion Journalism?
4. How do you tell the difference between Opinion Journalism and mere "blowiation" or counterfeit opinion?

Surgeon General's Warning:

A News Report will often include the opinions of experts, participants or witnesses.

That is not what is meant by "Opinion Journalism."

Failure to cling to this distinction may be harmful or fatal to your grade.

Opinion...A License to "Kill?"



007.WMV

What is Opinion Doing in the Journalism Neighborhood?



Code of Ethics: (excerpts)

- ✓ Distinguish between advocacy and news reporting.
- ✓ Analysis and commentary should be labeled and not misrepresent fact or context.
- ✓ Deny favored treatment to advertisers and special interests and resist their pressure to influence news coverage.
- ✓ Remain free of associations and activities that may compromise integrity or damage credibility.

What About V.I.A.?

Society of Professional Journalists

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Verification:

"Analysis and commentary should be labeled and not misrepresent fact or context."

Independence:

"Deny favored treatment to advertisers and special interests... (and) remain free of associations and activities that may compromise integrity or damage credibility."

Accountability

"Analysis and commentary should be labeled and not misrepresent fact or context."



A Brief History of Opinion Journalism



Alexander Hamilton Starts the *New York Post* and Attacks Thomas Jefferson

The Rise of the Non-Partisan Press Mass-Market Publishing – Newspapers profited by attracting a wide variety of readers and advertisers



The Opinion Quarantine

Editorials



A Virtual “Wall” Protects Credibility of Neutral Reporting

In print, online, a paper like the New York Times physically separates news coverage from opinion writing, AND those writers are also segregated in the building.



News Reporting

Opinion Journalism



Boehner Halts Talks on Cuts, and House G.O.P. Cheers



The White House
John Doe Flights
The Obama administration made a powerful statement against traditional's pornography law, but it strategically stopped a regulation.

The Opinion Quarantine

Columns



An Opinion Quarantine on TV?

foxhours.wmv

What Happens When Lines Blur?

foxhours2.wmv

An Opinion Niche Is Partisan Cable TV Inheriting the Role of Hamilton-era Newsletters?



Is Opinion Important in the News?



CNN doesn't take sides in its political coverage and is suffering because of it


Los Angeles Times

 *** POLITICS NOW ***

Fox recedes, MSNBC surges with DNC coverage



Question # 1:
How do we tell the difference between
News Reporting and Opinion Journalism?



News Report or Opinion Journalism ?



Sawyer.mov

News Report or Opinion Journalism ?



Geraldo1.wmv

Definition of News

Main Entry: **news** 🗣️
 Pronunciation: \ˈnüz, ˈnyüz\
 Function: *noun plural but singular in construction*
 Usage: *often attributive*
 Date: 15th century

News is information about a subject of some public interest that is shared and subject to the journalistic process of verification by an independent organization that is accountable.

Definition of Opinion

Main Entry: **opinion** 🗣️
 Pronunciation: ˈə-ˈpin-yən
 Function: *noun*
 Etymology: Middle English, from Anglo-French, from Latin *opinion-*, *opinio*, from *opinari*
 Date: 14th century

Opinion is a view, a judgment, or an appraisal formed in the mind about a particular matter.

How You Can Tell If It's News Reporting or Opinion Journalism?

Language and Labeling

Language Clues

- First-person statements
- Exaggeration or Superlatives
- Emotional or dramatic descriptions
- Tone (sarcasm, irony, parody)

Opinion Journalism Landmarks: First-person ("I")



Exploiting the Prophet

I think a few things are going on. The first is that many Muslim countries lack a tradition of free speech, and see ridicule of the prophet as part of a larger narrative of the West's invading or humiliating the Islamic world. People in these countries sometimes also have an addled view of how the United States handles blasphemy.

Opinion Journalism Landmarks: Exaggeration or Superlatives

"Look, we are not the mouthpiece for the Democratic Party of the United States. But that party is so crackhead-incompetent at selling its own program, we thought it was important that someone point out to the public one of the party's accomplishments.

Here it is:

The current Congress...with Sen. Harry Reid of Nevada at the helm in the Senate, approved the biggest tax cut in United States history.

And the Republicans voted against it.

All we can say is that voters should keep their eyes on the ball even if the Democrats don't."

-(2010)The Reno (Nevada) News & Review

Opinion Journalism Landmarks Exaggeration, Irony

The News:

Rep. Michele Bachmann, campaigning for President, said: "Well, I will tell you that I had a mother last night come up to me here in Tampa, Florida, after the debate. She told me that her little daughter took that vaccine, that injection, and she suffered from mental retardation thereafter... This is a very real concern and people have to draw their own conclusions."

The Editorial:

"Mrs. Bachmann's vaccine demagoguery is another matter. After the debate the Minnesotan has been making the talk show rounds implying that HPV vaccines cause 'mental retardation' on the basis of no evidence. **This is the kind of know-nothingism** that undermines public support for vaccination altogether and leads to such public health milestones as California reporting in 2010 the highest number of whooping cough cases in 55 years.

Opinion Journalism Landmarks: Tone (sarcasm, irony, parody)

We're watching our freedoms vanish

Here's how to cut crime at a stroke. It's cheap, it's foolproof and we can start to implement it today. Get a video surveillance camera and microphones in every room of every town. Some the ACLU isn't this the logical extension of what is already happening, of what we're doing with barely a squeak of protest?"

Lord and Lady Bland

The Importance of Labeling

- ◆ Reporter's Notebook:
- ◆ Editorial:
- ◆ News-Page Column:
- ◆ Op-Ed Contribution:
- ◆ Review:
- ◆ News Analysis:

The Forms of News and Opinion

The News to Opinion Spectrum: Print

The diagram illustrates the spectrum of print journalism. On the left, a newspaper clipping titled "Barns as a Tribute Isri Following, a House School News Its End" is shown. On the right, a section titled "The Opinion Pages" is highlighted, containing a sub-section "The White House Joins the Fight" and a small photo of a man speaking.

Editorial Cartoonists and Caricature



Cartoonists use exaggerated Language AND Art

Editorial Cartoonists and Caricature



Cartoonists use exaggerated Language AND Art

Labeling on TV

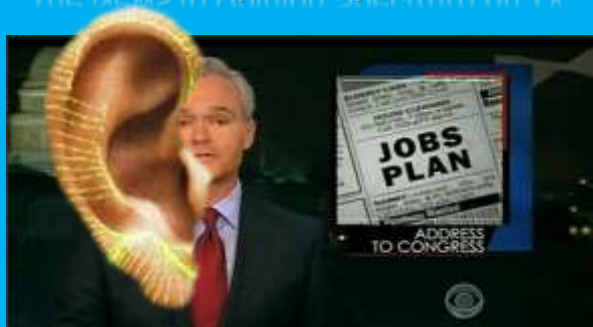


How Do You Know if It's Opinion?

The Importance of Labeling



The News to Opinion Spectrum on TV



News to Opinion on TV

TVspectrum.wmv



The News to Opinion Spectrum Online



The News to Opinion Spectrum Online



The News to Opinion Spectrum Online

Is Your Favorite 'Journalist' on the Malaysian Government's Payroll? Maybe

Readers: Ever since today's news story that a number of people writing for a whole host of websites across the political spectrum were doing so on behalf of the Malaysian government, and that their work they were paid handsomely. In other words, they were secretly passing off lobbying pieces from the Malaysian government as their own in exchange for money. This

RELATED
 Why Did Another Manning Die?
 Why Did Another Manning Die?
 Why Did Another Manning Die?

The News to Opinion Spectrum Online

Veteran American War Reporter Dies in Syrian Shelling Attack... French Photographer Also Killed... Syrian Blogger Reportedly Dies... WATCH: Reporter Carried CNN Hours Before Death

Readers: A veteran American war reporter died in a Syrian shelling attack on Tuesday, and a French photographer was also killed. A Syrian blogger was also reportedly killed. A video shows a reporter being carried away by CNN hours before his death.

The News to Opinion Spectrum Online

STATE DEPT: KEYSTONE IS GREEN

Readers: The State Department has announced that it is supporting the Keystone pipeline project. This is a significant move for the administration, as it has been a long-standing opponent of the project. The pipeline is a major source of energy for the United States, and its completion would have a significant impact on the economy.

The News to Opinion Spectrum Online

The Opinion Pages

Readers: This page features a variety of opinion pieces on current events. The main article discusses the impact of the Ukraine situation on the world. Other articles cover topics such as the economy, healthcare, and international relations. The page is designed to provide readers with a range of perspectives on the news.

Question #2: Why should you care which is which?

The goal of news reporting is to give you the information you need for your Fourth Estate role.

The goal of opinion journalism is to help you make up your mind about that information.



Octavia Nasr fired by CNN over tweet praising late ayatollah

BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE TUTORIALS TO FREEDOM OF SPEECH LEADER HAD A CONSPIRACY UNDER MURKIN. EXAMINER'S VERDICT

By **David Gribble**
The Associated Press • July 27, 2012 10:11 AM EDT

Octavia Nasr, a CNN news anchor, was fired Tuesday after tweeting praise for the late Iranian cleric Ayatollah Khomeini, a top Hezbollah leader. The tweet, which said "Sad to hear of the passing of Sayyid Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah... Hezbollah's giants I respect a lot," was posted on Twitter at 10:08 a.m. Tuesday. Nasr, 42, has worked for CNN since 2005. She is a Lebanese American and a member of the Christian Science Monitor. She has a master's degree in journalism from the University of Connecticut. She is a member of the National Association of Broadcasters and the National Press Photographers Association. She is also a member of the American Society of Professional Journalists. She is a frequent speaker at journalism conferences and has been featured in several media outlets. She is currently a freelance journalist and a member of the Associated Press. She is also a member of the National Press Photographers Association. She is a frequent speaker at journalism conferences and has been featured in several media outlets. She is currently a freelance journalist and a member of the Associated Press. She is also a member of the National Press Photographers Association.

The Virtual "Wall" In Practice

The Separation of 'Church' and 'State'



Newsday Looks at the Shoreham Nuclear Power Plant in Two Ways

Question #3:

What is the value of Opinion Journalism?

- Gives you new Insights
- Challenges your assumptions
- Helps you make a decision or judgment
- Provides a public forum of ideas for the public to consider.

Opinion Journalism is Valuable When:

- You are well-informed
- You are open-minded
- You are active, not passive

Question #4:

How Do You Spot Counterfeit Opinion Journalism?
(Evidence vs. Emotion)



Some Journalists Consider Cable TV Bloviation Unethical



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Opinion Journalism or Counterfeit?



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<p>Denying the antecedent</p> <p>If it is legal, no one will publish it. It is legal. Therefore someone will publish it.</p> <p>What other reasons might explain why no one has published it?</p>	<p>Affirming the consequent</p> <p>If it is illegal, no one will publish it. No one has published it. Therefore it must be illegal.</p> <p>What other reasons might explain why no one has published it?</p>	<p>Quoting out of context</p> <p>According to President Obama's own words, the president will support "certain cases" for partial business.</p> <p>Why isn't it a very small part of what President Obama has said?</p>	<p>Repping the question</p> <p>"If publishing secrets wasn't illegal, then they would not be prohibited. That is, why we cannot publish secrets."</p> <p>Why is publishing secrets prohibited and illegal to begin with?</p>
<p>Logical Fallacies</p>		<p>Misconceptions</p>	
<p>Existential fallacy</p> <p>All computers are hard to verify. Therefore some news stories that are hard to verify are computers.</p> <p>What other reasons might make it difficult to verify a news story?</p>	<p>The "fallacy" fallacy</p> <p>We know that's published it. It is illegal. It is not illegal. Therefore we should publish it.</p> <p>Why is publishing it a body argument not a reason for its illegality?</p>	<p>Strawman argument</p> <p>We must limit the press during war, otherwise we will be taken over by other countries' enemies.</p> <p>How does this exaggerated position relate to the argument at hand?</p>	<p>Slippery slope</p> <p>It is okay to censor some news, then hopefully governments will realize the danger of news.</p> <p>Why does a first step imply inevitably lead into subsequent consequences?</p>
<p>Common Errors in Critical Thinking</p>			
<p>Sleeper effect</p> <p>I remember hearing her speak. One day she broadcasted on radio. (I forgot that I heard that on TV last year.)</p> <p>Why are people more likely to recall the message when longer the passage?</p>	<p>Cognitive dissonance</p> <p>I think Democrats help the poor. Democrats voted for the stimulus. Welfare must be bad for the poor.</p> <p>Why is it difficult for us to hold two contradictory beliefs simultaneously?</p>	<p>Appeal to authority</p> <p>We cannot publish secret documents. An expert agrees it is illegal. Therefore it must be illegal.</p> <p>Why would we trust the advice of "experts" instead of our own judgment?</p>	<p>Bandwagon fallacy</p> <p>No other newspapers published it. Therefore we shouldn't. If I could not be a news publisher.</p> <p>Why should we copy a good reason to do or not do something?</p>
<p>Cognitive Biases</p>		<p>Red Herrings</p>	
<p>Framing</p> <p>I am not in favor of tax increases. But the law of a. (I received a letter) adjustment? (I have a lot of other).</p> <p>Why do we draw different conclusions based on how something is presented?</p>	<p>Confirmation bias</p> <p>I am certain that Republicans would never become another Democrats. I found a source that supports that.</p> <p>Why do we have a tendency to seek out and which confirms our beliefs?</p>	<p>Guilt by association</p> <p>We should not take the program. If we are not supposed to do it, it is not a good idea. Why not?</p> <p>Why would a person's membership affect the moral of their argument?</p>	<p>Ad hominem</p> <p>No one should support the tax plan because of the president. If I could not be a member of the president.</p> <p>Why should a personal attack negate the argument for the program?</p>

Opinion Journalism or Counterfeit?

UncleRush.wmv

Opinion Journalism or Counterfeit?

Fact-based vs. Emotion-based
Logic vs. Belief



Cable TV Isn't The Only Culprit

Society of Professional Journalists
Inspiring and protecting journalism since 1909

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Elishebeth
The Opinion Pages



Public Editor's Journal
Statement Rebuttal

11/14/2012, 10:00 AM PST | 21 Comments

A Column About Poverty Programs Creates a Stir and Raises Legitimate Questions
By Elisabeth Elisebeth

Due to this case, he did not talk to the primary sources, the parents of poor and developmentally disabled children. Given the provocative nature of his opening statement and his importance in setting up the column's thesis, it should have been completely voided.

But now, having read all the material - points and counterpoints, allegations and defenses - I believe that none of the column's assertions were based on any life-direct evidence or used statistical information that is, at the very least, open to interpretation.

Profiting From a Child's Misery
By Elisabeth Elisebeth

THEY did not even seek to help. In an article published in the journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the author of the column, Elisabeth Elisebeth, stated that the children's misery was the result of their parents' failure to provide them with the necessary care.

**Journalism, Opinion Journalism or
Counterfeit Opinion Journalism
Which Is It?**

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**Journalism, Opinion Journalism or
Counterfeit Opinion Journalism
Which Is It?**

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News vs. Opinion: A Summary

To tell the difference between news and opinion,
analyze language & labeling

Start with news: Know the news before you
seek opinions about the news

Moynihan's maxim: *"You're entitled to your own
opinion, but you're not entitled to your own facts."*

Alternate views can sharpen your thinking

After this lecture, students will be able to:

1. Identify and distinguish between Journalism and its subset: opinion Journalism and their illegitimate child: bloviation.
2. Use specific events and examples to illustrate the value of opinion Journalism.
3. Use historical context to analyze the role of modern opinion Journalism and the explosion of bloviation.
4. Evaluate the reliability – or value – of opinion Journalism and bloviation by examining the evidence offered and the logic underlying arguments being made.

These skills relate to course outcomes 5, 4 & 2

The New York Times
The Opinion Pages

OPINION
Suicide Made Easier
Published February 28, 2012

The current gun control debate is focused, not surprisingly, on the carriage from rapid-firing assault weapons, like the one used in the Connecticut school massacre. But beneath the surface lies a disturbing reality: nearly two-thirds of the gun-use gun deaths each year are not the work of damaged guns shooters but the actions of troubled individuals with easy access to firearms. Often in quiet lonely homes.

More prevention is certainly needed. Firearms should be left at the gun range and locked up there, or at least secured under lock and key at home, firmly beyond the hands of children and potentially troubled individuals. The shooter in the schoolhouse massacre two months ago in Newtown, Conn., found no problem in using his mother's legally obtained, readily available weapons.

Editorial Cartoonists and Caricature

Cartoonists use exaggerated Language AND Art

The New York Times
The Opinion Pages

OP-ED COLUMNIST
An Unserious Man
 By PAUL KRUGMAN
Published: August 19, 2012 | 663 Comments



That's how it works at the Times, or at least how it works for me. I supply a list of sources with each column submission; for yesterday's piece it looked like this:

- \$4.3 trillion: <http://www.aapolicycenter.org/numbers/displaytab.cfm?DocId=3301&DocTypeID=5> lines 2, 3 and 5
- Ryan cuts: <http://www.cbpp.org/cms/index.cfm?fa=view&id=3723> (I count his Medicaid cuts relative to current policy, not policy including Obamacare)
- Disproportionate benefits at top: <http://www.aapolicycenter.org/numbers/displaytab.cfm?DocId=3337&DocTypeID=2>
- Ryan award: <http://www.thefiscs.com/content/tes-kent-connal-emp-paul-ryan-and-gov-nitch-daniels-named-2011-fiscy-award-recipients>
- Baseline: <http://www.latimes.com/news/nation/world/nation/fn-na-ryan-20120417.0,1246452.story>