


# Inclusive Journalism

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Back in the late 1990s when the Media Diversity Institute (MDI), the publisher of this handbook, was still part of the New York University, we only worked with journalists and only with those in developing democracies. We believed then that practical training in additional and missing skills would be enough for journalists there to embrace a set of core values of journalism - truth and independence, accuracy, fairness, and balance. We quickly realised that incoming new era will be much more complex. We learned that often journalists in the countries we worked in – but those in developed democracies too – needed much more than basic skills if they were to reflect that complexity. They often lacked the right sources, right story ideas, and contacts. So, we decided to add civil society organisations (CSOs) to our portfolio. Linking CSOs activists with journalists brought manifold benefits. The earlier can learn and demystify the very profession of journalism thus getting to journalists when journalists truly needed them. At the same time, journalists could get channels to real people, real heroes, real stories. Yet, they can get information often denied by the elite. In the Balkans, South Caucasus and North Africa this kind of cooperation brought about types of stories never seen before: instead of only officials talking, suddenly, ordinary members of different communities had their voices put through. As a senior Moroccan reporter with 18 years of experience put then, ‘I’ve never interviewed ordinary people in my whole career’. Including missing voices in journalists’ stories became one of our objectives. *Diversify the sources, diversify the newsroom*. In other words, only if a newsroom is made of people coming from different avenues of social and cultural background can the news content can be diverse, *inclusive*.

This is where we realised we needed academics too, to help us understand better what’s happening in journalism and what are the best ways for us, media development practitioners, to respond to academic findings. Even more, we needed academics to take into consideration the experience of us, practitioners, so the future journalists can gain the right knowledge and right skills already at university thus entering the industry ready to fit into its needs.

Over the last 20 years we have worked with journalism schools in more than 70 countries across the globe, supporting academics in developing new modules, but also bringing journalism graduates to the newsrooms. We even created, in partnership with the University of Westminster, our own Diversity and the Media MA course responding to the complex issues around inclusion of diversity in public discourse.



And we no longer work only in developing democracies. Growing nationalism, nativism, populism and far-right resulting in massive production of fake news and dis/mal/misinformation, combined with popularity of social media pushed us into working in developed democracies too. As some studies show, journalists are not the goal-keepers of the news anymore. It's social media. So, today's journalists are turning into fact-checkers of the stories launched on social media. Yet, due to technology, the 'integral newsroom' concept, journalists nowadays produce in average some 20 times more content than in mid 1970-ies! Learning the right skills and approaches already at university has become crucial for the news industry.

So far, we have worked with more than 3000 journalists and media decision makers often getting the latter, once we introduced them to media outlets such as The Guardian (which have embraced the principles of Inclusive Journalism) asking us to help them set up their own diversity policies. Social media have been particularly good news for CSOs enabling them to directly communicate with the public. But it has also shown, as one academic put it, that civil activists – citizens, 'can talk now but there is no ear to listen to them'. This is another challenge for all three stakeholders MDI has been working with – media actors, civil activists, academics – to respond to in this ongoing process of learning.

From this particular handbook I've learned several things about contemporary journalism, one of them being that journalists have become mediators between reality and readers, but also that they are getting closer and closer to the elite and further from ordinary people. This is what academic studies have found out. As a practitioner, we can clearly link this claim to what we see in everyday media behaviour.

We believe that this Handbook, as much as the Reporting Diversity Framework we produced some 20 years ago, can be as useful resource for journalism academics in China as much as for their colleagues in other parts of the world. We are thankful to the handbook's authors, Dr Verica Rupar and Dr Chao Zhang and research assistant Wenjie Li as well as to Dr Miklos Sukosd, Associate Professor at the Department of Communication of the University of Copenhagen, and others who shared their own experience with the authors.

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# Introduction

The relationship between media and the social cohesion of diverse societies has become one of the most debated issues today, and with good reason. Most people depend upon the media for information about the world and everyday life, about events and issues beyond their immediate experience. Providing the information citizens need to engage in public and political discussion defines journalism and its place in society. However, this noble task has been challenged by the contingency of social relations. The idea of diversity differs depending on the context within which it is articulated, perceived, and operationalized. At its core stands a strong belief that difference matters and should be celebrated as a social good. The more voices are heard, the stronger individual and social capacity for representative thinking is and protecting the rights and freedoms of all and for all, “without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status” (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 2).

The handbook *Inclusive journalism* takes the UN Declaration of Human Rights as a reference point for offering an overview of major issues related to reporting diversity and a range of case studies that could be used in designing and running university courses aimed at increasing students’ knowledge and understanding as well as awareness of the issues that are involved in reporting of diversity. Journalism education across the world has traditionally covered practical skills and vocational training and broader, contextual education based on a need for intellectual independence and contribution to informed citizenry. But what journalism schools should teach to equip students with knowledge and skills to improve the ways media approach diversity issues remains an ongoing task. The specifics of journalism and journalism schools have often been defined by the demands of the industry needs – a challenging situation as many of us have passionately argued over the years. These demands differ from country to country and are naturally determined by culture, by law, politics, economic system and history, but the urge for a balance between vocational and academic, between practical and contextual knowledge seems to be universal goal for journalism programs worldwide.

In 2007, the World Journalism Education Congress (WJEC) in Singapore adopted a “Declaration of Principles in Journalism Education”. It stated the nature of journalism education as being interdisciplinary, and an academic field in its own right with a distinctive body of knowledge and theory. In 2019, the WJEC member organisations signed the Paris Declaration of Freedom of Journalism Education. Both documents declare that at the heart of journalism education is a balance of conceptual, philosophical and skills-based content. Acknowledging that in an age of disinformation, misinformation and threat to press freedom, the role of independent journalism is more important than ever, journalism educators agreed that resources allocated to journalism education are an investment in long-term institutional capacity to help guarantee strong, independent and quality journalism in any given society.

Journalists are first to report on conflicts, political polarisation, natural disasters or any other crisis. To do so they need knowledge and skills necessary for engaging with the world they report on and the publics they report for. Resilience ideas they activate in the process of responding to the complex and intertwined relationships they find themselves in, are closely related to both the education they gained, and the training acquired in a newsroom for bringing visibility of social groups into the public domain.

Using examples of the existing media coverage of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, religion, age, sexual orientation, disability, geography, social and marital status, this handbook offers a set of educational tools that can be used in a classroom to develop sensitivity to diversity, to increase students’ analytical skills in relation to news content and to enrich students’ knowledge and understanding of the relationship between social diversity and the media.

*Inclusive journalism* is a Media Diversity Institute (MDI) publication. It draws on the handbook *Reporting Diversity Curriculum Framework* produced by MDI, in 2003. Authored by Brian Winston, it outlined four main curriculum areas within which raising students’ awareness of the issues around the reporting of diversity in their societies can occur. Designed as an agenda for teaching it offered and outline of the elements and approached that could be taken as the basis for a course.

The handbook is aimed to be used as a textbook in journalism schools. It has been written in the context of China, but its content and examples would also serve journalism teachers elsewhere well. The first part of the book introduces theoretical and methodological frameworks. In the **Media and society** chapter, we provide an overview and critical discussion of the relationship between media and society and the ways contemporary journalists approach, represent and promote diversity issues. *Inclusive journalism* critically approaches the place of journalism in society by discussing a social system’s capacity to respond, adjust and transform in the face of tensions, conflict and adversity. This chapter lays out the theoretical framework for the analysis that proceeds. Chapter 2, **News analysis**, introduces methodological framework of critical discourse analysis and explains how it could be used in a classroom. Arguing that discrimination is learned through the many discourses we are confronted with in our daily life it positions the upcoming task within the wider efforts made to improve journalism performance in reporting on diversity issues. Discriminatory discourses are produced and controlled by the symbolic elites and educating future journalists

how to avoid reproducing stereotypes, prejudices and hate speech is an important part of their education. Once they enter the industry they will play an important role in the struggle against discrimination on any ground.

The second part of the handbook presents **Case studies**, examples of the media coverage of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, religion, age, sexual orientation, disability, geography, social and marital status. Each chapter introduces the subject and gives a brief overview of the existing research on the media representation of the diversity issue, followed by examples taken from Chinese and international media. The analysis of journalistic tools used is done using in-text comments to highlight the main points of ethical decision making that deserve students' attention. These examples could be used in a classroom but more importantly they could serve as a model of unpacking news content and discussing key issues considering relevant academic scholarship, with the objective of raising student's awareness towards media contribution to presentation, interpretation and construction of diversity discourses. A subsequent section outlines questions that could be addressed in the class discussion.

The **Conclusions** chapter revisits the issue of news media's role in structuring public debate followed by the **Appendices** that include List of References, UN Declaration of Human Rights and International Federation of Journalists' Global Charter of Ethics for Journalists.



# Media and society

Journalism's place in society has been a significant topic of academic inquiries. Scholars position the field of journalism between bordering fields of politics and economy, using the process of pushing and pulling to outline the dynamic between the autonomous and heteronomous nature of journalism practice. This is a useful framework for analysis of media performance but less helpful for studying the power of journalism to contribute to social change. Locating journalism in relation to civil society, provides a much more suitable catalyst for rethinking journalism, and its ability to move the boundaries of civic discourse. The logic of the journalistic field (Bourdieu 2005) underpins the process of forming and un-forming groups, involving a constant conflict between hegemonic and anti-hegemonic forms of identity, shifting the lines between included and excluded. In that context, who talks in the news and who is talked about in times of turbulence appears as a meta-narrative for stratifying societies along the lines of power. Journalism's agency in a provision of public infrastructure for the civic sphere is addressed in terms of its authority to represent, interpret and construct the meaning of reality.

Over the last century, journalism's authority in the fast processing of information has moved from the privileged position of *reporting life* to the more privileged position of *reporting life that matters*. Its capacity to separate individual lives from the life of society, has enabled it to turn persons into representatives of groups. By forming and un-forming groups and by constructing a sense of who we are in relation to others, the journalistic sector of the media participates in the larger process of social inclusion and exclusion. To confess that journalists have become far removed from ordinary people's life sounds like professional suicide. Persons are at the core of the 'realist news' (Barnhurst cited in Rupar 2017) and if journalists are losing a connection with ordinary people, they might be stepping into a very dangerous space. Using a distinction between elite and ordinary people as a main criterion for evaluating journalistic conduct is a strong, persuasive and powerful tool that reveals many symptoms of the current state of journalism as a profession. Barnhurst and Nerone's (2009) longitudinal study of people in the news has documented that persons identified only by name have been replaced by descriptions of their group affiliation. People are in the news only if they represent a wider social, professional, or political group. The obvious question for both journalism scholars and practitioners is: What are the consequences of this shift?



This handbook aims to open a critical dialogue about journalism practice that sheds light on voices misrepresented or left out in news coverage. It draws on a number of case studies to explore both journalism text and a structural context within which group competition reinforces ethnic, class, religious, and other divisions. Several studies on media representation of social groups have confirmed that racism, bigotry, xenophobia, ageism, sexism and other forms of discrimination are learned by text and talk, namely that journalists play a crucial role in the reproduction of prejudices (see the list of references in the Appendix 1).

The mass media theory scholarship (Kornhauser 1968; Dahlgren 1995, Deuze 2019) documents the process within which the media offer a view of the world as “a substitute or pseudo-environment, which is a potent means of manipulating people but also an aid to their psychic survival under difficult conditions” (McQuail 2000, p.74). The Marxist perspectives (Bagdikian 1988; Herman & Chomsky 1988) posit a direct link between economic ownership and dissemination of messages and emphasize the ideological effects of the media in the interests of a ruling class. Functionalism (DeFleur & Ball-Rokeach 1989; Dayan & Katz 1992) claims to explain social practices and institutions in terms of the needs of society and of individuals and depicts the media as essentially self-directing and self-correcting. A critical political economy approach (Golding and Murdock 1996) focuses primarily on the relation between the economic structure and dynamics of media industries, on the one hand, and the ideological content of the media, on the other. Modernization and development theory (Tomlinson 1991) assumes the superiority of modern western societies and says that the mass media serves as an agent of development by disseminating technical know-how, spreading democracy, promoting consumer demand, and aiding literacy, education and health. The communication technology determinism school (Innis 1950; McLuhan 1962) argues that communication technology is essential to society and that there is a direct link between communications and social revolutions. The information society theory (Ferguson 1992) says that the new media technology leads to an information society characterized by a predominance of information work, a great volume of information flow, an interactivity of relations and postmodern culture (McQuail 2000, p.88).

Defining the place of journalism as a field is close to ‘critical political economy’ in the way that it gives central importance to the embedding of the contemporary media in the market and to ‘differentiation’ theory (Alexander 1981) because of its interests in the development of normative practice, such as the development of the journalism profession. One of the issues that defines contemporary journalism, for example, is its position as mediator between reality and readers. Mediation is unlikely to be a neutral process, because the media provides information that the *New York Times* describes as ‘fit to print’,<sup>1</sup> and that means satisfying the habitual set of news judgments (starting with the selection of reality that satisfies the criteria of newsworthiness) and the anticipated needs of readers (determined by the common shared interests and values of the readers). Media scholars agree that “the ‘reality’ will always be to some extent selected and constructed and there will be certain consistent biases” (McQuail 2000, 67), and that the construction of reality is strongly linked to questions of social power, integration and change behind these biases. What divides media scholars is the answer to the question: Why is this selection and construction of reality relevant, and what does it tell us about the media and about society, and about the dynamics between the two? Studies in the sociology of journalism indicate that the representation, and subsequent interpretation and construction of reality in the news media, are relevant issues because the media define and bring attention to important social problems. The news media are seen as one of the ‘arenas’ for public debate, along with other arenas such as parliament and political parties.

<sup>1</sup> Allusion to the *New York Times* logo.

The 'public arenas model' developed by Stephen Hilgartner and Charles Bosk (1988) describes the complexity of public policy where social problems always exist in relation to other social problems and are forced to compete for public attention. The interaction between two public arenas, the media and parliament, is of particular interest to this study because it is the interface between fields, such as the fields of journalism and politics, that creates the forum-creating capacity of the press. Scholars (see for example Norris 2001) have noted that the public policy agenda is influenced by news media and that people who watch more TV news, read more newspapers, surf the net, and pay attention to top campaigns, are consistently more knowledgeable, trusting of government, and participatory. The interaction between the fields, however, does not function in the same way everywhere and the intensity of interactions differ across the globe. Hallin and Mancini (2004) suggest that the way to investigate the relationship between the media (and journalism) and society is to identify the development of media markets with emphasis on mass circulation press, political parallelism (or the degree and nature of the links between the media and political parties), the development of professionalism in journalism and the degree and nature of state intervention in the political system. The authors used these criteria to evaluate different media systems across the globe and came up with three distinctive models: 'democratic corporatist', 'polarized pluralist' and 'liberal'. The 'democratic corporatist model' (the media system in northern continental Europe) is characterized by the historical coexistence of commercial media and media tied to organized social and political groups and by the relatively active but legally limited role of the state. The 'polarized pluralist model' (Mediterranean countries of southern Europe) demonstrates the integration of the media into party politics, a weaker historical development of commercial media, and the strong role of the state. And the 'liberal model' (Britain, Ireland, the US and Canada) is characterized by the relative dominance of market mechanisms and of the commercial media (Hallin & Mancini 2004, p.21).

However, the field of journalism is not only a field of production, but also a community of practices created by the interaction between an individual and a group, and between the actual and the historical. Combining empirical analysis with what has been termed the 'field theory' frame (Benson & Neveu 2005), this handbook discusses the role of the journalist in the production of meaning by focusing on the practice and a set of implicit and explicit norms that stand behind the news text. Taking as a starting point the statement that the "study of technique is the study of process" (Holbert & Zubric 2001, p.50), it identifies and interprets practical options available to journalists in their everyday work when covering issues that touch upon diversity. The choice of form, the use of sources, the transparency of newsgathering and the imposition of a frame indicate how journalistic rules are embedded in a news text and how they are related to reality. The handbook is focused on professional journalism as the place where journalists historically have claimed to serve the public interest. This is not to claim that other forms of journalism, such as public and civic journalism or talk back radio programmes, lack the potential to impact on public debate. They do. But this book is focused on journalism in mainstream media because of its significant influence on the way issues are presented in other media and in the public arena.

The upcoming analysis is aimed to demonstrate how news discourse is formed as well as the ways in which news discourse reflects and rationalises dialogue in other fields – political, economic and cultural. It discusses journalism because the "wider society depends on the quality of its journalism for the efficacy of its institutions and for understanding in every sphere" (De Burgh, 2003, p.95), but also because discussion about the role of the news media in society is impossible without a detailed discussion about professional ideology as a system of norms and standards that define journalistic work.

News reporting is subject to the local political system, economic development and cultural values. It includes the activity of mass communicators who use mass media to select and process news facts and disseminate information to the audience. The differences in cultural values and political systems in China and Western democracies result in different characteristics of Chinese and Western news writing and reporting as well as the paradigms and practices of journalism. Throughout the history of journalism in the West, the fight for freedom of expression and the press have been the main domain of political action, whereas in China freedom of expression and the press have played only a small part in the history of Chinese politics. Standard narratives of liberal democracy in the West are prone to have the political significance of the march to freedom of journalism being seen as exaggerated (Narramore, 2011). A state-owned or Chinese Communist Party-owned system of media organizations was created since the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949. Chinese mass media industries have very high concentration indices because of the strong state or party ownership role (Zhao, 2004). As public institutions, news outlets are social service organizations engaged in educational, scientific and technological, cultural, health and other activities for the public good.

After the Reform and Opening-up in 1978, independent news outlets started to appear, although government-run media outlets occupy a high proportion of the market share. Mainstream news outlets still take the propaganda role and report events or explain policies from the central Party's perspectives. Other market-oriented news outlets, although attached to the same media organizations as the mainstream news outlets, have more freedom to select news stories and set their own news agenda (Wang, Sparks & Huang, 2017). Crucial transformation in terms of politics and operation system of media organizations brought by the Reform and Opening-up policy has facilitated the experimental institutionalization of 'consensus supervision' (yulun jiandu - watchdog model of journalism), which is both attractive to the audiences and implemental to the state control. Having societal problems being criticised and politicians' scandals being exposed, the 'investigative journalism has been one of the most significant and novel development in the contemporary Chinese media' (Wang, 2010, p.8). With news outlets' financial incentive and journalists' professional integrity, the government and the governing Party have acknowledged journalists' role as a watchdog to reinforce and reconfirm the control of the dysfunctional bureaucracy (Bandurski & Hala, 2010). However, journalism in China is ineluctably under the influence of politics and becomes the target of political manipulation. The autonomy of journalists in finding material, reporting and writing news is often limited in various ways (Zhao, 2017). Politics has in some cases replaced the principles of journalism that should be guiding the practice of journalism, and the media now serve specific interests at the expense of the public interest to some extent, leading to a loss of public trust (Wang, 2010).

# News analysis

The objective of this handbook is to look at journalism as an 'independent' variable in the construction of meanings in the public domain. Firstly, we adopt the concept of 'news culture' to investigate journalism in its setting and "rethink the ideological assumptions, modes of perception and even unconscious expectations which need to be sustained by journalists and audience member alike if a news account's claim to be a factual representation of reality is to be upheld" (Allan 2004, p.4). Secondly, assuming news culture is a part of the wider notion of the field, we suggest using the "field theory framework" as a basis for the analysis of the political, social, cultural and economic conventions in journalists' everyday work.

Why does the concept of the 'field' (Bourdieu 2005) provide a suitable framework for the analysis of journalism in relation to media representation of different social groups? The concept of the field supports the multi-layered analysis of the social conditions of the production of the news text. It also highlights the spectrum of choices available for news production (what events will be covered, in what form, for how long) and explains that production is based on the professional strategies of the agents within the field (e.g. junior reporter, senior reporter, commentator, editor). The field itself is also historically positioned within the broader social, political and cultural environment consisting of semi-autonomous specialized spheres of action (e.g. field of politics, economy, cultural production, science) where the relations of power, not only among the fields, but within the fields as well, structure human action. The incorporation of the 'field' provides a framework for the analysis of journalistic norms and their power in the complex process of a media's representation, interpretation and construction of reality. The typical study of journalism focuses on form, values, standards and practice of individual journalists, and has relatively little to say about the nature of a news discourse, its manifestation and how it reflects and interacts with other social fields. It is important to talk about the journalistic field and not individual journalists because "... so long as one talks about journalists, one is talking within a logic of personal responsibility", but if one talks in terms of a field there is an opportunity to investigate not only individuals but "the structure of the journalistic field and the mechanisms that operate within it" (Bourdieu 2005, p.41)

The central issue in conceptualization of journalistic practice as the constitutive element of the field is the notion of objectivity. Objectivity, seen as a mission and as a method rather than the impossible task of providing an objective account, is discussed here as a norm and a basis of journalistic professional ideology. The routine of balancing both sides of the story, for example, becomes a kind of 'objectivity trap' in media coverage of complex social issues such as immigration or ethnic, religious and race tensions. Not only does this routine privilege authoritative sources, but it makes a hierarchy of voices in the battle between the agents from different fields. Hallin's question of "how the development of the journalistic field affects the representation of different social interests in public discussion" (Hallin 2005, p.238) serves as a starting point for identifying the elements of journalistic professional norms – a segment of the field – that shape the representation of different interests in the public sphere. The most visible element of the journalistic field that reflects the objectivity norm and the representation of different social interests is the journalistic product, namely the news text. The tools journalists use in their work, the norms they apply, and the principles that lead them leave a mark on their products. The journalist's job is to make things explicit, so journalists attempt to "legitimate categories of perception" (Bourdieu 2005, p.37), to set out rules that give legitimacy to their representation and, more importantly, for the forum-creating capacity of the press. The term 'representation' indicates a process of depicting reality in the form of a news text. This process involves the construction of reality because 'depiction' is never mirror-like: it requires interpretation. A news text is routinely accepted as a more reliable representation of reality than a movie or a novel, although its process of production indicates a historically, socially and professionally shaped form of mediation. Not all events are selected for the media coverage, neither are all elements of the selected events included in reports. Some things are fore-grounded, while other facts are stated at the bottom of the report; some articles are news reports, the others are interviews; where one journalist used a direct quote, another interpreted the views in the form of reported speech.

How the definition of the world, incorporated into everyday news production, works as an act of mobilization, can be addressed by using simultaneous analysis of social structures and cultural forms. The idea is that journalists not only reproduce but also transform power relations in other fields because the field itself is divided between forms of cultural and economic capital. This is an important and very useful point for media research because the production of "common sense" – a role the press takes across different media systems – is a far more complex phenomenon than the simple transmission of common sense from a position of power, as some other approaches suggest.

The set of norms – rules, tools, textual devices and modes of representation – that journalists apply in their everyday work defines the profession and indicates the autonomy of the field in relation to the wider society. Many media scholars have identified and discussed journalists' reliance on official sources (see Cottle 2003), but few have explained how the news judgement is collectively constructed. The position of a journalist is that of a mediator in pursuit of truth, who overcomes the effects of the singularity of the event and who, by interpreting the event, transforms reported reality into universal 'experience' and common shared knowledge. The two distinctive visions of the journalist, the position of 'neutral reporter' and of 'participant', are developed in relation to the wider social space: "the first refers to ideas of the press as informer, interpreter and instrument of government (lending itself as a channel or mirror); the second is the traditional 'fourth estate' notion, covering ideas of the press as representative of the public, critic of government, advocate of policy and policy-maker" (McQuail 2000, p.253). The majority of journalists see themselves as neutral interpreters of events (Weaver and Wilhoit, 1996), a position that reveals objectivity as the main professional value. In making news

judgements, gathering information and presenting events and issues, journalists are led by a set of norms that define how this important work should be done, what is good and what is bad, what should be welcomed and what avoided.

The key questions, however, remain. What are journalistic norms? What are the rules about doing a proper job? How do the rules develop and how do they relate to the outside world? Where does the power of journalistic norms come from? How are the principles of objectivity, accuracy, balance and fairness – the most commonly used terms for identifying journalistic norms – reflected in the news text? It seems that the ‘practice’ not only shapes the structure of the journalistic field but also creates its logic. The question that underpins the upcoming chapters is simple: how do journalistic norms articulate the ‘truth’ and how does this ‘truth’ relate to different social groups.

Finding and telling the truth, as the history of journalism has shown, is a complex if not impossible task. It is related, among other things, to a particular news culture. What we know from existing comparative studies is that news culture comes about as a result of an “intervening variable between people – journalists, sources or public – and a given ‘objective’ situation – media events, organisations, infrastructures, and systems – through which citizens inform or are informed” (Deuze 2002a, p.134). The understanding of journalistic norms therefore differs around the globe, but not many studies have been undertaken to identify those differences and discuss their implications for the interactions between the fields of political, social and cultural production.

Journalists are agents in the field with some degree of autonomy. They are not explicitly ‘governed’ by either the state, their organization, cultural heritage or the market, but at the same time they are considered to be working under the influence of all of those factors. To view the journalistic field as a dynamic and open system of constantly changing values and interpretations is to understand that it is linked to a set of forces that seek to shape its content. Shoemaker and Reese (1996) list five of them: individual forces, routine forces, organizational forces, external (institutional) forces and ideological forces. For this study, a focus was placed on journalism practice and the interplay between journalistic norms and public debate, a more operational three-part system is used: the journalistic field is defined by a set of forces coming from the wider social context (external factors), from the media institution (internal factors) and, thirdly, by the forces coming from the profession of journalism (norm factors).

These factors are implicitly incorporated into the analogies journalists use in describing the job they are doing such as a “window”, a “mirror” or a “forum” (McQuail 2000, p.66). Journalists may deny being subject to a ‘external’ or ‘internal’ set of forces or factors and declare instead that they are driven by ‘norm factors’ to achieve a high level of professional autonomy. But what is this autonomy? Hallin (1986) says that the journalist’s conception of autonomy is a false consciousness, based on the idea that news judgments can be politically neutral. As such, “far from being a mere lie or illusion, it is a deeply held system of consciousness that profoundly affects both the structure of the news organization and the day-to-day practice of journalism” (Hallin 1986, p.23). The rise of professional journalism gave journalists grounds to claim their own authority in the sphere in which they communicate primarily to members of their own profession. Although there are conflicts between the journalists’ and the corporation’s authority, the trend is towards increased journalistic autonomy. When scholars warn that the line towards autonomy is not a straight one, but “an uncertain and changeable process, in which parts of the field of journalism ... have sometimes won relative autonomy in relation to other fields, often then losing it again, or sometimes winning it in one direction while they simultaneously

lose it in another” (Hallin 2005, p.229), they expand the scope of discussion towards the issue of the role of the press in society and its capacity to create a forum for public debate.

The *Inclusive journalism* handbook examines journalism as a system, the forms of journalism that seek reconsideration of professional norms and values. It invites journalism students to develop new ways of understanding how journalism might affect the currents of contemporary life. It looks at journalism as an agency ready to adjust and transform itself too. The concept of resilience suits the task of raising awareness about diversity. How citizens respond to war, natural disaster, political polarization and other types of disruption and stress, depends on accessibility of resources and the ability to participate in decision making processes. Journalists are central to this process. Much has been said about their failures, and to lesser extent about their success, but a systematic overview of journalistic efforts to contribute to building a resilient society of all and for all is still missing.

The starting point for achieving this goal is the question of how to choose a method that would capture the dialogical character of the field, the form of balancing accounts and ongoing dialogue within the text in its production and in its conversation with the reader. The problem reflects the essence of the discipline of journalism: it is rooted in ‘positivism’ and it claims to represent ‘facts as they really are’, but each segment of its practice, from selecting events to giving the news a headline, clearly demonstrates a deep embeddedness in ‘constructivism’. The proposed method that captures this ambivalence – the socially constructed nature of reality that seeks the answer to the question of “*how* social experience is created and given meaning” (Denzin & Lincoln 2000, p.8)—is a combination of case study and critical discourse analysis. It borrows explanatory frameworks from sociology, as well as cultural and language studies, to conceptualise journalistic practice. It seems to be the most appropriate strategy for highlighting the power of unwritten norms in the construction of meaning.

Our case studies approach the question of the representation of reality by scrutinising elements of journalistic practice such as methods of gathering news, news sources, framing devices and language of news.

The method applied is critical discourse analysis, an approach to the study of news developed from the need to look at language above the level of the sentence, to incorporate language structures and extra-linguistic information into an analysis of the news text. Drawing on a range of scholarship on discourse analysis (Fairclough 1995, 1998; Wodak 1997), we look at the news text as one communication in an extended chain of communicative events that “reconceptualises” others (Fairclough 1995, p.41). Critical discourse analysis, which is: “... not concerned with language alone” (Cook cited in Garrett & Bell 1998, p.3) is a method for identification of the context of communication. Critical discourse analysis sees discourse – language use in speech and writing – as a form of “social practice”:

Describing discourse as a social practice implies a dialectical relationship between a particular discursive event and the situation(s), institution(s) and social structure(s) which frame it: the discursive event both shapes and is shaped by them. That is, discourse is socially constitutive as well as socially conditioned – it constitutes situations, objects of knowledge and the social identities of and relationships between people and groups of people. (Wodak 1997, p.173)

Discourse analysis may illustrate the links between the journalism professional ideology and the diversity of voices in public domain. News texts are approached as a communicative event, and a form of journalism practice, located “within fields of social practice and in relation to the social and cultural forces and processes which shape and transform these fields” (Fairclough 1998, p.143).

# Religion

Reporting religion can easily go wrong. In the context of Western societies, reprinting someone's discriminatory speech risks creating offense; reporting on acts of religious intolerance carries a danger of contributing to the stigmatization of a religious group. The majority of Chinese scholarship on the news coverage of religion centres on the media's role in promoting religious propaganda in ethnic-minority regions and how this should be done. Generally speaking, religious beliefs differ across China's regions. For example, the people in Xinjiang and Ningxia mostly believe in Islam, while the religion in Qinghai, Inner Mongolia and Tibet is mainly Tibetan Buddhism. However, there are also people of other religions in these areas. Chinese scholars tend to focus on agenda setting within media organizations and conduct thematic, content, and framing analysis of news reports on national or regional religious policies over a period of time. Such research is done with a clear purpose of: encouraging the media to assume an active role in promoting and guiding the adaptation of religion to socialist society and improve the Marxist view of religious propaganda (Pan & Yuan, 2015). In addition, nearly all existing studies concentrate on newspapers coverage of religion. Research on other media forms remained relatively understudied.

The core values of journalism – truth, independence, accuracy, fairness, balance, respect for privacy and commitment to minimizing harm – are inscribed in journalism codes of ethics across the world. But, expectations and everyday practices differ within and between newsrooms. Journalistic codes of ethics instruct journalists to be aware of the dangers of amplifying discrimination based on religion, but also national or social origin, in their work. At the same time, covering stories involving religion pose complex challenges, requiring knowledge, understanding, and a full awareness of social responsibility to avoid stirring up tensions or stimulating confrontation and intolerance (George 2014, p.76).



All phases in news production pose challenges in journalism work: from finding topics and approaching sources of information to providing necessary background information, finding an angle, and presenting a story. Poor media coverage of religion usually entails 'labelling' of individuals and/or groups, selective use of data, generalizing incidents, negative stereotyping, giving one side of a story, using derogatory words, mixing facts and views, absence of fact-checking, and miss-matching content with the headlines, images and sound (Rupar 2012). But, what about the good examples? Socially responsible journalism practice is based on in-depth reporting, providing background information, explaining legal contexts, considering the impact, giving a voice to the voiceless, showing respect, raising awareness about diversity, avoiding stereotypes, taking a stand on discrimination, moving beyond the event, and minimizing harm, as demonstrated by as RNS's award-winning reporting on the Las Vegas shooting (Winston, 2017). This example demonstrates that socially responsible journalism looks at a place of tension as a space for investigation that includes both truth-telling and caring and monitoring the powerful while contributing to the common good. Good reporting on religion is based on universal human values and on moral reasoning, which remains situated within the context but aims to transcend it. This entails a shift with significant professional and social consequences. The current lack of trust in news media and the ease of spreading misinformation raises a question: is the simple credo of journalism 'serving the public interest' sufficient to address the challenges of the time? The morally questionable journalism practices in the coverage of religion are fuelling nationalism worldwide, spreading fear and tensions instead of promoting tolerance and compassion.



—  
Man beaten within an inch of his life during the Delhi riots.  
Image Credit: Twitter

### Case study: Providing context to a story

<https://gulfnews.com/world/asia/india/if-we-kill-you-nothing-will-happen-how-delhis-police-turned-against-muslims-1.1584001614621>

Civil unrest in India and violent clashes between Hindu and Muslims have dominated the global news agenda since the introduction of the Narendra Modi's new citizenship law in 2019. In the following article the author makes an effort to provide a context for the most recent clashes between the police and protesters.

## 'If we kill you, nothing will happen.' How Delhi's police turned against Muslims

*The New York Times*, 12 March 2020

By Jeffrey Gettleman, Sameer Yasir, Suhasini Raj and Hari Kumar

NEW DELHI:

Kaushar Ali, a house painter, was trying to get home when he ran into a battle.

Hindu and Muslim mobs were hurling rocks at each other, blocking a street he needed to cross to get to his children. Ali, who is Muslim, said that he turned to some police officers for help. That was his mistake.

This is an example of effective intro. The author brings his personal story as if the camera starts with a close up and then moves away to show a broader picture of an issue.

The officers threw him onto the ground, he said, and cracked him on the head. They started beating him and several other Muslims. As the men lay bleeding, begging for mercy - one of them died two days later from internal injuries - the officers laughed, jabbed them with their sticks and made them sing the national anthem. That abuse, on February 24, was captured on video.

"The police were toying with us," Ali said. He recalled them saying, "Even if we kill you, nothing will happen to us."

So far, they have been right.

India has suffered its worst sectarian bloodshed in years, in what many here see as the inevitable result of Hindu extremism that has flourished under the government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. His party has embraced a militant brand of Hindu nationalism, and its leaders have openly vilified Indian Muslims. In recent months, Modi has presided over a raft of policies widely seen as anti-Muslim, such as erasing the statehood of what had been India's only Muslim-majority state, Jammu and Kashmir.

Now, more evidence is emerging that the Delhi police, who are under the direct command of Modi's government and have very few Muslim officers, concertedly moved against Muslims and at times actively helped the Hindu mobs that rampaged in New Delhi in late February, burning down Muslim homes and targeting Muslim families.

- Several videos showed police officers beating and throwing rocks at Muslim protesters and waving on Hindu mobs to join them.

- A police commander said that as the violence erupted - at that point mostly by Hindu mobs - officers in the affected areas were ordered to deposit their guns at the stationhouses. Several officers during the violence were later overheard by New York Times journalists yelling to one another that they had only sticks and that they needed guns to confront the growing mobs. Some researchers accuse the police force of deliberately putting too few officers on the streets, with inadequate firepower, as the violence morphed from clashes between rival protesters into targeted killings of Muslims.

- More than two thirds of the 53 people killed and who have been identified were Muslim. Human rights activists are calling it an organized massacre.

- Although India's population is 14% Muslim and New Delhi's is 13%, the total Muslim representation on the Delhi police force is less than 2%.

India's policing culture has long been brutal, biased, anti-minority and almost colonial in character, a holdover from the days of British rule when the police had no illusions of serving the public but were used to suppress a restive population.

The phrase 'what many here see' is common feature in news stories, however it needs precision. Who are 'many'? Modi's political opponents, human rights organisations, international monitors?

Attributing this statement to relevant report and providing data to support the claim would increase veracity of the claim.

Listing the major policies would be useful.

This is a fine example of linking a statement 'more evidence is emerging' and introducing existence of video footage.

Too vague, instead of saying 'some researchers' it would be better to either name them or institutions they belong to.

Source of information needed.

This is a fine example of using data to illustrate social problem.

Says who? If it is a journalist than data needed to support the claim, if otherwise source of information needed.

Commonly used in news reports but vague. Media observers, political observers, human rights activists..?

But what seems to be different now, **observers contend**, is how profoundly India's law enforcement machinery has been politicized by the Bharatiya Janata Party, Modi's governing party.

Police officials, especially in states controlled by Modi's party, have been highly selective in their targets, like a Muslim school principal in Karnataka who was jailed for more than two weeks on sedition charges after her students performed a play about a new immigration law that police officials said was critical of Modi.

Some judges have also seemed to be caught up - or pushed out - by a Hindu-nationalist wave.

**A Delhi judge** who expressed disbelief that the police had yet to investigate members of Modi's party who have been widely accused of instigating the recent violence in Delhi was taken off the case and transferred to another state. And at the same time that the Supreme Court has made a string of rulings in the government's favor, one of the judges, Arun Mishra, publicly praised Modi as a "visionary genius."

All of this is emboldening Hindu extremists on the street.

The religiously mixed and extremely crowded neighbourhoods in northeastern Delhi that were on fire in late February have cooled. But some Hindu politicians continue to lead so-called peace marches, trotting out casualties of the violence with their heads wrapped in white medical tape, trying to upend the narrative and make Hindus seem like the victims, which is stoking more anti-Muslim hatred.

Some Muslims are leaving their neighbourhoods, having lost all faith in the police. More than 1,000 have piled into a camp for internally displaced people that is rising on Delhi's outskirts.

Muslim leaders see the violence as a state-sanctioned campaign to teach them a lesson. After years of staying quiet as Hindu lynch mobs killed Muslims with impunity and Modi's government chipped away at their political power, India's Muslim population awoke in December and poured into the streets, along with many other Indians, to protest the new immigration law, which favours migrants belonging to every major religion in South Asia - except for Muslims.

**Modi's government, Muslim leaders say, is now trying to drive the whole community back into silence.**

"There's a method to this madness," said Umar Khalid, a Muslim activist. "The government wants to bring the entire Muslim community to their knees, to beg for their lives and beg for their livelihoods."

Providing name would bring more authority to the belief. If that not possible adding 'who asked not to be named' would make journalist's newsgathering process more transparent.

Very good example of the use of interviews. It would be even better if the author added a paragraph citing a foundational text that has spread fear.

“You can read it in their books,” he said, referring to foundational texts by Hindu nationalists. “They believe India’s Muslims should live in perpetual fear.”

Modi has said little since the bloodshed erupted, except for a few anodyne tweets urging peace. Delhi police officials deny an anti-Muslim bias and said they “acted swiftly to control law and order,” which both Muslims and Hindus in those neighbourhoods have said was not true. The police responded “without favouring any person on religious lines or otherwise,” according to a written reply to questions, provided by M.S. Randhawa, a police spokesman.

Going back to the person mentioned in the first paragraph is a fine example of keeping a strong narrative in a long form journalism.

Police officials said that Ali and the other Muslim men were hurt by protesters and rescued by the police - although videos clearly show them being hit by police officers. Police officials also pointed out that one officer was killed and more than 80 injured; videos show a huge crowd of Muslim protesters attacking outnumbered officers.

Putting the current incidents into historical context gives depth to reporting.

The violence in New Delhi fits a pattern, experts say, of chaos being allowed to rage for a few days - with minorities being killed - before the government brings it under control.

In 1984, under the Congress party, which often bills itself as representing the interests of minorities, the police in New Delhi stood back for several days as mobs massacred 3,000 Sikhs.

In 1993, again under a Congress government, riots swept Mumbai and hundreds of Muslims were killed.

In 2002 in Gujarat, when Modi was the state’s chief minister, Hindu mobs massacred hundreds of Muslims. Modi was accused of complicity, although he was cleared by a court.

Several retired Indian police commanders said that the rule in quelling communal violence was to deploy maximum force and make many arrests, neither of which happened in Delhi.

Ajai Raj Sharma, a former commissioner, called the performance “unexplainable.”

“It can’t be forgiven,” he said.

When the violence started February 23 - as Hindu men gathered to forcibly eject a peaceful Muslim protest near their neighborhood - much of it became two-sided. By day’s end, both Muslims and Hindus had been attacked, and dozens had been shot, apparently with small-bore homemade guns.

But by February 25, the direction had changed. Hindu mobs fanned out and targeted Muslim families. Violence crackled in the air.

This is the second time the author cites the New York Times. Using previous media coverage of the event usually happens when journalist was not on the spot and has to rely on other reports to present the information and/or to give more credibility to the report by citing most prominent news outlets.

Very important to say the effort was made to bring information from official sources.

Coming back to the question of disproportional police structure.

Gain personalized story for the effective end of the report.

Police officers watched as mobs of Hindus, their foreheads marked by saffron stripes, prowled the streets with baseball bats and rusty bars, looking for Muslims to kill. The sky was filled with smoke. Muslim homes, shops and mosques were burned down.

When a reporter for The New York Times tried to speak to residents standing near police officers that day, a mob of men with darting eyes surrounded him and ripped the notebook out of his hands. When the reporter asked police officers for help, one said: "I can't. These young men are very volatile."

The home ministry, which controls Delhi's police force and is led by Amit Shah, one of the most combative Hindu nationalists in the BJP, has come under heavy criticism for the policing failures. Delhi police officials denied being instructed by the central government to go easy on the troublemakers. The home ministry did not respond to repeated requests for comment.

And then there's the composition of the police. The Delhi force, numbering around 80,000, has fewer than 2,000 Muslim officers and just a handful of Muslim commanders, according to an analysis done in 2017 by the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative. Delhi police officials did not deny this, and Muslim leaders said that police behaviour was biased across India.

"Indian police are extremely colonial and caste-ist," said Shahid Siddiqui, a former member of Parliament. Police behaviour, he said, is always "more violent and aggressive toward the weak." scholar

India's population is about 80% Hindu, and gangs of Hindus are threatening Muslims in several Delhi neighbourhoods to leave before the Hindu holiday Holi this week.

One Muslim woman, who goes by the name Baby, opened her door a few days ago to find 50 men outside with a notebook in their hands, listing the addresses of Muslims. She packed up. She may be leaving soon.

## Tutorial outline

Ask students to bring to the class examples of the media coverage of religion and to prepare in advance answers to the following questions:

- Why genre of a news text matters? Use examples to support your argument
- Who are the sources of information in the selected sample?
- How the structure of the news text contributes to its creation of meaning? Document.
- What is the nature of religious conflict according to the article. *'If we kill you, nothing will happen.'*  
*How Delhi's police turned against Muslims?*

- What causes of the religion tension are listed in your examples?
- How the authors frame religious conflicts?
- What tools are usually used for identification of religious groups?

Ask students to discuss if the following guideline for reporting on religious issues were followed:

- Get to know anti-discriminatory legislation, national and international
- Use a broad network of expert sources
- Provide background information
- Put facts into context
- Investigate documents in public domain
- Interview people with knowledge
- Portray people as human being instead of representatives of religious groups
- Avoid negative labels
- Separate facts from opinion but treat opinion as relevant

Provide students with the list of recommended academic texts and ask students to prepare short academic essays on media coverage of religion using one news story as a case study (alternatively two in which case the essay should be based on comparing and contrasting examples).

#### Tips for reporting religion

- Get to know anti-discriminatory legislation, national and international
- Get a clear idea of what is the dominant religion in the country or region and what are the other religions too.
- Pay attention to portrayal of people belongs to other religions.
- Keep a fair and balanced presentation of the dominant religion and other religions.
- Contextualize religious conflicts and religious related events.
- Portray people as human being instead of representatives of religious groups
- Avoid (influenced by) pre-defined assumptions, stereotypes, prejudice of a religion.
- Separate facts from opinion but treat opinion as relevant

#### Recommended readings:

- Stollow, J. (2005). Religion and/as Media. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 22(4), 119-145.
- Yao, Q., Stout, D. A., & Liu, Z. (2011). China's official media portrayal of religion (1996–2005): policy change in a Desecularizing Society. *Journal of Media and Religion*, 10(1), 39-50.
- Travagnin, S. (Ed.). (2016). *Religion and media in China: Insights and case studies from the Mainland, Taiwan and Hong Kong*. Taylor & Francis.
- Rupar, V. (2012). *Getting the facts right: Reporting ethnicity and religion*. Brussels: International Federation of Journalists. Available [here](#).

# Ethnicity

The examination of media's role in democracy has historically developed around the question of what media practice means in terms of how people can live well together (Coudry 2012). The news media occupy a central space in the political communication process. As such, studies into news media's role in encouraging community cohesion around shared values, irrespective of individuals' ethnic origins, have become ingrained into any purposeful communication about politics and social wellbeing.

In a world characterised by diversity and inequality, the ultimate goal of dialogic democracy may be seen not as "consensus", but rather the production of a space where "multiple voices" can be heard and where "closure" is not achieved at the expense of failing to question prevailing relations of power" (Dobson 2014, 130). News media's role in processing, distributing and receiving social information ensures it occupies a central position in providing such a forum for public debate, helping citizens to participate in public life. Being inclusive of the community defines what media do – or ought to do – in terms of the civic values of equality and diversity, universally not only at important times such as elections. 'Can we live together, equal and different?' – asked Alain Touraine (1998, 140) in an essay challenging conventional, socio-centric approaches to inclusion and exclusion, equality and difference, diversity and multiculturalism.

The Government of the People's Republic of China officially defines the Chinese nation as the collective name for the 56 nationalities recognized in the country. The Han Chinese are the ethnic majority group in China (more than 90 percent of population), while there are 55 other groups of ethnic minorities together making up the Chinese nation. National autonomous areas are administrative regions, inhabited by one or more ethnic minorities inhabit, where ethnic regional autonomy is implemented. According to the Chinese Constitution and laws, China's ethnic autonomous regions are divided into Autonomous Regions, Autonomous Prefectures, and Autonomous Counties.

Most of existing academic research on ethnic issues focuses on the way foreign news agencies and/or Chinese news agencies construct the image of Chinese ethnic minorities. Studies that focus on foreign news media (e.g., *New York Times*) reveal that coverage of China's ethnic minorities in these outlets tends to be negative, due to multiple factors that influence reporting, such as ideology, cultural differences, and Western values (Liu, 2013; Ding, 2012). By contrast, Chinese media shape the image of ethnic minorities in line with the mainstream discourse system, which constructs China as a unified multi-ethnic country. More precisely, the examinations of media coverage of ethnicity document that ethnic minorities were portrayed in Chinese media as recipients; advocates; life improvers; spokespeople; maintainers of national unity and stability; participants in important national activities; nationalists; hometown constructors; moral citizens; or, separatists (Gao, 2015; Qin, 2010; Tong & Pan, 2012; Zhang, 2013; Li, 2019). When it comes to stereotypical images of ethnic minorities, Chinese media often portray them as group of people who: live in the countryside; can sing and dance well; have festivals every day; are backward, undereducated, ignorant and poor (Shan, 2006; Qiu, 2013; Luo, 2012). Scholars note that it was very difficult for the construction of media image of ethnic minorities to disaffiliate from the influence of the dominant discourse (Gao, 2015). In the news, frequently used frames include: the benefits of the Socialist system, support for the leadership of CCP and PRC; equality and unity among 56 ethnic groups; pluralism of Chinese culture; harmonious development of civil society; framework of personal quality and collective prosperity can easily be extracted from news reports on ethnic minorities.

The commitment to a diversity of voices is crucial for understanding journalism's place in society – its pledge to provide accurate, fair and impartial reporting, and to promote public participation in the democratic process. Expressions of reference to specific ethnic groups, are considered to be signs of belief in common good and joint action. These expressions also indicate a certain level of distinctiveness that—in the everyday production of news—journalists transparently recognize as a 'plural subject' (Day 2006) worth mentioning in order to understand public debates. Journalism's intervention, visible in the choice of sources, references to social groups and selection of topics, has been considered an important element within the wider process of 'mediatization' of politics (Cushion and Thomas 2013).

Ethnic diversity has become one of the major challenges for media today. Reporting on ethnicity gives journalists a chance to map out the social reality for their audience, but also to evaluate, frame and magnify events and issues. On one hand, media coverage of religion and ethnicity can reinforce existing social relations and the status quo and perpetuate stereotypes and prejudices. On the other, journalists can demonstrate full awareness of the dangers of discriminatory narratives being furthered by the media and do their utmost to avoid facilitating such discrimination as they are set out in the International Federation of Journalists' *Declaration of Principles on the Conduct of Journalists, 1954*.



### Case study: Ordering facts

[http://zqb.cyol.com/html/2014-08/07/nw.D110000zgqnb\\_20140807\\_1-04.htm](http://zqb.cyol.com/html/2014-08/07/nw.D110000zgqnb_20140807_1-04.htm)

Labour migration in the 1960s and waves of political refugees since the 1970s makes Muslim a visible ethnic group in Germany. According to Office for Statistics Berlin-Brandenburg, Muslims constitute 11.6% of the total population in Germany<sup>2</sup>. This news article focuses on the ethnic, social, cultural and religious conflicts between Muslim and the mainstream ethnicities in German society. The account of the facts is precise and credible, and the use of subheadings enhances the clarity of logical, skilful and fluent writing.

China Youth Daily  
August 07, 2014

## An Article Set Off an Uproar The Topic of Muslim Immigration Stirred up German Society Again

On August 18, 2012, Muslims in Berlin, Germany, held demonstrations against earlier anti-Muslim demonstrations outside several mosques in Berlin. Pictures provided by CFP (A picture of this information)

The name of the media organization or news outlet are usually spelled in full when first mentioned.



Nicholas Fest (N.Fest), deputy editor of the German “Bild Sunday”, expressed his views on Islam on July 26 in his critical article, “Islam is an obstacle to integration”. “I am a religious-friendly atheist,” he said. I don’t believe in God(God), but I don’t resent Christianity, Judaism or Buddhism. Only Islam

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.statistik-berlin-brandenburg.de/publikationen/stat\\_berichte/2020/SB\\_A01-05-00\\_2019h02\\_BE.pdf](https://www.statistik-berlin-brandenburg.de/publikationen/stat_berichte/2020/SB_A01-05-00_2019h02_BE.pdf)

A succinct summary of who did what, at where. Used direct quotation to ensure accurate delivery of Fest's point of view.

makes me more and more disgusted. I resent the above-average juvenile crime rate with Islamic background. I resent the deadly discrimination against women and homosexuals in Islam. I also resent forced marriage and honorary murder. "The author asked himself and answered: "Is religion an obstacle to social integration? I don't think it's always; but when it comes to Islam, it is. This, on the one hand, should be taken into account when absorbing immigrants and refugees."

Clear topic sentence to lead the first section of this news article.

The publication of this comment has caused a great uproar in public opinion in Germany.

Why did the reporter put an emphasis on this politician's Turkish origin? Other politicians mentioned were not introduced by their ethnicity.

The use of direct quotation guarantees the accuracy and avoid misrepresentation of their viewpoint.

Mutlu (Turkish), a German Greens politician, called the comment "pure racism". The Social Democratic politician Westphal said the comment was "nonsense". Another Greens politician, Baker, asked the newspaper to "apologize to all Muslims." Niegmeier, a media celebrity, asked the newspaper to fire Fest. Dickman, editor-in-chief of "Bild Sunday", tweeted it that Fest's comments were wrong and Muslims should not be overall negated. Horne, editor-in-chief of "Bild Sunday", responded and explained: "We are not hostile to Islam. I apologize for giving the public such an impression.

Good selection of a wide range selection of politician and media celebrities provided, though direct quotation would work better here.

Did reporter's selection and layout of the news sources here intentionally put public and non-public figures against each other? There may also be proponents of Fest's remarks and opposing views in online comments.

Unlike the above-mentioned public figures, many German readers are anonymous in their online comments, saying that he has said what most Germans want to say, like the child who tells the truth in "The Emperor's New Clothes". Other readers say that freedom of expression should include criticism of Islam, and that criticism should not be hostile to Islam at once.

It would be more authentic and persuasive, if the reporter used some quotations from the online comments instead of summarizing it. The short summary makes it uneven compared to the weight of public figures (direct quotations from a wide range of figures).

Critics and supporters are at loggerheads. But which side is more representative of public opinion? What do the Germans think of Islam and Muslim immigrants?

Giving the other side of the disputes is always useful.

Germany currently has about 4 million Muslims, of which 2.5 million are from Turkey. The vast majority of Muslims live in the former West German region. With the increase of Muslim migrants who believe in Islam, the cultural conflict between them and the mainstream German society, which believes in Christianity and secularization, has repeatedly attracted public attention.

The first sentence summarizes the previous section. The questions are the leading topic sentence for section two.

Source of information needed.

In 1999, Muslim women wearing headscarves sparked controversy and litigation. At that time, the Muslim female teacher Festa Lutyn applied for inclusion into the civil service teacher series, which was rejected by the Baden-Wuertenburg state government because she refused to take off her headscarf during class. The reason given by the government is that the headscarf is not only a religious symbol, but also a political symbol, which is contrary to the neutrality and secularism of public schools. Lutyn sued the government and start a series of legal proceedings. Until 2003, the Federal Constitutional Court ruled that it was legal to prohibit teachers from wearing headscarves as long as the federal states had enacted corresponding laws. Since then, states have enacted corresponding

laws, and so far eight federal states in Germany have legislated to prohibit teachers in public schools from wearing headscarves. But to this day, the controversy over the “Headscarf Ban” continues. In the eyes of many Germans, wearing headscarves is a form of oppression and restriction on women, and although many Muslim women say they wear headscarves voluntarily, critics argue that this is the result of the internalization of external pressure.

Other Islamic dress codes also continue to stimulate the nerves of German society. In 2011, the German government of Hesse banned a Muslim employee from wearing burqas to work. A subsequent survey by “Focus” found that 75 percent of respondents opposed Muslims working in the government to wear burqas to work. In 2013, the Federal Administrative Court ruled that a 13-year-old Muslim secondary school student could not refuse to attend school swimming classes on the grounds of religion, because she could wear a full-body swimsuit. But the student and her parents from Morocco considered that swimming at the same time between half-naked boys and girls was contrary to Islamic dress codes.

Further explanation on ‘symbolic provocation’ needed.

Explain what is Minaret as it is a relative unfamiliar concept for Chinese readers. Also explain why German oppose building Minaret?

In 2009, mosque “symbolic provocation” remark appeared. In November of that year, Switzerland held a referendum in which 57 percent of voters opposed the construction of Minaret at mosques in the country. According to a poll by “Der Spiegel”, 44 percent of people would agree if Germany banned the construction of Minaret. There are currently 700 mosques in Germany. With the increase in mosques, the number of cases of destruction of mosques in Germany (such as putting pig heads, graffiti, setting fire at night) has also increased in recent years, reflecting an increase in German resistance to mosques. Weiner, secretary-general of Germany’s right-wing party Pro NRW, even saw Muslim construction of mosques in Germany as a provocation: “We see the construction of mosques as a symbol of offensive power for Muslims to conquer Germany.”

In 2005, forced marriage and “honorary murder” shocked Germany. On Feb. 7 of that year, Hartong Suluku, 23, was shot dead by his brother at a bus stop in Berlin. She was born in Berlin, Germany, and her parents are Kurds from Turkey. At the age of 16, she was ordered by her father to drop out of school and was forced to marry a cousin as far away as Turkey. At odds with her husband and his religious family, she left home alone and returned to Berlin, trying to start a new life, and took off her headscarf. Her three brothers thought she had violated Islamic tradition and humiliated her family, so they joined forces to kill her. The case sparked a big discussion in Germany about Muslim values, forced marriage and honorary murder. In a classroom discussion at a Berlin-high school, three Turkish students expressed support and approval for the murder.”It’s only Suluku’s fault for pushing herself,” they said. “This bitch makes herself look like a German.” After the incident was exposed by the media, it once again made a splash all over the country. During the International Women’s Day on March 8, 2005, demonstrations against “honorary murder” broke out in several German cities. But to this day, “honorary murder” cases continue to emerge in Germany, in the past five years, the media alone has reported 114 such cases.

Clear and good flow of the examples (Hijab, costume, building Minaret, murder) to explain different levels of cultural conflicts (symbol to violence).

Source of information needed

Muslim juvenile delinquency and social integration are worrisome. In May 2010, a survey commissioned by the Federal Ministry of the Interior of Germany showed that 25 percent of Muslims living in Germany were prone to violence against followers of other religions. In the same year, a joint study published by the Federal Ministry of the Interior and the Institute of Criminology of Lower Saxony (KFN) showed that Muslim adolescents were more violent among German immigrants than adolescents of other religions. Moreover, the more devout the religious, the more violent the tendency. The headlines chosen by the German media in their reports are very eye-catching and sensational: “Muslim teenagers: the more pious, the more violent,” earned enough public attention.

Giving both side of a story but lack of even weight.

However, some analysts pointed out that the study only found the relationship, and can not make the causal inference that faith in Islam can lead to crime.

A survey conducted by the Institute of Criminology from 2007 to 2008 showed the impact of religious beliefs on the social integration of young migrants. The survey showed that juvenile migrants who did not believe in religion had the best integration in German society; the social integration of Muslim adolescents was seen as one of the reasons for their high crime rate.

Clear topic question for section three of this news article.

As many as 4 million Muslims have become an important part of the German population, and Muslim women in robes and headscarves are everywhere in the streets of Germany. But have they been accepted by mainstream German society? Has Islam become part of Germany?

The information given on Woolf is complete and accurate.

Former German President Woolf, who resigned on suspicion of taking bribes in 2012 (the Hanover court ruled against his bribery charges earlier this year), gave a positive answer to this question. On a recent talk show on German television, he said that the media, such as “Bild Sunday” and “Der Spiegel”, insisted on forcing him to step down not because of bribery, but because he had publicly stated that “Islam has become part of Germany”, causing many people to dislike him. Woolf’s argument undoubtedly has a strong conspiracy theory, but at least one thing is right, that is, he says that “Islam is part of Germany” lacks public support.

This is reporter’s comments. Evidence needed to support this comment.

Good use of statistics to support the reporter’s interpretation.

According to a survey released this year by the German Foundation for Integration and Migration, 53.2 percent of Germans believe that Islam is not part of Germany; 63.1 percent of Germans do not agree that Muslim teachers could wear headscarves in public schools; and 75.9 percent of Germans do not agree that Muslim students could refuse swimming classes or other physical education classes on the grounds of religion. A December 2009 poll on German TV station 1 found that 75 percent of Germans were worried about the spread of Islam; 82 percent thought mosques had interfered with them, and the pagoda gave people a sense of dominance.

This shows that the Germans have not yet accepted Islam. It is not surprising because Germany is, after all, a country dominated by Christian culture.

Source of information needed

Among 82 million residents, 25.2 million are Catholic and 24.5 million are Protestant. The ban on headscarves and the resistance to mosque pagodas can be regarded as the resistance and exclusion of Christian culture to Islamic culture.

Says who? If it is the report's then evidence needed to support the claim, if otherwise source of information needed.

Bryler, a professor at Leipzig University, points out that aversion to Muslims has spread to all levels of German society, and 1/3 of Germans want to ban Muslim immigration in their country. Norbert Gass, a federal member of the Christian Social Union Party, says in 30 or 40 years, one in two people in Germany will be Muslim. This is an exaggeration, but in Germany, there are many people who are worried about the rapid growth of the Muslim population.

The point here is that some people worry about the rapid increasing of the Islam. However, the statistics below only prove the population is growing rapidly. The point did not get fully supported.

German TV station 2 recently reported on the Islamization of British schools- the Muslim population is over 70 percent. In 21 local primary schools of some urban areas of Birmingham, Arabic has become a compulsory course, Christian festivals such as Christmas and Easter are no longer celebrated, boys and girls have to sit separately or even attend separate classes, the destination of the class trip is Mecca, and schools teach the Koran and Islamic values. This may be the future that many Germans are worried about seeing.

Interpretation needs support.

Constrained by the guilt of Nazi history, the lingering image of exclusion and the doctrine of "political correctness", most German public figures dare not publicly express their criticism of foreign ethnic groups. Therefore, criticism of Fest may not really represent public opinion, or even come from the hearts of critics themselves. Although Fest's comments are subjective and absolute, but if it can lead to a discussion about the integration of Muslim immigrants, it also plays a constructive role. The integration of Muslim migrants in German society involves how Muslim minorities live together with mainstream society in a non-Islamic country. This is not only a problem Germany concerns, but also a common challenge to be faced by many countries in Europe and the world.

This final paragraph is well-meaning but is really an editorial statement rather than based on objectively reported information.

## Tutorial outline

### Questions:

- How many sources of information are cited in the news text?
- How the structure of this text contributes to its creation of meaning?
- Does the author maintain a stance of journalistic objectivity, how?
- How the structure of this text contributes to its creation of meaning?
- What leads to the ethnic conflict in Germany?
- How the author frames the religious conflicts in Germany?
- How are Muslims portrayed in the article?

### Tips for reporting ethnicity

- Use a broad network of expert sources
- Provide background information
- Get a clear idea of what is the dominant ethnic group in the country or region and what are the other ethnic groups too.
- The voice of the ethnic minorities should be heard
- Pay attention to the portrayal of ethnic groups - avoid (influenced by) pre-defined assumptions, negative labels, stereotypes, prejudice attached to ethnic groups.
- Check every fact to the fullest extent possible
- Keep a fair and balanced presentation of ethnic groups
- Contextualize ethnic conflicts and ethnic group related events.
- Portray people as human being instead of representatives of ethnic groups
- Separate facts from opinion but treat opinion as relevant

### Recommended readings:

- Spencer, S. (2014). *Race and ethnicity: Culture, identity and representation*. Routledge.
- Ahmed, S., & Matthes, J. (2017). Media representation of Muslims and Islam from 2000 to 2015: A meta-analysis. *International Communication Gazette*, 79(3), 219-244.
- Sun, Z. P. 孙志鹏 (2019) 新型主流媒体中的少数民族形象报道框架——基于人民网少数民族报道的分析 (2008—2017) (Minority image in the framework of mainstream network media reports—Analysis of ethnic minorities based on people.com.cn reported). Retrieved from <http://media.people.com.cn/n1/2019/0109/c424554-30513313.html>





# Race

International research on racism and the media has revealed that “despite considerable variation among countries, periods and newspapers, the press continues to be part of the problem of racism, rather than its solution” (Van Dijk 2004, p.17). The term racism refers to a belief that different races possess distinct characteristics, abilities, or qualities, especially to distinguish them as inferior or superior to one another. In the context of communication studies research, the term is often used to indicate a strong, dominant white racial frame, a racist standpoint that marginalises other groups while reinforcing whiteness as superior. According to Goffman (1963), there are three broad types of stigma in our societies: physical deformities; blemishes of individual character and, the tribal stigma of race, nation and religion. In particular, xenophobic and racist stigma appear to spread and intensify whenever the danger of disease transmission is imminent. From the H1N1 influenza in 2009 and the spread of Ebola in 2014 to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, spread of viral infections has been accompanied not only by the panic of diseases, but also by racism. At the time of the pandemic, stigma and discrimination were closely connected. Stigmatization of the disease is a group response to stress in terms of social psychology of fear and self-protection (Ji, 2020). For example, one French newspaper’s (*Le Courier Picard*) ran a front page with the headline “Yellow Alert” appearing next to an image of a Chinese woman wearing a face mask. Another headline in the same paper read “New Yellow Peril”, in reference to an article about the Wuhan COVID-19 outbreak. The term ‘yellow peril’ or ‘yellow fear’ became a popular racist color-metaphor, used to represent Chinese people as an existential danger to the Western world in connection to the pandemic. “To invoke the term in a story about death and illness in China, seems thoughtless at best and blatantly racist at worst,” argued CNN journalist Jessie Yeung.<sup>3</sup> Yeung’s claim is supported by the UN’s *Dimensions of Racism* handbook, which stresses the relationship between “racism and disease” (Parodi, 2020).<sup>4</sup> According to the Handbook, race, class and gender all can have a decisive impact on a person’s health and well-being, as these factors affect perceptions of disease, treatment-seeking behaviours and access to help.

<sup>3</sup> Jessie Yeung, “As Coronavirus Spreads, Fear is Fueling Racism and Xenophobia”, CNN: <https://edition.cnn.com/2020/01/31/asia/wuhan-coronavirus-racism-fear-intl-hnk/index.html>; Jan. 31, 2020.

<sup>4</sup> Cristina Torres Parodi, “Dimensions of Racism: Proceedings of a Workshop to commemorate the end of the United Nations Third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination”, UN website: <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/556287?ln=en> Mar. 6, 2020.

There are number of ways racist ideologies enter the news-making process: through the absence of newsroom diversity; application of news values; use of official sources; hierarchisation of topics; individual journalist's racial biases, news style and rhetoric. The different ways in which the press contributes to the reproduction of racism in society demonstrate that this is a complex process that characterizes both the production context (hiring, promotion, beats, news gathering, source selection, writing, and so on) as well as journalistic discourse itself.

Scholars have documented racial minorities, if at all represented, are portrayed in stereotypical ways in a narrow range of peripheral roles: "while not all of these stereotypes are negative, even seemingly benign ones could activate paternalistic, benevolent prejudicial feelings that are just as problematic" (Ramasubramanian and Oliver 2007, p.624). To analyse how these stereotypes get naturalized and popularized through journalism practice, the 'racial formation' framework, which refers to 'the socio-historical process by which racial categories are created, inhabited, transformed, and destroyed', is useful because it highlights the ways racial categories mobilize specific meanings and contribute to the reinforcement of stereotypes and prejudices (Omi and Winant, 1994, p. 55).

As a source of cultural production and information, news media provide interpretative frames for understanding people, issues and events, offering answers to the questions how and why the world works as it does. While the perpetuation of racist ideologies is rarely a conscious editorial decision, it is often incorporated into day-to-day journalistic routines as conceptions, assumptions and definitions of the normal. Increasingly, blatant forms of racist discourse are disappearing from the media. But race-based discrimination is still present and its depiction as a social phenomenon requires journalism with a strong sense of social responsibility, interpretative forms of reporting that situate particular event within social structures that enable it.



### Case study: Structuring a story to build a powerful narrative

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2020/jun/06/george-floyd-plight-reflected-burden-of-being-black-america>

The death of George Floyd has become a symbol of the racial discrimination in the United States. The article below engages with the issue by using multiply journalistic devices: building up a narrative based on individual and group struggle, bringing argument based on evidence, discussing structural racism and the ways to overcome it.

A man holds a burnt upside down US flag while facing police as protesters gather in downtown Los Angeles on 27 May.

Photograph:  
Agustin Paullier/AFP/Getty Images

*Guardian, UK*

June 6, 2020

## In life and death, George Floyd's plight reflected the burden of being black in America

The opening sentence clearly indicates narrative thread that follows, Floyd's death as a symbol of systematic racism in the States.

With a knee to his neck and head against the concrete, George Floyd became the face of one of the largest [uprisings in modern American history](#). His final moments at the hands of four Minneapolis police officers was replayed on social media and television all across a country that was already in crisis.



America is in an economic free fall as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. And it is black Americans who have been disproportionately impacted by mounting deaths and crushing job losses, making up a disproportionate number of the 42 million people [left unemployed](#).

Reinforcing the main frame before moving to description of current trends.

Black Americans, already subjected to generations of systemic racism, were now more likely to die from the coronavirus and also faced losing their jobs in higher numbers as a result of record unemployment.

George Floyd, then, was no exception.

State medical examiners confirmed this week that Floyd had contracted the coronavirus by late-April. He had also lost his job. [But that didn't cause his death](#).

Instead, Floyd died from what historian Carol Anderson called “the longest ongoing saga in American history”.

“We saw racial terror: a cop with a knee in [Floyd's] neck, a soulless look and a casual disregard for life,” she said. “That angst and hurt came before we ever knew that [Floyd] had the virus, because it resonated with us as people.”

[At his memorial service](#) on Thursday, family attorney Ben Crump said that Floyd had not died from coronavirus but that the “pandemic of racism” had taken his life.

While his death has come to symbolize the plight of black people navigating the criminal justice system, for many, Floyd's life and the timing of his killing underscores the burden of being black in America, and created the spark that lit this week's uprising.

“It was bound to happen here in Minneapolis and all across the country,” said Dara Beevas, a restaurateur and activist who has [lived in the city](#) for more than 15 years. She said that black communities are rendered nearly invisible, silencing inequality.

“When you give people so many signals that their history, culture and humanity does not matter, you will see a rejection, a revolt,” Beevas said.

Floyd's life is a familiar story of falling or being knocked down and picking yourself back up as a black man in America. Although imperfect, he was a man described as [hard-working by his peers](#) in Minneapolis and a [community staple](#) and mentor, in his native Houston.

He left Texas for Minnesota in 2014, in search of better opportunities after being released from prison for aggravated robbery. The Great Migration of much of the 20th century saw millions of African Americans [make that same journey](#), mostly attempting to escape racism in the south and in search of upward mobility in the north.

Borrowing literary tool of repetition in close proximity of each other, brings coherence to the narrative while building up an expectation that the statement will be followed by powerful evidence.

This text is written following the memorial service. Journalist had two options: to base report on what happened there by citing people who talked or two use these speeches and build its own narrative about a man who symbolizes racism in the country and effects of long lasting structural discrimination and marginalisation.

Effective use of data here and in the rest of the text support the main argument without disrupting the main narrative.

Instead racism violently confronted Floyd in Minnesota, a state in which black residents are more than [13 times more likely to be killed by police](#).

The state's African American residents are only 6.8% of the population, concentrated primarily in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St Paul. Like much of black America in densely populated cities, that is also where coronavirus cases have been highest. Black Minnesotans are 16% of the state's nearly 25,000 confirmed cases and deaths.

The cardiovascular disease and hypertension cited in Floyd's official autopsy are also underlying risk factors that make black Americans more susceptible to contracting and dying from the virus. Other risks factors include obesity and diabetes.

For Beevas, the multiple iniquities that face black Americans fell on deaf ears until they were amplified by screams of "I can't breathe" as Floyd lay dying on a Minneapolis street.

"By standing up for [Floyd], an overlooked, yet over-policed community of people accustomed to not being seen stood up for themselves and that message spread all over," she said.

A [report](#) from the Economic Policy Institute unpacks how inequities exacerbated the impact of the coronavirus crisis on black communities.

Black people are twice as likely to [lack health insurance and to live in medically underserved communities](#). They also [represent a majority of workers in most essential industries](#), often putting them at the frontlines of the pandemic.

Elise Gould, lead researcher and senior economist, said "when black workers lose their jobs, a history of discrimination and inequality" can make rebounding harder.

"[Black Americans already] experienced a much higher unemployment rate, larger wage gaps, have lower median household incomes and higher poverty rates, all things that keep them from being able to weather the storm of job loss."

When the restaurant where he worked shut down due to Minnesota's stay-at-home order, Floyd became one of the 44% of Africans Americans to lose their jobs.

Black Americans like him have felt the brunt of the economic spiral. The Federal Reserve found that of households making less than \$40,000 a year, nearly 40% of those employed in February [lost their jobs in March](#) or at the beginning of April.

That's [nearly half of all black households](#).

After presenting a case about the consequences of structural discrimination, the author moves to explaining why that is the case

Author and academic Carole Anderson contends that “usually, multiple national crises happening at once sparks unrest.” While headlines may describe these as unprecedented times, especially for African Americans, this is nothing new.

“Abolitionists were essential to getting America into a Civil War,” Anderson noted. “They refused to let the US slide by pretending that slavery wasn’t a horrific practice.”

Still, she acknowledges there’s a different energy this time, and not just because Floyd’s “is one of the most egregious modern examples of the contradiction between what [the US] says it stands for versus what it really is”.

Anderson places the difference squarely on who is leading a “preventable, yet unprecedented crisis”: [Donald Trump](#).

She fought back tears as she recalled watching Floyd’s last moments, weeping in horror as she heard a man call out for his mother who had died two years earlier. For her, it was the cry of a man who had given up.

For others, it was a call to action.

Dionne Smith-Downs traveled from California to attend one of Minneapolis’ many protests since Floyd’s death. She [lost her own son](#) to police violence in 2010, so when Floyd “called out for the mothers,” she felt it personally.

“When he said ‘Mama’, I knew I had to come,” she [told Breakthrough News](#). “I heard him and that is why I’m here.”

All four police officers involved in his arrest have been fired. Derek Chauvin, the 19-year veteran seen kneeling on Floyd’s neck, [has been charged with second degree murder](#) and manslaughter while the other three officers were charged as witnesses.

American history is littered with promises of atonement and reform, but they’ve been mostly left unfulfilled, even after the police killings that gave rise to the Black Lives Matter movement.

“Protests are bigger this time because there’s finally more of an understanding that the onus isn’t on black people to resolve this,” Beevas said. “We’re no longer questioning the existence of oppression. Our communities have been saying ‘I cannot breathe’ for centuries.

“It’s just a matter of America listening now,” she said. Floyd’s life and death resonated because, for many, the story of struggle, triumph, and perseverance only to fall victim to an unequal system is that of black history in America.

Effective use of sources, an citing an academic who explains how multiple crisis relate to the man who let them explode.

Bringing emotions to the report by showing (She fought back tears) instead of telling (She is emotional...).

The article is structured carefully: introduces the event, describes protagonists, describes the problem, explain it causes and now moves to addressing the question what is done and could be done to prevent similar happenings in the future.

Georgia congressman John Lewis, one of the original Freedom Riders who was notoriously beaten by mobs during the civil rights movement, remarked on the NBC's Today Show Thursday that while he "been down this road before", this time "gives [him] hope as a nation, and as a people."

"We're going to get there. We're going to make it," he said, signaling to a new generation of leaders combating a generational struggle. "We're going to survive and there will be no turning back."

## Tutorial outline

Ask students to identify facts and opinions in this article. Open a discussion based on initial set of questions such as:

- What is the article's main argument and how it develops?
- What distinction is made if any between the facts and views?
- How is the article structured and why?
- Who are the sources of information and how each contributes to the story narrative?
- What literary tools journalist applies?
- What is the place of adjectives in this story?

Discuss the political moment within which the racial issue is brought to the forefront of politics. What role Trump's presidency has played in the racial tensions in The US and what is the role of journalism in political environment fuelled by racial tensions.

## Recommended readings:

- Downing, J. D., & Husband, C. (2005). *Representing race: Racisms, ethnicity and the media*. Sage.
- Van Dijk, T. A. (2012). The role of the press in the reproduction of racism. In *Migrations: interdisciplinary perspectives* (pp. 15-29). Springer, Vienna.



# Geography

International news shape our understanding of what is happening in other regions or countries, how the international situation is changing and moving forward. A number of international news types, both positive (scientific discoveries and successful vaccines produced) and negative (disasters and terrorism), flow through territorial boundaries. News agencies select which foreign news to cover, shaping domestic audiences' understanding of different regions or countries (Wanta, Golan & Lee, 2004).

In news coverage of public health events, a common type of “stigmatisation” is the naming of a disease after a particular location, leading to discrimination against the national, regional and indigenous communities that live there. Stigma associated with disease names, such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and the Spanish flu, deepens with each recurrence of the disease in the news stories. After reviewing the impact of this type of stigma, the World Health Organization's *Best Practices for Naming New Human Infectious Diseases* called on scientists, health authorities, and media worldwide to avoid adversely affecting countries, regions and the individuals that inhabit them by naming diseases after geographic locations. It is important to get things right from the start, because once a disease name is widely known to the public, it is difficult to change it. However, even with the scientific norms and regulations, the media can misrepresent them in their news reporting. For example, *The Economist* published an article, titled “Will Wuhan Virus Become a Pandemic?”.<sup>5</sup> The article not only included the words “Made in China” in red letters above the headline, but also used a cartoon of the Earth covered with a red Chinese-flag mask. More broadly, media around the world used the term “Wuhan pneumonia” to refer to the novel coronavirus for the sake of convenience, before the World Health Organization announced the official name for it “COVID-19” on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2020. The continued use of terms, such as “Wuhan pneumonia” and “Wuhan virus”, after 11<sup>th</sup> February represent deliberate politicizing of the disease, which leads to discrimination based on individuals' race and place of origin. The marriage of a place name with a disease is considered by some scholars as the most direct and easy approach of stigmatizing the “other” (Ji, 2020).

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.economist.com/leaders/2020/01/30/will-the-wuhan-virus-become-a-pandemic>

As the gatekeeper, media are responsible for the selection and coverage of current events to the public and how these are framed (McCombs and Show, 1976). Questions concerning the ability of different news agencies to decide on whether or not to deliver particular international news stories and how to cover them based on their geographical location are not new (Schramm, 1959). Media studies have long highlighted the existence of imbalances of news coverage between the global North and the global South or between centre and periphery, such as the unequal flow of politics, culture, news and information, mainly from the global North (with the U.S. and Europe as its core) that are mainstreamed to the South and periphery (Thussu, 2006). They have the sources, connections and supporters with the investments and partnerships that allow them to spread a biased, one-way flow of news and information.

The global information media system favoured dominant perspectives on the world, which benefited wealthy countries and their interests to the detriment of the Global South/developing countries/majority world. International news agencies and television networks have global reach, but have been criticized for perpetuating the centrality of the nation-state (Hafez, 2011) and a specifically Western view of the world (Cottle & Rai 2008). Grasland, et.al (2016) proposed the notion of geographical agenda-setting which refers to media coverage of national states and regional areas is structured to gain visibility. News framing of public affairs in foreign countries can shape the attitudes of the domestic public. Journalists' characterization of an issue in a national state or regional area shapes its reality for audience with the creation of acceptable range of meaning on a defined problem, casual interpretation, moral evaluation and treatment suggestion (Entman, 1993).



### Case study: Using other media's stories

<https://cn.nytimes.com/china/20200313/china-coronavirus-cost/>

This is a news story on Covid-19. It claims that China may win the battle against it but at a very painful cost. It is a collection of stories that support support a specific viewpoint. The journalist is well-versed in the use of rhetorical questions to guide, weaken and shake the established fact. The logic of the narrative aims to attract the readers.

Shutterstock / CGN089

cn.NYTimes.com, New York, US  
13 March, 2020

## China May Be Beating the Coronavirus, at a very Painful Cost

BEIJING - As the new coronavirus races around the world, tanking markets, cutting off global travel and suspending school for hundreds of millions of children, governments are desperate for ways to contain it.

China, the place where it first appeared, says it has the answers.

It is double standard, the title of the article uses the word "maybe", which shows reluctance to recognize the effectiveness of China's epidemic prevention and control.

The paragraph talks about covid-19 situation of the world but than names only China.

Better to say students.

Lack of accuracy. China is where the virus breaks out, not where it first appeared. Using the epidemic to stigmatize China.

<p>Who are the some? Why surprise?</p> <p>Shows suspects of fact.</p>	<p>  </p>	<p>To the surprise of some, the country that concealed and mismanaged the initial outbreak appears to be bringing it under control, at least by its own official figures. The number of new cases reported has fallen dramatically in recent days even as infections are surging in other countries. The World Health Organization has praised Beijing's response.</p>
<p>Specific dates needed.</p> <p>Be specific how many weeks?</p>	<p>  </p>	<p>Officials reported only 99 new cases on Saturday, down from around 2,000 a day just weeks ago, and for the second day in a row, none were detected in Hubei Province outside of its capital, Wuhan, the center of the outbreak.</p>
<p>Inaccuracy. The lockdown was only on Wuhan not the whole Hubei province, nearly 10 million people.</p> <p>Propaganda is used primarily to influence an audience, which may not be objective and may be presenting facts selectively to encourage a particular synthesis or perception</p>	<p>  </p>	<p>China says the trend proves that its containment measures — which include a lockdown on nearly 60 million people in Hubei and strict quarantine and travel restrictions for hundreds of millions of citizens and foreigners — are working. And it has begun trying to promote its efforts as successful in propaganda at home and abroad.</p>
<p>Vague. Who concerns? Source of information needed.</p>	<p>  </p>	<p>The rest of the world, much of it fearfully confronting its first cases, has taken note. But there is also concern that China's numbers may be flawed and incomplete. The real test will be whether the virus flares again when children return to classrooms and workers to factories, and commuters start taking buses and subways.</p>
<p>The claim needs support. The use of 'real test' acts as a denial of the initial difficulties and the successes of the fight against the epidemic.</p> <p>Adjective with negative connotation. Implied disapproval of the strategy.</p>	<p>  </p>	<p>China's blunt force strategy poses deeper questions for other countries. Its campaign has come at cost to people's livelihoods and personal liberties. Even countries that could copy China still have to ask whether the cure is worse than the disease.</p>
<p>Mixing facts and views</p> <p>Subsequent doubts are induced to deny the fact of existence as well as the former 'amazing job' China did.</p>	<p>  </p>	<p>"I think they did an amazing job of knocking the virus down," said Michael T. Osterholm, director of the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy at the University of Minnesota. "But I don't know if it's sustainable. What have the Chinese really accomplished? Have they really contained the virus? Or have they just suppressed it?"</p>
<p>Wrong data. By March 12, diagnosed cases of COVID-19 in the U.S. exceeded a thousand. <a href="https://wapo.st/3KWqgXJ">https://wapo.st/3KWqgXJ</a></p>	<p>  </p>	<p>Elsewhere, Italy, South Korea and Iran are struggling to control the spread of the virus. In the United States, where there are now more than 400 confirmed cases, the government has been criticized for fumbling its rollout of test kits and allowing the virus to spread in vulnerable communities like a nursing home in Seattle. The outbreak now threatens global growth and is intensifying a backlash against immigration and globalization.</p>
<p>Fact? Evidence? Dramatical description with exaggeration. The use of 'was upended' contains the meaning of coercion.</p> <p>Says who? Evidence? Source of information? If it is a journalist than data needed to support the claim, if otherwise source of information needed.</p>	<p>  </p>	<p>Countries studying China's approach would need to consider how it was upended nearly every corner of Chinese society.</p>
<p>Generalization needs precision. Patients from where? Struggling to find timely care at what time?</p>	<p>  </p>	<p>The economy has ground to a near standstill, and many small businesses say they may soon run out of cash. Patients with critical illnesses are struggling to find timely care, and some have died. Hundreds of millions of people have been placed in some form of isolation. As of Friday, about 827,000 people remained under quarantine in Beijing, according to the state-run China Daily newspaper.</p>
<p>Specific date needed</p>	<p>  </p>	

"I have been worried about all the focus on just controlling the virus," said Dr. Jennifer Nuzzo, a senior scholar at the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security. She recommended a more measured response, such as that taken by the governments in Hong Kong and Singapore. Officials there enacted targeted quarantines but did not shut down workplaces altogether, allowing their respective economies to continue operating while so far successfully containing the virus.

"We have to take a broad view of the impact on society," Dr. Nuzzo said, "and do a better accounting for the social tolls of these measures that is not just focused on the numbers."

And for other countries?  
The numbers are not the  
key, human life behind the  
numbers are key.

For China, the numbers are key.

The number of cases reported on Saturday was a substantial decline from two and a half weeks ago, when China was recording around 2,000 new infections and as many as 100 deaths a day. Twenty-eight new deaths were reported on Saturday, all in Hubei.

Specific date needed

By comparison, Italy reported 49 deaths from the virus on Friday.

Outside of Wuhan, the spread has effectively stopped, according to the official figures. All but one of the 99 new cases reported on Saturday were in Wuhan or were people who had traveled to China from abroad.

The World Health Organization says China's containment measures may have saved hundreds of thousands of people from infection. Its efforts show that uncontrolled spread of the virus "is not a one-way street," Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the group's director general, said on Thursday.

"This epidemic can be pushed back," Dr. Tedros said, "but only with a collective, coordinated and comprehensive approach that engages the entire machinery of government."

Name needed.

W.H.O. experts sent to China have also highlighted clinics that could diagnose hundreds of cases a day with CT scans and laboratory tests, and the mass isolation centers in stadiums in Wuhan that separated people who had mild infections from their families.

"There's no question that China's bold approach to the rapid spread of this new respiratory pathogen has changed the course of what was a rapidly escalating and continues to be a deadly epidemic," Dr. Bruce Aylward, the leader of the W.H.O. team that visited China, told reporters in Beijing late last month.

The numbers suggest that aggressive quarantine measures, when fully enforced, could choke the spread of the virus, said Dr. William Schaffner, an infectious disease specialist at Vanderbilt University.



“This is the largest public health experiment in the history of humankind,” Dr. Schaffner said. “They can’t turn it off, but they did turn it down. And it did provide the rest of the world with some extra time.”

Source of information needed

Still, the total number of infections in China, at more than 80,000, is staggering.

Explain what are the reasons.

And there are reasons to doubt the official figures.

In the early days of the outbreak, a shortage of test kits and hospital beds meant that many were not able to get tested. Many mild infections are likely going undetected. The government has changed how it counts cases several times in recent weeks, prompting large fluctuations in the reported figures, though experts say such adjustments are not unusual.

Experts’ name, field and affiliation needed

Name of the medical experts and their affiliation needed or add ‘prefer not be named’

Medical experts say that there have been few signs that the government has aggressively tested for the coronavirus outside of medical facilities in Hubei.

Experts’ name, field and affiliation needed

Until they broaden the scope of testing, experts say, it will be impossible to determine the true extent of the epidemic because those who have mild infections might not see a doctor.

“At the moment we are focused on the tip of the iceberg,” said David Hui, the director of the Stanley Ho Center for Emerging Infectious Diseases at the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Political colour and orientation are too strong. Mixing facts and views. Evidence needed. Many of whom?

The ruling Communist Party hails the slowdown of the outbreak as a sign of the superiority of its authoritarian, top-down political system that gives officials nearly unchecked power. But its heavy-handed measures are testing the patience of its citizens, many of whom think such a clampdown could have been avoided if officials had not first hid the scale of the outbreak and silenced whistle-blowers.

Dramatic and inflammatory expression

The statement should have support with facts and figures.

The impact of the restrictions has been felt most acutely in Hubei, where 56 million people have been effectively penned in since January. For more than five weeks, the typically bustling hub of universities, commerce and transportation has been transformed into a collection of ghost towns as the virus has ravaged communities, ensnared entire families and infected thousands of medical workers.

China’s experience combating the virus has also highlighted the risk of family transmission if hospitals run out of beds and testing kits, as they did in Wuhan, where for weeks, many who were sick were sent home and infected their relatives.

Roadblocks have sealed off cities, public transportation has been shut down and private cars have been mostly banned from the roads. In Wuhan, restrictions on individual movement have been stepped up in recent weeks, with residents now mostly barred from leaving their homes.

Speculation?  
Clarification needed

Among residents in Hubei, there are signs that anger and frustration are mounting. Chinese social media sites are flooded with posts from residents saying they have lost their jobs because of the extended lockdown, making it difficult to make payments on mortgages and loans. Others have described food shortages in their communities.

One side of the post on social media.

Specific dates

Which residential community?

On Thursday, in a rare public rebuke of the government, disgruntled people in a residential community in Wuhan heckled high-level officials as they walked through the neighborhood on an inspection.

“Fake! Everything is fake!” shouted one resident at the delegation, which included Sun Chunlan, a vice premier leading the central government’s response to the outbreak.

More details needed

The state-run People’s Daily newspaper later said that the accusations were aimed at local neighborhood officials who had “faked” delivery of vegetables and meat to residents. Ms. Sun ordered an immediate investigation into the issue.

Specific date needed

Wang Zhonglin, the party secretary of Wuhan, announced plans on Friday to teach the city’s residents to be grateful to the party, a move that was quickly met with derision and anger on Chinese social media.

The ‘label’ feminist works well in this story. If a label is going to be attached as part of the introduction, the journalist should make effort to indicate what role it played here. Otherwise, it comes across as just a racy detail that adds nothing to the reader’s understanding of the story.

Relationships are also fraying as families are forced to live for extended periods in confined spaces. Guo Jing, a feminist in Wuhan, said she and other volunteers had fielded a number of requests for help from residents reporting physical abuse by their family members at home.

“Under these circumstances, it’s really difficult for them to find help during the epidemic,” said Ms. Guo. “It’s so difficult to leave the house.”

Fang Fang, a writer who has been keeping a widely read — and often-censored — online journal of life in Wuhan, said that the lockdown was exacting a psychological toll on residents.

“Ordinary people have no source of income and lack a sense of certainty even about when they’ll be able to go out,” she wrote in a recent entry. “When you can’t feel the ground or you lose control over a situation, it’s easy to lose the most basic sense of security.”

Outside of Hubei, China wants to fire up its economy, but local officials are also under immense pressure to take no risks in order to reduce the number of infections. Even as provinces have lowered their alert levels for the virus, many companies are choosing to err on the side of caution. Some have even faked electricity consumption rates in order to hit stringent back-to-work targets, according to a recent report by Caixin, an influential Chinese magazine.

Name some experts.

Some experts are increasingly wondering if China's lockdown will become pointless the more widespread the virus becomes. Given the global spread of the virus and the difficulty of spotting mild cases, they say, it is unlikely that it will ever be completely eliminated — even in China.

"I do think the declining case numbers likely mean that all these incredible measures that have been taken are probably having an effect," said Marc Lipsitch, an epidemiologist at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. "But I don't think zero is zero."

## Tutorial outline

### Questions:

- How accurate are data used in the article?
- Does the author have a clear stand point? If yes, what is it and how did the author develop the argument?
- What aspects of COVID-19 crisis are outlined in the article and how they connect to each other?
- What is the logical flow of this report?
- How are voices from Wuhan used in this news article?
- How is China and their management of COVID-19 framed in the news article?

### Tips for reporting geography

- Use a broad network of expert sources
- Provide background information
- Put facts into context
- Check every fact to the fullest extent possible
- Interview people with local knowledge
- Avoid negative labels attached to certain countries or regions
- Separate facts from opinion but treat opinion as relevant
- Avoid (influenced by) pre-defined assumptions, stereotypes, prejudice of a certain country or region.
- Avoid geographic or historical inaccuracy in language.

## Recommended readings:

- Barnett, C. (2003). *Culture and democracy: Media, space and representation*. Edinburgh University Press.
- Wanta, W., Golan, G., & Lee, C. (2004). Agenda setting and international news: Media influence on public perceptions of foreign nations. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 81(2), 364-377.
- Thussu, D. K. (Ed.). (2006). *Media on the move: Global flow and contra-flow*. Routledge.

# Gender

News media play a powerful role in shaping, producing and changing our notions about gender. Dissemination of gender stereotypes, which limit audiences' perception of gender-specific behaviour, reinforces patterns of gender inequality. McQuail (2005) points out that 'the news content is deeply and persistently gendered in the way they have been encoded' (p.122). The specific details of how news media contribute to the construction of gender has been well-elaborated through social cognitive theory (Bandura 2003). An extensive amount of research has indicated that women and men are represented differently in news media. News media tend to represent women through the frames of motherhood, marriage and domesticity while men are frequently defined through occupational status or as central figures with masculine traits (Gauntlett, 2008, Furnham, Mak, & Tanidjojo, 2000). Females are underrepresented with a faulty implication that males represent the social norm, while females are insignificant and invisible role in society. For example, Global Media Monitoring Project found that only 24% of news stories focused on women, while 76% were about men (Macharia, 2020). According to this research, women's voices are most likely to be heard in health or science-related news (35%) but are least used in news stories regarding politics or the government (16%). When women are used as a news source, they are more likely to provide individual experiences (38%) rather than experts on the subject (19%) (Geertsema-Sligh, 2019). Men are often depicted as active, tough, unemotional, aggressive and competitive persons, while women are portrayed as passive, emotional, sensitive, submissive and incompetent beings (e.g., Furnham, Mak, & Tanidjojo, 2000).

The framing of reporting on gender issues in China is relatively homogeneous, with insufficient coverage of issues women are facing, such as: patriarchy in the family, school and workplace; women's economic empowerment; women's employment and work-place discrimination; sexual harassment; women's rights movement; violence against women; and women's personal safety in the public space. In recent years, a number of high-profile "reversal dramas" appeared in news coverage of gender issues, mostly as a result of journalists jumping to conclusions based on one-side interviews, fragmented interpretations and incomplete information chains. In these stories, structural gender issues, gender relations and gender power imbalances have not been clearly explained in a comprehensive and thorough manner, neither through the use of language nor the standpoint. Gender and class issues have become closely intertwined, with gender not only becoming a rhetorical expression of class prejudice. However, traditional gender issues, such as marriage, are also becoming more deeply allied with poverty and class entrenchment, thereby creating new forms of intersectional oppression.



### Case study: Taking a stand on discrimination

[http://www.xinhuanet.com/fortune/2019-07/04/c\\_1124707340.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/fortune/2019-07/04/c_1124707340.htm)

Fertility status is considered as a factor in job search and employment for women but not for men. This news story starts with this social problem for rising awareness and takes a stand on discrimination. Policy interpretation helps readers to improve their understanding of the problem, but the logic and the flow of the relevant policies are not easy to follow which weakens the readability of the news.

Shutterstock / fizkes

*Xinhua Net*, China

July 4, 20129

## Women Are Always Asked If She Has A Baby in Job Search and Employment.

### When Will the Childbearing Discrimination Stop?

The reporter takes a clear stand on discrimination.

Voice of voiceless is attractive and impressive and it is effective to raise readers' empathy.

Which provincial hospital of traditional Chinese medicine in western China? Needs to be clear.

Full story should be covered - did Zhang Chun accept the discriminatory job offer? Accept for what reason? Reject for what reason? Did she struggle for whether accepting/rejecting it?

This statement needs precision. Generalization of experiences and lack of accuracy or support of evidence.

Good inclusion of the relative legal contexts but further explanations needed

"We can hire you, but having to carry machines and make films to do this job, you can't have children for five years." Zhang Chun, a newly graduated graduate student in journalism, was asked in the interview for a job in the propaganda department of a provincial hospital of traditional Chinese medicine in western China.

"This is the employment discrimination and childbearing discrimination!" Zhang Chun said angrily. The employers had also made it clear that they wanted to recruit men when recruiting. "While no one signed up at the time, they had to accept me."

During the graduation season, many fresh graduates have similar experiences with Zhang Chun. Recently, Beijing Municipal Bureau of human resources and social security issued "Notice on Further Strengthening the Management of Recruitment Activities to Promote Women's Employment", pointing to various phenomena in employment discrimination. In the process of drawing up recruitment plans, issuing recruitment information, and recruiting personnel, the notice explicitly requires employers and human resources service organizations not to give priority to gender and not to restrict fertility as a condition for employment.

On February 21 this year, the Department of human resources and social security and other nine departments issued "Notice on Further Regulating Recruitment Practices to Promote Women's Employment" (hereinafter referred to as the Notice), requiring all units not to limit gender (except in the case of taboo labor scope stipulated by the state, etc.) or gender priority in the recruitment process, not to restrict women's job search and employment

on the grounds of gender, to refuse to employ women, and not to inquire about women's marriage and childbearing. Pregnancy tests shall not be used as entry physical examination items, restrictions on childbearing shall not be used as conditions for employment, and employment standards for women shall not be raised in a differential manner.

The use of inverted sentence use does not fit Chinese reading habit and is inconvenient for visual and logical acceptance. The Chinese reading habit is to see the person speaking first, then read what is said. Liu Xiaonan should be pointed out before citation of her speech.

“Although the existing laws and regulations of our country explicitly prohibit gender discrimination in employment, there is still a lack of definition of the concept of gender discrimination in employment and the listing of specific discrimination behaviors.” According to Liu Xiaonan, a professor at the Institute for Human Rights of China University of Political Science and Law, the above notice further clarifies the behavior of gender discrimination in employment and further clarifies the criteria for judging gender discrimination in employment by enumerating “Six Restrictions.” In particular, in view of the common problems in reality, it is clearly stipulated that “women may not be asked about marriage and childbearing” and that pregnancy testing shall not be regarded as an entry physical examination item “,further clearly interpreted the existing law, which will help to alleviate the current employment discrimination based on marriage and childbearing.

“Almost all female students are asked questions about marriage and childbearing.”

“Are you married? Do you have a boyfriend? Are you going to have children in the near future? “

The use of Yu Yu case works well to expand the case of Zhang Chen (mentioned in the first paragraph) - the issue not only occurs in job hunting but also appears after nine years of working.

“When I changed jobs in 2018, I interviewed five units and were asked these questions every time. Three units said they would refuse me if I had children.” Yu Yu has been working in the workplace for nine years, and she is no stranger to this experience. She is embarrassed and helpless for she is 30 years old, and has not yet married or had children.

Yu Yu admitted that when she encountered these problems in the interview, she would feel that more conditions had been attached to the competition for job search. “Some girls meet the requirements in all aspects of the interview, but the company's personnel finally replied that it was inappropriate after comprehensive consideration and risk assessment, and most of the problems appear in the situation of marriage and childbearing.”

Specific date needed.

The example of the university illustrates the prevalence of the problem and corroborates what Yu Yu talked about. The case comes with a clear result.

Women who are already in the workforce also suffer from fertility problems. Recently, Hebei Institute Of Communications's internal formulation of “Do a Dood Job in Family Planning Management Regulations” aroused widespread concern. The document mentioned that the pregnant period of female employees must be “after reaching the prescribed length of service, according to the individual application, according to the proportion of one or two births, signed by the party general branch secretary (the person in charge of the department), and submitted to the school family planning office for examination and filing.” For the unreported pregnant female workers, “Carrying out the

school wide circular criticism, withholding 6 months of performance salary” and “Cancelling the qualification of excellent, advanced and professional titles within two years” will be imposed on them.

As soon as this regulation was introduced, it was widely questioned. Public opinion believes that the document infringes on the reproductive rights of workers, and breaks the relevant laws. On June 29th, Hebei Institute of Communication issued a “Situation Note” that the school has withdrawn the above provisions.

Married and infertile **young women** are more vulnerable to discrimination in employment.

Jin Xin, 36, said nearly half of the nearly 10 units she interviewed turned her down because she was married and infertile. “I really want to tell the interviewer in person that it is not allowed to ask that question right now. When it comes to job hunting experience, Jin Xin is aggrieved.

In 2017, According to “Zhaopin”’s survey of 130000 personnels nationwide, 22 percent of the women surveyed considered gender discrimination in employment to be serious, nearly 8 percent higher than the men surveyed. “The 2017 Survey of the Current Situation of Chinese Women in the Workplace” points out that among these groups of women who deeply feel gender discrimination in employment, the age between 25 and 35 is the golden period of individual career development and the peak period of childbearing, and the gender discrimination felt by women in this period is the most obvious in the process of employment. Married childless women face the “risk” of giving birth and are more vulnerable to gender discrimination in employment.

In fact, in addition to requiring units not to inquire about women’s marriage and childbearing in the recruitment process, the “Notice” has also clearly established and improved mechanisms for female workers to safeguard equal employment rights.

In Liu Xiaonan’s view, the promotion of equality and the elimination of discrimination have become an issue of continuous concern to the party and the government in recent years. In 2013, the “Decision of the CPC Central Committee on Deepening Reform in an All-Round Way” clearly put forward “Standardizing the Recruitment System and Eliminating All Institutional Obstacles and Discrimination in Employment that Affect Equal Employment in Urban and Rural Areas, Industry, Identity, and Gender.” At the end of 2017, the Central Economic Work Conference pointed out that “In employment, we should solve the problem of gender discrimination and identity discrimination.” In his government work report delivered at the first session of the 13th National People’s Congress in 2018, Premier Li Keqiang stressed that “It is necessary to improve the consultation mechanism on labor relations and eliminate gender and identity discrimination.”

Inaccurate use of appellation. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines the age of young people as 10-24 years. <https://www.who.int/south-eastasia/health-topics/adolescent-health>

A more specific introduction is needed for 36-year-old Jin Xin. In the expression, it is not clear whether it is in this job search or in the first time of job search. Were the ten interviews conducted in a role or over several years?

To solve the discrimination of women in employment and fertility, we need to break down many barriers.

Jin Xin, who has been engaged in the work of human resources in the enterprise, said, “the current enterprise is very realistic, hiring a man needs the labor cost and the training cost. If she is pregnant, a post will be vacant for as little as four months or more than half a year, there is no way to carry out the job, and the cost of manpower will not be reduced.

Name the HR or add ‘the person who asked not to be named’

“For the sake of job stability, we will all ask these questions.” A person who has been working in human resources for many years told the reporters of China Youth Daily and China Youth Online. The essence of social recruitment is to obtain established labor force and to avoid waste of personnel as far as possible. If a female employee is recruited to get pregnant immediately, or if she is already pregnant, the company will think more about it.

Overly rely on Liu’s perspectives. There should involve other authorities’ views and the interpretation of relevant policies. The reporter may consider bringing in the views of entrepreneurs, women’s rights organizations, and NGOs.

Liu Xiaonan believes that these can not become the reason why women’s employment is blocked, to solve the problem of reproductive discrimination in women’s employment needs to break through many barriers. She gave an example that since the implementation of the national comprehensive two-child policy, population and family planning regulations have been widely amended. The method of calculation to introduce maternity leave is adjusted to “98 days of holiday prescribed by the state + maternity incentive leave”.

Statement needs precision. How many? Which provinces?

However, population and family planning regulations in many provinces do not specify whether maternity benefits for extended maternity leave are paid by the maternity insurance fund, which to some extent adds to the burden on employers, so that employers are reluctant to recruit urban women who have not had children or may have the second children.

Liu Xiaonan believes that the “birth cost” of individual women should be compensated by “society as a whole”, including shared by the state, employers and men. “The prohibition of gender discrimination and discrimination in marriage and childbearing is a requirement of the international conventions ratified by China, is clearly stipulated in China’s domestic law, and is also a common practice in all countries in the world, which is beyond doubt.” Liu Xiaonan said.

Liu Xiaonan said that in accordance with the requirements of the “Notice” of the nine departments, complaints related to gender discrimination in employment can be accepted in a timely manner through open windows to receive visits and establish three hotlines. It should be clearly defined that human resources social security departments, trade union organizations, women’s federations and other departments can conduct joint interviews with employers suspected of gender discrimination in employment. Through perfecting the administrative management mechanism, strengthening supervision and punishment, fine the behavior of gender discrimination in employment, and bring the acceptance of administrative punishment into the record of good faith in the human resources market, and implement the punishment of breach of trust in accordance with the law. These initiatives are conducive to guiding, educating and deterring employers.



The article ends too hastily. The rights aspect should be expanded to inform female readers how to protect their rights in such situations. Specific examples of employment rights disputes case would have been be more convincing.

At the end of 2018, the Supreme people's Court added the causes of disputes over equal employment rights. The "Notice" also calls for active legal assistance, such as legal advice, for women who suffer from gender discrimination in employment, legal aid for eligible women and support for the positive rights of women whose rights and interests have been violated.

(At the request of the interviewees, Zhang Chun, Yu Yu and Jin Xinwei, are all pseudo names).

## Tutorial outline

Ask students to bring their own experiences with gender discrimination. Then divide a class into three groups: journalists, women and state officials. Discuss each point of view. Then move back to the news text and discuss following questions:

- What voices are heard in this story, does anyone dominates?
- What is the logic of narrative flow in this story?
- What role does the reference to relevant law, policies and regulations play in the article?
- How does the author take a stand on discrimination?
- How are females in this article portrayed?

Bring the IFJ Code of Ethics and any other code of ethics/mission statement that will help discussion about following tips on unbiased gender reporting.

- Avoid the portrayal and presentation of gender stereotypes
- Avoid referring to women bodies, looks, marital status, and fertility status, unless relevant for the story.
- Cover more stories on the issues confronting women, such as domestic violence and sexual harassment
- Plan more stories that challenge gender stereotypes and reflect the changing roles of both genders in contemporary times, especially the diversity of women's roles.
- Be aware of the frequency, images, and functions of both genders appearing in news articles (in particular news on politics, economy, law, sports and science), and try to be gender-balanced in content sources.
- Whenever possible, make an effort to hear and convey women's perspectives, especially those of female experts, academics, parties, and stakeholders.
- Provide background information and legal context
- Pay close attention to your choice of words and expressions.
- Avoid using overtly sexist words or images
- Avoid over-consumption of women's body image and sexuality.
- Avoid negative labels.

## Recommended readings:

- Gill, R., & Gill, R. M. (2007). Gender and the Media. Polity.
- Gauntlett, D. (2008). Media, gender and identity: An introduction. Routledge.



# Marital status

Decreasing marriage rates and a dramatic rise in the number of single people is an established social trend around the world. Nevertheless, unmarried people are still treated as ‘exceptions’ or ‘outside the norm’ by some media. Being single is still seen as deviant and problematic in China, while marriage remains the social and cultural norm. In news reports, women and men are always evaluated on their marital status. Stigma is attached to singlehood, which in itself impairs people’s human rights, social, cultural and civil life. When someone is married, their marriage status does not always get mentioned. By contrast, when an unmarried individual is the subject of a news story, their unmarried status often becomes the core element of the narrative, a ‘flaw’ that can be blamed for the individuals’ actions, even when this is irrelevant to the overall picture.

News framing is an important journalistic tool that is persistently used in gendered portrayals (Neuman et al., 1992). Framing stands behind the construction of gender creation of images of gender identities and gender roles. Highlighting an individual’s marital status is just one example, which contributes to the construction of a perceived reality. News stories that frame unmarried status as a factor of societal division exaggerate gender inequality and it is deeply rooted in the cultural conceptualization of reality (Entman, 1993). In sum, common frames concerning marital status in China’s news media reinforce the dominance of the norm and ideology of marriage and familism; conversely, other ways of thinking that deprioritise normative family structures are marginalised (Jackson, 2013).

The dominance of pro-marriage frames in Chinese media also leads to the reinforcement and naturalisation of gender-normative expectations. China’s media have double standards for their framing of single women and single men, such as the widespread use of the terms like ‘leftover women’, for the former and ‘diamond bachelor’, for the latter (Gong et al., 2017). Compared to their portrayal of single men, mainstream media in China is more likely to exaggerate single women’s ‘deficiencies’, such as implying that they are prone to conflicts with other societal groups, blaming them for threatening social stability and failing to maintain demographic sustainability (Zhang, 2018). ‘Leftover women’ are accused of overvaluing themselves, lacking female virtues and being nit-picky due to their unmarried

status. Despite the profound changes in cultural norms relating to traditional life norms, a heterosexual married couple (with children) is still deemed the correct life path for adults and the ideal pattern constituting broader society (Koropecjy-Cox & Pendell, 2007; Rothrauff & Cooney, 2008). A misogynistic agenda is also being spread and amplified by media idealisations of the traditional family model and woman's role in it (Gaetano, 2014). Media's emphasis on marital status contributes to the construction of a perception that a woman's worth is determined by marital status through the belittling of their societal contributions and stigmatisation of single women as 'irresponsible', 'incomplete', 'immature', 'isolated' and 'a person lacking something' (Zhang, 2020). Media stereotypes of single womanhood, although they may not affect single women themselves (who may even reject this type of messaging), can still have damaging effects on their parents and peers who were influenced by the message, thus reinforcing the idea that in any interpersonal communication, women's self-worth is ultimately being evaluated through to marital status.



### Case study

[https://www.thepaper.cn/newsDetail\\_forward\\_5305205](https://www.thepaper.cn/newsDetail_forward_5305205)

This news article takes a stand on unmarried women's reproductive rights from covering a court case of an unmarried woman suing a hospital for refusing her eggs. However, the misuse and the interchangeable use of single women and unmarried women complicates the subject of the story.

Shutterstock / leungchopan

Red Star News, Chengdu, China

December 21, 2019

The headline successfully conveys the core of the case without inflammatory or sensational language.

**Single woman from Beijing sues hospital for refusing to freeze her eggs, focusing on the dilemma behind the first unmarried egg freezing case.**

Clear, concise and effective introduction of what happened for what reason.

At the end of last year, Ms. Xu, who worked in Beijing, went to Beijing Maternity Hospital affiliated to Capital Medical University to "oocyte cryopreservation", but because she was single, she was unable to provide a marriage certificate, and then she sued the hospital in court.

Not long ago, Ms. Xu received a subpoena from the court. This general personality right dispute case will be held in Chaoyang District People's Court of Beijing on December 23, 2019.

Point out why this story is worth covering (news value)

Ms Xu and her lawyer, Yu Liying, said that after understanding from many sides, they found that this was the first lawsuit of single women fighting for the rights and interests of oocyte cryopreservation in China. The person in charge

Name the official or adding 'who asked not to be named'

of the propaganda department of Beijing Maternity Hospital affiliated to Capital Medical University said that the hospital is acting according to the policy at present. Ms Xu hopes to "tear a hole" through this lawsuit, so that people can pay attention to the reproductive needs of single women.

Good to move beyond the event itself by bringing on the legal contexts, but the explanation does not match the 'disputes over legal value' in the topic sentence.

It's more about the inadequate legal protection of women's reproductive rights and the rights of children born out of wedlock.

In fact, there is a deep legal value dispute behind the "oocyte cryopreservation" of single women. Supporting single women's "oocyte cryopreservation" on the one hand guarantees women's reproductive rights and the rights and interests of children born out of wedlock, on the other hand, it may challenge traditional concepts, public order and good customs and the protection of children's rights and interests.

In 2017, the National Health and Health Commission mentioned in the relevant response that the law does not deny the reproductive rights of single women, but the social security system is still not perfect. At present, the specific provisions on the reproductive rights of single women are made by amending the Population and Family Planning Law, which requires in-depth research and demonstration, and should be carefully promoted for clinical application.

Good summary of why this story is worth covering

In any case, this lawsuit, which is called the first unmarried frozen egg case in China, deserves attention.

Because of single or unmarried. These are different groups. Should be more concise.

### **Woman's oocyte cryopreservation was rejected because she is single**

### **Prosecuting hospitals for discriminating against women and infringing on general personality rights**

Unclear - brings uncertainty about connotative identity. Has a boyfriend? Never-married? Concise description of the cause of the incident has been offered.

Ms. Xu is 31 years old and single. As she grows older, She is more and more able to feel the responsibility of taking care of her parents, and begins to make plans for her major choices in life. She hopes to leave her golden age oocyte through the mature "oocyte cryopreservation" technology. This may be a "regret medicine" in the next five or six years, which can make her and her parents feel more down-to-earth.

Before going to the hospital, Ms. Xu learned from the relevant communities that "in Beijing, hospitals cannot provide artificial assisted reproductive technology to single women." However, no one around me has directly learned from the doctor, and maybe the doctor can give some suggestions. So Ms. Xu hung up the expert number of Beijing Maternity Hospital affiliated to Capital Medical University.

On November 14, 2018, Ms. Xu was informed to go to the East Campus of the hospital for treatment. After face-to-face diagnosis and a series of examinations, she registered for treatment again on December 10, and the examination results confirmed that she was in good health and met the needs of oocyte

Lack of clarity in presentation here.

Without marriage certificate doesn't equal to the singles. it should include, the never-marrieds, the divorces, the widows. The scope of the target population has a big difference. Name the doctor or adding 'who asked not to be named'.

Needs to explain why the local court reject the case on contractual disputes – to give reader a more comprehensive understanding of the story.

Inaccurate use of word here. 'Again' means the second time of change. It is the first time to change. The faulty use of 'again' has certain implication on Ms Xu's character.

Explain the reason for changing the main points of the case.

cryopreservation. However, her request for oocyte cryopreservation was rejected because she could not provide a marriage certificate. The doctor told her that there was a document requirement that single women could not be provided with egg freezing technology.

She was “annoyed” by the hospital's refusal, and then she decided to sue the hospital.

Ms. Xu's attorney, Yu Liying, told the reporter that the original lawsuit was a contract dispute, but the court did not accept it. Subsequently, the case was changed to “general personality right dispute” again, and the Chaoyang District People's Court of Beijing accepted the case in September this year.

In the complaint, the plaintiff believes that “the behavior of Beijing Maternity Hospital affiliated to Capital Medical University is discrimination against the plaintiff's female identity, which violates the relevant provisions of the Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Women's Rights and Interests on equality between men and women and the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. Infringed on the plaintiff's general personality right.”

Ms Xu's appeal is clear, and she hopes to order the hospital to stop infringing on her general personality right and provide her with oocyte cryopreservation service.

On December 23rd, the case will be held in Chaoyang District People's Court of Beijing.

### The hospital responded by following the policy

#### Relevant regulations prohibit “oocyte cryopreservation” for single women

Is the female celebrity unmarried? There's no clue on her marital status in this statement.

On August 2, 2015, CCTV news reported that “a domestic female artist claimed that she had frozen her oocytes in the United States, and called it 'the only regret medicine in the world'”. However, the former Ministry of Health (now the National Health and Health Commission) stipulates that single women cannot perform operations related to assisted reproductive technology. Some hospitals allow single women to go on oocyte cryopreservation, but they must provide ID cards, marriage certificates and birth certificates when using oocyte cryopreservation.”

What is the basis that single women can't perform assisted reproductive technology related operations?

On December 20th, Red Star News contacted the person in charge of the pro-

paganda department of Beijing Maternity Hospital affiliated to Capital Medical University. He said, “This has nothing to do with the hospital. At present, the hospital is acting according to the policy.” The person in charge said, “The hospital implemented the” Management Standards for Assisted Reproductive Technology “of the National Health and Health Commission in 2003.”

Red Star News found that as early as 2001, the former Ministry of Health issued the Administrative Measures for Human Assisted Reproductive Technology, and Article 13 of this document stated that “the implementation of human assisted reproductive technology should comply with the provisions of the Technical Specifications for Human Assisted Reproductive Technology formulated by the Ministry of Health”. However, there is a provision in the Technical Specification for Human Assisted Reproduction: It is forbidden to apply human assisted reproduction technology to couples and single women who do not conform to the national population and family planning laws and regulations. The “Code” has retained the above provisions in several subsequent revisions.

Quotation marks needed.

### Jilin introduced local laws and regulations many years ago

#### However, no single woman has successfully passed the application

Ms. Xu said that she sued the hospital not only for herself, but also hoped that the relevant parties could realize that “with the development of the times, more and more single women have the need for fertility. This is a real situation of women under the conditions of the times.”

Link the current case back to historical context provides depth to reporting

Ms. Xu told Red Star reporter that she had learned that Jilin Province had issued relevant regulations allowing single women to have children with assisted reproductive technology.

Should be journalists from Red Star News.

In this regard, Red Star News searched the data and found that Article 28 of the Regulations on Jilin Province and Family Planning stipulates that “women who have reached the legal age of marriage and decided not to marry and have no children can take legal medical assisted reproductive technology to have a child.”

Nice of fact-checking conducted by the journalist.

Says who? If it is a journalist than data needed to support the claim, if otherwise source of information needed

However, in the past 17 years, there has not been a single woman who has successfully applied for giving birth by medical means in Jilin.

The examples here are not strong enough to support ‘there is not yet a single case succeed’. Better to provide official statistics.

Ma from Jilin told Red Star News that in 2016, as a single woman, she applied to four hospitals in Jilin for artificial assisted reproductive technology, which was all rejected. Ms. Ma wrote in an account that even if she showed the relevant provisions of the Regulations on Population and Family Planning in Jilin Province to the hospital, she was still rejected by the hospital.

Name the doctor or adding 'who asked not to be named'

At that time, a doctor from the Reproductive Center of Jilin Provincial People's Hospital told Ms. Ma that the Regulations on Population and Family Planning of Jilin Province promulgated in 2002 came into effect at that time, but after the Ministry of Health promulgated Document No.176 in 2003, this regulation of the Regulations on Population and Family Planning of Jilin Province was automatically invalidated. Before 2003, there were no related cases in Jilin Province. Not only Jilin Province can't do it, but the whole country can't do it.

Clear explanation of what 176 document is.

The "Document No.176" mentioned by the doctor is "Wei Ke Xue Fa [2003] No.176-Notice of the Ministry of Health on Revising the Technical Specifications, Basic Standards and Ethical Principles Related to Human Assisted Reproductive Technology and Human Sperm Bank", which contains the Technical Specifications for Human Assisted Reproductive Technology that currently guides hospitals.

According to the "Legislation Law", if the provisions on the same matter are inconsistent between local regulations and departmental regulations, and it is uncertain how to apply them, the State Council will put forward opinions. If the State Council believes that local regulations should be applied, it should decide to apply the provisions of local regulations in that place; If it is considered that departmental rules should be applied, it shall be submitted to the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress for adjudication.

Here shows the professional attitudes as journalists – attempts on collecting and checking the corroboration of multiple testimonies, Not just listening to one side of the story

On December 20th, Red Star reporter contacted the Propaganda Department and Regulation Department of Jilin Provincial Health and Health Commission, trying to further interview this matter, but no reply was received from the staff.

### **The former National Health and Family Planning Commission has publicly responded**

#### **The law does not deny the reproductive rights of single women**

#### **But the social security system is not perfect**

Depth of reporting includes concerned parties, relevant scholars and experts, and authorities to give multiple perspectives.

Wang Xiangxian, a professor at Tianjin Normal University who has been engaged in gender sociology for a long time, said in an interview with Red Star News reporter that compared with the conditions that illegitimate births can be mainstreamed in EU countries, At present, there is basically no possibility that illegitimate births will become an important source of new population in China, but this does not mean that illegitimate births do not exist.

However, at present, the illegitimate birth in China is directly confronted with the concept of birth and the distribution of birth power formed by the combination of the Confucian trinity concept of birth and the family planning management system. Because it requires a series of preconditions, such as, fertility is a civil right, state power can not be expanded at will, intimate

Says who? If it is a journalist than Professor Wang needed to support the claim, if otherwise source of information needed. It's a layout problem. It would be better to use thorough quotation of Professor Wang's original words than reporter's summary and interpretation.

relationship and sexual orientation can be freely chosen, fertility and marriage should not be bound, fertility can be achieved by heterosexual intercourse, and it can also be achieved by artificial insemination and surrogate reproductive assistance and so on.

The Red Star journalist found on the website of the National Health and Health Commission that on December 17, 2017, the former National Health and Family Planning Commission official website responded to the "Proposal to Amend the Population and Family Planning Law of the People's Republic of China", saying that the relevant laws in China do not deny the reproductive rights of single women.

Provision of legal contexts to popularize the provisions related to reproductive rights.

Article 17 of the Population and Family Planning Law stipulates that citizens have the right to bear children. Article 51 of the Law on the Protection of Women's Rights and Interests stipulates that women have the right to have children in accordance with relevant state regulations. The Marriage Law also stipulates that children born out of wedlock enjoy the same rights as children born in wedlock, and no one may harm or discriminate against them.

Contradictory to previous descriptions on page 27 "However, in 2003, after the Ministry of Health promulgated document No. 176, that article of the Jilin Province Regulations on Population and Family Planning automatically became void."

Jilin Province was also mentioned in the response of the former State Health Planning Commission. "In practice, some regions have formulated relevant regulations in light of the actual situation. For example, the 32nd meeting of the Standing Committee of the Ninth National People's Congress of Jilin Province on September 27, 2002 passed the Regulations on Population and Family Planning of Jilin Province, which stipulates that "a woman who has reached the legal age of marriage and decided not to marry without children can have a child by legal medical assisted reproductive technology". After all previous revisions, Jilin Province has retained this provision. It is understood that since the implementation of this regulation for more than 10 years, no single woman has applied for medical means to realize fertility."

Contradictory to previous descriptions on page 27 "However, in 2003, after the Ministry of Health promulgated document No. 176, that article of the Jilin Province Regulations on Population and Family Planning automatically became void."

The response also indicated that the specific provisions on the reproductive rights of single women by amending the Population and Family Planning Law need to be further studied and demonstrated.

Says who? The Journalist or former National Health Planning Commission? If journalist, then needed to support the claim, if otherwise source of information needed. If former National Health Planning Commission, quotation marks are necessary. It's a layout problem. It would be better to use thorough quotation of Professor Wang's original words than reporter's summary and interpretation.

First of all, China's Constitution stipulates that both husband and wife have the obligation to implement family planning, but does not clearly stipulate the reproductive rights of single women. In addition, as a subordinate law, the Population and Family Planning Law should formulate relevant provisions in accordance with the Constitution and should not exceed the scope of the Constitution.

Second, the permission of single people's reproductive rights by law is inconsistent with China's traditional values, public order and good customs.



This news doesn't have an ending, the last two paragraphs are from National Health Planning Commission - unclear. The news article starts with an ongoing case, better to end it with 'Please read the follow-up story from us on dd-mm' or 'We'll keep you posted'.

The information offered in the final paragraphs is critical for grasping the overall situation. Readers might not see it, however, because many simply do not read articles all the way through. It would have been better to include some of it higher up in the story to provide greater context for understanding the whole story.

In addition, China's social security system is still not perfect, and the legal restrictions on the implementation of assisted reproductive technology for single women fully reflect the protection of children's rights and interests. In view of the fact that some single women have given birth and cannot verify the father's situation, the relevant departments should properly handle it based on the principle of safeguarding the rights and interests of the parties.

In the next step, extensive and in-depth research will be conducted with relevant departments, strengthen research and demonstration, pay close attention to the development of technologies such as "oocyte cryopreservation", actively carry out feasibility studies, prudently promote clinical application, improve relevant laws and regulations, and effectively protect the legitimate rights and interests of single women.

## Tutorial outline

### Questions:

- How are the terms 'unmarried women' and 'single women' used in this news text? Do they contain different meanings?
- How are policies explained in this news article?
- How the voices of women worked in this news articles?
- What reasons were provided for the rejection to freeze Xu's eggs?
- Does the author take a stand on discrimination against unmarried women? If yes, how does the author articulates it?
- How are unmarried women and single women in this article portrayed?

### Tips for reporting marital status

- Avoid judging women by marital status and fertility status, etc.
- Cover more stories on the issues confronting unmarried women
- Be precise when referring the unmarried women as single women, never-married women, widow, and divorced women
- Place more stories that challenge gender stereotypes and reflect the changing roles of women in contemporary times, especially the diversity of women's roles.
- Whenever possible, try to hear and convey the perspectives of women in unmarried status.
- Concern about the legal rights and interests of women who are not married and who are married.
- Provide background information and legal context
- Avoid negative labels concerning marital status, such as 'leftover women'.

### Recommended readings:

- Gong, W., Tu, C., & Jiang, L. C. (2017). Stigmatized portrayals of single women: a content analysis of news coverage on single women and single men in China. *Journal of Gender Studies*, 26(2), 197-211.
- Johnson, K. M. (2017). Single, straight, wants kids: media framing of single, heterosexual fatherhood via assisted reproduction. *Journal of Gender Studies*, 26(4), 387-401.

# Sexual orientation

Media narratives have a long history of misrepresenting the LGBT+ community as a problem for society, which directly threatens social stability, children's development and family value. Before the 21st century, gays and lesbians were mainly portrayed in crime stories or brief news segments and got ridiculed for female masculinity and male femininity (Streitmatter, 1998). Most stories utilized second-hand sources, such as psychiatric experts, military, law enforcement and government authorities, while LGBT+ individuals themselves had been rarely interviewed or heard. After 2000, increasing media coverage enhanced the visibility of the community, but news stories have continuously concentrated on crisis with lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgenders, queers, intersexual (LGBTQI). They have been systematically judged, condemned, marginalized, trivialized, excluded, stereotyped and silenced by the media. Such treatment cannot avoid instilling faulty perceptions about the LGBT+ community in society at large, increasing the risk of societal and moral judgement (Klin & Lemish, 2008). Inaccurate, negative, one-sided and incomplete narratives in the media lead to negative public opinion on and stigmatization of LGBT+ individuals, groups, and communities (Clement, et al., 2013). This type of news coverage reflects the social, cultural and political oppression of the LGBT+ community. It is important to note that negative and inaccurate portrayals of minority groups can strongly influence how members of those groups perceive themselves, as well as how they are perceived by the majority.

Issues related to the LGBT+ community have recently gained a spotlight in the Chinese mainstream media. Apart from cis-gender gay men, members of the LGBT+ community have been absent from the mainstream media. Inaccuracy, stereotypes, prejudices, offensive content, distortion and censure can all be easily found in the country's media coverage of the LGBT+ community. By contrast, any clear and concise understanding of sexual orientation and gender identity expression (SOGIE) appears to be lacking. This is evidenced by the fact that homosexuals are always framed in the contexts of 'infectious diseases', which is usually a euphemism for HIV/AIDS. Repeated emphasis on the connection between LGBT+ individuals and HIV/AIDS reinforces the stereotype that they are the source of AIDS. Such news stories continue to create and strengthen the prejudices against homosexuals, which may ultimately lead to increased discrimination.

Some news stories depart from the traditional frame of “homosexuality and HIV/AIDS” to concentrate on informing the audience about issues affecting the LGBT+ community. Still, such reports lack humanistic concern for the LGBT+ community and their civil rights. Likewise, distinct sexual bias and unbalanced reporting can be seen in these reports. Like other news reports, news stories on LGBT+ disproportionately foreground cis-gender gay men, focusing mostly on the issues such as their emotional experiences and oppressive social position, while the other community members are neglected. Mainstream news media plays a pivotal role in influencing and leading public opinions and consciousness. It is precisely the absence of the LGBT+ community from mainstream media in China that ghettoizes the topic of sexuality, meaning it cannot be freely discussed in public. Mainstream media have a professional obligation to ensure minorities and marginalized groups are able to exercise the rights they deserve by giving them a voice, on the path to a progressively democratic, liberal, pluralistic and tolerant society.



### Case study: Don't spread misinformation

<http://scitech.people.com.cn/n/2012/0812/c1007-18723953.html>

In China, the difficult situation of homosexuals, plagued by misconceptions, discrimination and traditional attitudes, should not be underestimated. This article attempts to spread knowledge about homosexuality, but the writer fails to understand even the most basic common sense related to homosexuality.

Shutterstock / Maridav

This article is not a news but are commonly posted as news in the Chinese media.

Better to have this point supported by official statistics. More accurate data should be provided.

According to the average statistics of the Institute of Science in 2014, the number of homosexuals in China could reach 70 million.

There is a strong subjective intention contained in the rhetorical question following the display of the numbers - with an indication that it would be better to cure the great number of homosexuals in China.

These questions can clearly show that the journalist of this article lacks a basic understanding of the homosexuals.

This article was published in 2012. So 'Homosexuality in Perspective' was published 30 years ago.

Sexuality Psychologists

People's Web, China

August 12, 2012

## Can science explain whether homosexuality can be cured?

There is at least one homosexuality out of every 100 people in China. If there is a way to “cure” homosexuality, would it be a good thing? Or, do homosexual patients need “treatment”? What is right? What is wrong? It should be decided by themselves, and society should give them full respect.

Twenty years ago (1979), well-known sexual psychologists William Master and the Virginia Johnsons jointly published *Homosexuality in Perspective*, declaring that they had successfully transformed homosexuality into heterosexuality.

In the study of the Masters, they selected 67 homosexuals who were dissatisfied with their sexual orientation. Among them, 12 were very convinced that they were homosexual and received “transformation therapy”; the other 55 thought their sexual orientation is temporary and received “reversal therapy.” After receiving two weeks of treatment, only 14 homosexuals thought the treatment was not effective. Five years later, another follow-up survey found that the success rate of treatment was more than 70%.

Use of an outdated study (30 years ago) hard prove any argument.

### Can homosexuality be “cured”?

Good to give two sides of the story but since the example is out of date and not a representative case, it is not convincing. Instead of just using a random and non-representative example, more research needs to be done before writing.

At the time of the publication of “Homosexuality in Perspective”, people were skeptical about the authenticity of their research cases. Lynn Strenkofsky, who was responsible for meeting patients at Master’s clinic, said she had never seen the 12 gay patients who received “conversion therapy”. According to the clinic’s senior psychotherapist Marshall and Peggy, they did not provide homosexual treatment services at all and have never heard of “transformation therapy”. When the head of the clinic, Robert Kolodny, asked to review the study case, Master rejected Robert’s request. This made Master’s wife Johnson also have to wonder if “transformation therapy” was fabricated. Finally, the publication of the book had to be cancelled.

It is not controversial issue. There is no reliable evidence that can be changed and medical institutions warn that those therapy practices are ineffective and potentially harmful (Drescher & Zucker 2006; Ford 2001)

In fact, whether homosexuality can be completely “cured” is still a controversial issue.

One view is that sexual attitudes are influenced by the environment such as childhood growth, family background, personality, temperament, peer pressure, sexual assault and sexual experience. Therefore, homosexuality can be “cured”. Many successful cases of homosexual counselling shown that sexual orientation can be changed, and some gay men are married and lead a heterosexual life after counselling. Some religious organizations also believed it can be changed, and provided conversion therapies to change their sexual orientation.

Better to use the another view to criticise the ‘one view’ in the last paragraph so that to provide readers a scientific perspective on homosexuality.

Another view is that homosexuality is genetically determined and cannot be changed. Researchers found that homosexual men’s brains are similar to heterosexual women’s brains, but they are different from heterosexual men’s brains. Studies of identical twins also found that if one twin is gay, the rate of the other twin is also gay will increase by 50%. The National Cancer Institute’s Ding Hammer discovered through genetic research that homosexuals have a gene called Xq28. This gene determines people’s sexual orientation. In addition, the National Institutes of Health researcher Odenwood also confirmed the existence of homosexual genes through the homosexual behaviour of male fruit flies.

More research needs to be done.

Needs further elaboration on why it is an ethical issue.

Maybe there is no scientific conclusion regard on whether homosexuality can be completely “cured.” However, whether homosexuality needs to be treated is an ethical issue.

The data sources for the entire article are from the US, but the readers of the article are Chinese, so more China-related data should be provided. For example, in China, on April 20, 2001, the third edition of “Classification and Diagnostic Criteria for Mental Disorders in China” was published, and homosexuality was no longer classified as a mental illness. Therefore, it should not be cured as it is not a illness.

Again, more recent or updated data and better to explain legal contexts

The medical community and the scientific community generally condemn “transformation therapy” for homosexuality, and believe that the depression they bring to patients sometimes leads to suicide or inferiority. Therefore, in 1973, the American Psychiatric Association removed homosexuality as a psychiatric classification unit from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Psychiatry (DSM). A resolution was passed in 1997, stating that doctors engaged in homosexual “transformation therapy” will be considered to lack professional ethics.

The journalist knows to provide two sides of the argument but this part miss-matching as the objections to the materials before – saying homosexuality was no longer classified as a psychological illness.

Again selected use of data is too outdated.

The entire news article is more of a listing of outdated studies, the author's own perspective is missing.

However, there are also objections to this. For example, in 1985, Robert Perloff, chairman of the American Psychological Association, said: 1) The existing research is not comprehensive and it is unreasonable to make one-sided judgments; 2) If gay people really want to change their sexual orientation, they should be respected and listened 3) This absolute claim of the American Psychological Association will hinder future research.

Indeed, what is right? Which is better? It should be decided by the homosexuals, and society should give them full respect.

## Tutorial outline

### Questions:

- How many research projects have been cited in the article? What are they?
- How effective are the use of data?
- How the structure of this text contributes to the creation of social identities?
- What is the logical flow of this story?
- Did the author provide a clear stand point in relation to the claim on whether the homosexuals can be cured?
- How are sexual minorities portrayed in this article?

### Tips for reporting marital status

- Avoid emphasizing the sexual orientation of suspects or perpetrators when reporting on negative events such as crime unless the sexual orientation is the main reason for the crime.
- Provide a fair representation of LGBTQ+ people and issues
- Cover LGBTQ+ diversified life and culture with an idea of equality and a humanistic concern.
- LGBTQ+ voice should be heard.
- Respects the basic life of the person concerned and respects the individual's own voice.
- Reject the viewpoints which argue that non-heterosexual orientation should and can be cured, sexual minorities intentionally spread HIV or are harmful to society.
- Avoid using sexual minorities as a label for entertainment news.
- Pay attention to the use of language to avoid discrimination, insulting and inflammatory.
- Disseminate of general knowledge about LGBTQ+

### Recommended readings:

- McInroy, L. B., & Craig, S. L. (2017). Perspectives of LGBTQ emerging adults on the depiction and impact of LGBTQ media representation. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 20(1), 32-46.
- Hu, K., & Li, X. (2019). The Effects of Media Use and Traditional Gender Role Beliefs on Tolerance of Homosexuality in China. *Chinese Sociological Review*, 51(2), 147-172.
- Mocarski, R., King, R., Butler, S., Holt, N. R., Huit, T. Z., Hope, D. A., ... & Woodruff, N. (2019). The Rise of Transgender and Gender Diverse Representation in the Media: Impacts on the Population. *Communication, culture & critique*, 12(3), 416-433.



# Age

The rapid growth of the elderly population has become a global social phenomenon, which brings journalists both challenges and opportunities to development new reporting for capturing social issues related to population aging. Elderly people make up a large and loyal part of mainstream media audience. But, this social group, especially older women, is underrepresented, and less visible in mainstream media content than the rest of the population (Vasil & Wass, 1993). To add, those elderly people who get covered tend to be 'depicted in a negative light and elderly characters were rarely cast in major roles or fully developed' (Hillier & Barrow, 2014). It is important to understand that the ways in which the mass media portray the elderly has a great impact on constructions of and attitudes towards the elderly in society at large. Not only does the media influence the public's perception of the group, the ideas, thoughts and attitudes about the elderly portrayed by the media may also influence the way people treat elderly individuals in real life, and even influence the government or relevant departments in formulating various policies and systems directly related to them.

In China, it has been found that the proportion of news output dedicated to elderly individuals and their concerns fails to match their population number, in relation to other age groups in the total population; a large number of reports focus on individuals from lower age groups, decreasing drastically for elderly people (Ren, 2013). The majority of news content about the elderly cover local individuals. At the same time, the proportion of international reports has been increasing as a result of growing international exchanges and openness in more recent times. In terms of news topics, socially responsible coverage on the elderly accounted for the majority of stories, and there is a certain correlation between politically oriented and human-interest oriented coverage on the elderly (Cheng, 2012). In terms of intersectionality, elderly women receive less coverage than elderly men and were more likely to be portrayed in a negative psychological and social image of aging, while the proportion of news reports focusing on older people who are physically unhealthy was higher than those that focused on healthy individuals, but there was a decreasing trend over the past 15 years (Liu et al. 2016).



### Case study: Putting quotes in context

[https://www.bbwc.cn/article/2018/03/06/100070612\\_1.html](https://www.bbwc.cn/article/2018/03/06/100070612_1.html)

This is a brief news on British Resolution Foundation's report - seniors should pay more in property taxes to help young people in UK. The news demonstrates journalist's dependence on the source of information and a need to put the quotes in context. It ends with additional background information on the identity of Executive Chair and illustrate the next steps he may take.

Shutterstock / Rawpixel.com

*Bloomberg Business Week*, Chinese Website  
March 6, 2018

## Tax the Wealth of Older Britons to Help the Young, Report Argues

Date of the news coverage should be noted here.

According to **Bloomberg**'s coverage, British Resolution Foundation claimed that Britain should impose higher wealth taxes on the older generation to ease the growing burden on young people.

Exact date needed.

Better change it to RMB for Chinese readers to for a more intuitive understanding.

In a speech **on Monday**, Executive Chair David Willetts warned that welfare spending is set to rise by the equivalent today of **60 billion pounds (\$83 billion)** by 2040 as aging **"boomers"** drive up the cost of health care.

The label of 'boomers' needs explanation for Chinese readers as there is no same words/meaning in China.

"The time has come when we Boomers are going to have reach into our own pockets," he said. **"The alternative could be an extra 15 pence on the basic rate of tax, paid largely by our kids.** Is that kind of tax really the legacy we--a generation who own half the nation's wealth--want to bequeath our children and grandchildren?"

The alternative to what? Impose higher wealth taxes on elders? How much more will be imposed?

Provision of more background information on Willetts' may help readers to understand why he has such a claim and proposal.

**Willetts, a former minister in the Conservative Party,** will make the case for reform of council tax--a property-based levy that helps fund local services--and of inheritance tax. Failure to at could fuel a sense of grievance among young people who are already struggling to match to the living standards enjoyed by older generations, he will say.

## Tutorial outline

### Questions:

- What story has been told in this news text?
- Are answers to 5W +H (who, what, where, when, why and how) included? What are they?
- What background information is provided in this news article?
- How are the aged people portrayed in the news article?
- How to develop from this news text to turn it into an in-depth news reporting?

### Tips for reporting on ageism

- Report on ageism issues meet by the elderly, such as financial, health, relationship, and discrimination issues.
- Cover stories of seniors doing not only extraordinary things and pursuing special interests but engaging in social life as citizens.
- The voice of elderly should be heard.
- Provide information on available community services, social insurance, and medical care, etc.
- Provide background information and legal context
- Pay close attention to the choice of words and expressions and avoid negative labels

### Recommended readings:

- Edström, M. (2018). Visibility patterns of gendered ageism in the media buzz: a study of the representation of gender and age over three decades. *Feminist media studies*, 18(1), 77-93.
- Vasil, L., & Wass, H. (1993). Portrayal of the elderly in the media: A literature review and implications for educational gerontologists. *Educational Gerontology: An International Quarterly*, 19(1), 71-85.





# Disability

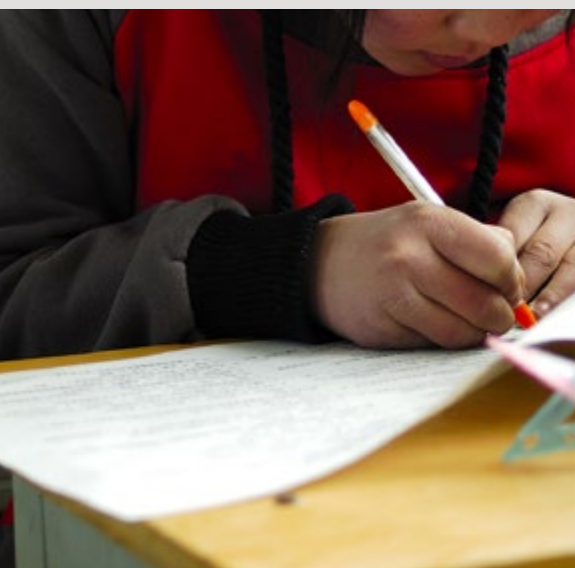
Globally, the disability rights movement began to grow in the 1970s and, eventually, mainstreamed what became known as the ‘social’ model of disability. This model of disability recognises that although people live with impairments it is society which creates social and physical barriers, which therefore disable people. People with disabilities took a stand themselves to change perceptions and stereotypes. In the media, people with disabilities remain an invisible cultural group. When they appear in media content, people with disabilities are stereotyped into one of the six most common frames: victims; heroes; threat; inability to adjust; need of care; and, the disabled person as the one who shouldn’t have survived (Nelson 2000).

Sociologist Tom Shakespeare argues that media portrayals of people with disabilities make it difficult for them to integrate into the community and even distance them from the rest of society “The peculiar and particular fascination – the fear and loathing – that disability has for human beings is because impairment represents the physicality and animality of human existence” (1994: p. 296).

In other words, an emphasis in the media on individuals with disability is what ‘others’ them from the rest of society which is made up of a majority of able-bodied individuals. Reporters often emphasise the medical side of a person’s disability, even if this is not relevant for the story. In some articles written about people with disabilities, they are constructed as the ‘other’ because of what they cannot do. This alienation of people with disabilities “means that the actual political and social context within which disability is made manifest, and the actual work that a disabled person must do in order to negotiate a place in the world, are covered over by a focus on diversity of impairments” (Titchkosky 2000, p. 133). This makes it more difficult for people with disability to fit in with the rest of society, outside of the media.

China's population is rapidly aging and the largest number of people with disabilities live in the country. The total number of people with disabilities in China is expected to exceed 100 million in five years. As things stand, disability coverage in the country's media is characterized by under-representation, emotionality (compassionate, overlooked and exaggerated perspectives) and emphasis on official discourses (Feng, 2017). The frequency of reports follows "holiday style" distribution – sparse coverage on normal days, but explosive coverage on disability-related commemorative days, such as the International Day of Disabled Persons and China's National Day of Disabled Persons (Feng, 2017). In terms of topics, news coverage of people with disability is mainly concerned with self-improvement, care and welfare (Meng, 2013). Most news stories continue to perpetuate harmful stereotypes that people with disabilities are "miserable", "in need of help", "helpless and pathetic vulnerable", "inspiring and strong hero", and "uncertain risk takers"; conversely, non-stereotypical and respectful perspectives on people with disability are lacking (Jing, 2013; Wu, 2014). Such unbalanced coverage risks making people with disabilities "abnormal in normal discourse", misleading or limiting the public's perception of them.

In terms of content, there are differences between national newspapers, local newspapers and specialized newspapers for people with disabilities. National newspapers tend to cover national actions, programmes and initiatives for the disabled from the angle of the government. Local newspapers tend to expose various infringements and violations from the angle of human rights of the disabled. Specialized newspapers for disabled people tend to cover specialised topics, such the disability assistance model and rehabilitation knowledge from experts and specialists. As for news frames, national newspapers are inclined to use ceremony frames, defining the event frames, achievement in politicians' official career frames, and charity frames, presenting the national consciousness and creating a caring atmosphere. Local newspapers tend to focus on the human rights of people with disabilities and emphasise that they are unique individuals. The following frames are commonly used: problem disclosure; accountability; community role models. In order to show the overall characteristics of "focusing on disabled model and scientific service for disabled people", specialized newspapers for the disabled tend to use the following frames: politicians; social public welfare; and, popularization of science frame" (Liu, 2018; Cao, 2018).



### **Case study: Public interest based on human values**

[http://www.xinhuanet.com//2017-08/22/c\\_1121519588.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com//2017-08/22/c_1121519588.htm)

There were 9.4 million students who sat the China Higher Education Entrance Examination in 2017. Braille exam papers were used by seven students who have total blindness or low vision. The protagonist in this new story is one of them. This article describes his predicament after he entered university. Such stories of concerning for and advocacy on the disadvantaged need to be carefully worded to fully reflect humanistic concerns.

*The Beijing News*  
August 22, 2017

Instead of calling them 'blind people', say the person with vision impairment or low vision.

For the first time, it should be called Northeastern Normal University in full, after that it can be abbreviated.

Blind means completely cannot see anything, but from what follows in the news article, it is clear that Wang has a visual impairment - low vision. Blind and low vision are completely different concepts.

## A blind freshman from NNU was refused to apply to live in student dormitory

Wang Chong is a freshman of Mathematics Department of NNU in 2017, and also the first blind student enrolled by the university. After going through the "examination room for one person" in the college entrance examination and being admitted with a score of 88 points higher than the Key university minimum passing line, Wang Chong found that his road to university was still uneven. On August 17, the day after coming to the school to register, Wang Chong was told that the school did not assign him a dormitory, but asked him to rent a house outside the school accompanied by his parents.



Being able to see clearly contradicts the term of total blindness used here. It should be low vision (best corrected visual acuity equal to or better than 0.05 and less than 0.1.).

Because he is almost completely blind, Wang Chong needs to enlarge the font size and keep his eyes close to the screen to see clearly. Photo courtesy of respondents.



Wang chong's admission notice from northeast normal university.

### Relevant persons from Northeast Normal University said that they have no experience in managing such students, which is for “safety reasons”; The school will bear the rent in the form of subsidies

Sentence structure here lead to a inflammable meaning as the second half of the sentence is the focus. It should be 'The Northeast Normal University refused to arrange him living in a dormitory but will pay his rent with subsidy'.

Yesterday, the Beijing News reporter was informed that NNU will bear Wang Chong's rent expenses in the form of subsidies, but still refuses to arrange for him to stay in the collective dormitory. The school has not responded positively to Wang Chong's family's suggestion that he should be equipped with guide dogs or disabled vehicles to assist Wang Chong's daily study.

### “A person's examination room”

This specific detail is an example of how close observation lends a story greater power. The reader can visualize it.

Back to June 7th this year, in the special science examination room of susong county Experimental Primary School in Anqing City, Anhui Province, only one examinee fumbled for the examination paper with both hands, and then answered with a pen. Behind him and on the podium, there were three invigilators.

According to the China Disabled Persons' Federation, on this day, there were 7 blind candidates in China who took the general college entrance examination by using Braille papers. Wang Chong, a candidate in Susong, Anhui Province, was one of them.

Wang Tinghuai, Wang Chong's father, told the Beijing News reporter that in 1999, when Wang Chong was born, he suffered from severe visual impairment, and after many treatments, there was no improvement. When Wang Chong was an adult, his eyesight was only 0.05, almost completely blind.

After graduating from Anqing school for deaf-mutes in 2014, Wang Chong was admitted to Qingdao Blind School to attend high school. “In that session, hundreds of people applied for the exam, and only 25 people were enrolled.” Wang Chong's class head teacher said that he had already had fierce competition to enter Qingdao Blind School.

According to Teacher Cheng, the head teacher, blind students will be divided into classes after they reach Grade Two of this high school, and students can freely choose to take the ordinary college entrance examination or take the single exam. It's relatively difficult to take part in single exam, but there are few majors to choose from, most of which are acupuncture or massage, and they will also be engaged in related industries after graduation. If you take the general college entrance examination, you need to compete with the same candidates at the same starting line, which is very difficult. Few blind students take this road.

Between the two, Wang Chong chose the ordinary college entrance examination, hoping to have a normal college life, and was more interested in

It should be low vision (best corrected visual acuity equal to or better than 0.05 and less than 0.1.).

The name of the school needs to be verified for accuracy. It should be Former Anqing School for the Blind and Mute (now Anqing Special Education School) and Qingdao School for the Blind

Name the teacher.

Provide readers with an understanding of learning and working with people with vision impairment

mathematics. “I want to be a teacher. Even if it is difficult, I have to compete in the same examination room as other normal students.”

On June 26th, Wang Chong learned by telephone that the score of the college entrance examination was 575 points, which was 88 points higher than that of Anhui Province.

### **Unable to stay in student dormitory**

After getting a score in the college entrance examination, Wang Chong reported to Northeast Normal University in Changchun, Jilin Province, and was admitted to the Department of Mathematics and Applied Mathematics of the School of Mathematics and Statistics. On July 25th, an acceptance letter with a red official seal was sent home. Wang Tinghuai said that at that moment, he was “happier than Wang Chong”.

On August 15th, the family set foot on the northbound train and arrived in Changchun the next day to report to Northeast Normal University.

When going through the admission formalities, Wang Chong felt a little strange. Other students could get the dormitory key after they registered for school, but he couldn't get it. According to this, Wang Tinghuai consulted the college and was told that whether Wang Chong could stay in the dormitory “has not been decided yet”. After staying in an off-campus hotel for one day, on August 17th, the school took the initiative to find Wang Chong, saying that due to his eyesight, there were many inconveniences in staying in the dormitory. For safety reasons, the school did not arrange collective dormitory for him, but asked Wang Chong to rent a house outside the school with his family.

Before leaving for the north, Wang Tinghuai made a lot of plans. He told the Beijing News reporter that he planned to “tell roommates, classmates and teachers well” because he was worried about the inconvenience caused by eyesight, asking them to take care of Wang Chong more. Faced with the incontrovertible tone of the school, Wang Tinghuai found that he was “thinking too much”.

Yesterday, the Beijing News reporter contacted the Northeast Normal University and the School of Mathematics and Statistics, but no positive response was received. Wang Chong's counselor, a teacher surnamed Shao, said it was “inconvenient to talk about” this matter. An insider of Northeast Normal University, who asked for anonymity, said that Wang Chong was the first blind student admitted by the university. Before that, the university had no experience in managing such students, and asked them to rent a house and be accompanied by their families, which was for “safety”.

It should also cover how other universities deal with students with vision impairments. This can also be extended to the whole dimension concerning the people with vision impairments seeking education – to move beyond the event itself.

Yesterday, Wang Tinghuai told the Beijing News reporter that after coordination with the university, the university will pay monthly subsidies to bear the rent of Wang Chong during his university years. In addition, a person in charge of the School of Mathematics and Statistics verbally promised Wang Tinghuai that if he stayed as an accompanying parent, the school could help provide a job.

## Dialogue

### Discrimination

#### Blind student Wang Chong:

#### Being unable to stay in dormitory is the lack of university life

Use a large part for interview, giving a voice to the voiceless. Wang's mood and his thinking have been clearly showed in the transcripts. Readers get a chance to know how the person with vision impairment felt.

Wang Chong's "home" in the next four years is a newly rented two-bedroom apartment with a monthly rent of 1,600 yuan, which is located near Northeast Normal University and less than 20 minutes walk to school. Compared with the collective dormitory with little space, it is obviously spacious and quiet, but Wang Chong's tone on the phone seems to be lost. In his view, it is a deficiency of university life to be unable to stay in the dormitory and experience the collective life.

#### “At least you should have a complete classmate relationship”

**Beijing News:** Are you satisfied with where you live now?

**Wang Chong:** I can accept it now. The conditions here are OK. However, if I have a choice, I still hope to live in a dormitory anyway.

**Beijing News:** Why is it necessary to have a student dormitory?

**Wang Chong:** I imagined the feeling of going to college before. It should be collective life. It would be better to get along with roommates. I think collective life is a part of university life. Although I have some physical problems, I should at least have a complete classmate relationship like other people.

**Beijing News:** What does a complete classmate relationship mean to you?

**Wang Chong:** High schools are blind schools, and all contacts are blind people. Relatively speaking, the interpersonal relationship is relatively lacking, there are no good friends all the time, and it is lonely all the time. It is almost impossible to find a bosom friend in the dormitory after going to college.

In fact, the school did this for safety reasons, which I can understand, but I hope it can be considered for me. Although my eyesight is weak, I feel that there is no big problem in walking and living at ordinary times, and I don't need people to take care of me.

#### “Don't want to be treated differently”

**Beijing News:** What's the difference when blind people take the general college entrance examination?

**Wang Chong:** There is only one person in the whole examination room, and there are three invigilators. In terms of time, it is half longer than that of ordinary examinees, and then I have to write Braille by myself. I was nervous in the first game, but I got better later. It makes no difference to practice in peacetime anyway.

There are 5 people in Qingdao School for the Blind who take the general college entrance examination. I should be the best one, and I feel that I have a chance to be a teacher.

**Beijing News:** Why do you want to be a teacher?

**Wang Chong:** On the one hand, I was helped by many teachers at school, and on the other hand, I felt more suitable to be a teacher. I have a good understanding of mathematics, and I am willing to study, and I often help my classmates talk about problems.

**Beijing News:** What do you think of the present situation?

**Wang Chong:** I was a little disappointed. When I came, I was just glad I didn't know there would be so much trouble. I knew there was a policy before, and blind people could apply for the general college entrance examination, thinking that we could be just like normal students. However, when I arrived at the university, I found that there were no supporting measures in the school, and I was treated differently, which I didn't want to do.

**Beijing News:** Do you have any expectations for the future?

**Wang Chong:** At present, I still hope to coordinate and let me stay in the dormitory. In the future, I don't know if I can get a fair job like ordinary students, there are still many obstacles for the disabled. If possible, I hope to teach high school mathematics in blind schools.

It is necessary to interview the Disability Federation for information about this, whether more people with disabilities are able to go to university and what difficulties they face in doing so, and how to solve their problems in daily life.

### Lawyer's statement

#### The university should provide dormitory

Article 25 of the Law on the Protection of Disabled Persons stipulates that ordinary educational institutions shall educate disabled persons who have the ability to receive ordinary education and provide convenience and assistance for their study. Article 63 stipulates that if the relevant educational institution refuses to accept students with disabilities, or imposes conditions on students with disabilities beyond the admission requirements stipulated by the state, it

Not a lawyer's statement - the news content does not match the subtitle.

shall be ordered by the relevant competent department to make corrections, and the directly responsible person in charge and other directly responsible personnel shall be punished according to law.

This paper uses the word 'discriminatory' for the first time here. It needs to be defined and explained why it is a form of discrimination. Is treating things differently (arranging things differently) or special care can be seen as discrimination?

Wang Changqing, a lawyer at Beijing Zeyong Law Firm, said that the refusal of Northeast Normal University to provide Wang Chong with dormitory is actually a discriminatory treatment. "Just because Wang Chong is blind and I don't agree to live off campus, the school should provide dormitory."

## Tutorial outline

### Questions:

- How is Wang Chong referred to in this news text?
- How did the author contextualize Wang Chong's experiences of being rejected to enter dormitory?
- How the direct use of dialogue between the journalist and Wang contributes to the narrative?
- How are the people with disabilities portrayed in the news article?

### Tips for reporting on people with disabilities

- Cover issues confronting people with disabilities
- Avoid referring people with disabilities as cripple/crippled/handicapped person, disabled person, deaf and mute, retarded, deformed person, or defective person.
- Avoid using terms 'normal' and 'healthy' to describe people without disability.
- Avoid using terms such as 'courageous', 'brave', 'special', or 'superhuman' to describe people with disabilities as it implies that all people with disabilities should have an unusual talent.
- Respect life of the person concerned and respect the individual's own voice.
- Take the time to listen to and adopt more of people with disabilities own opinions rather than how people without disability perceive people with disabilities.
- Provide information on available community services, social insurance, and medical care, etc.

### Recommended readings:

- Briant, E., Watson, N., & Philo, G. (2013). Reporting disability in the age of austerity: the changing face of media representation of disability and disabled people in the United Kingdom and the creation of new 'folk devils'. *Disability & Society*, 28(6), 874-889.
- Zhang, L., & Haller, B. (2013). Consuming image: How mass media impact the identity of people with disabilities. *Communication Quarterly*, 61(3), 319-334.
- Goggin, G., Newell, G., & Newell, C. (2003). *Digital disability: The social construction of disability in new media*. Rowman & Littlefield.





# Social status

Journalists' approaches to reporting social status varies across cultures. The conventional media line of portraying wealthy people as successful, and poor people as responsible for the hardships they have in fact had no part in creating follows ideological camps in any given society (Cozzarelli, Wilkinson & Tagler, 2001). In this section, we focus on poverty and how it is portrayed. News media tend to frame the issue of poverty as the fault of individual behaviour (Beddoe & Keddell, 2016). Research shows that media narratives and political discourse influence each other, reinforcing narratives that work to pigeonhole and stigmatise the poor (Mooney, 2009). By doing this they reduce poverty and wealth inequality from an important social issue to the status of a trivial personal defect, an easy way to justify shifting the focus to more 'sensational' topics that will attract a wider voting audience. In general, research demonstrates that the way citizens understand poverty is dependent on how the issue is framed in public discourse (Iyengar, 1990). Evidence-based news reporting can authenticate poverty as a symptom of a broken system, counteracting the framing of the issue as an outcome of individual behaviour. In the context of poverty, news media have a professional obligation to provide a platform for strategic debate and discussion, an opportunity to confront social injustices (Haas & Steiner, 2001). However, media tendency to downplay poverty and make low-income citizens invisible is in a stark contrast with the space devoted to business news. While coverage of poverty remains sparse, media are allocating more and more space to business news that tends to foreground successful individuals making strong financial gains and how their activities boost the economy, with hardly any attention paid to the problem of unequal wealth distribution.

Clawson and Trice's (2000) discussion on poverty indicate that the poor are being accused and stigmatized in the media that portrays them as criminals, lazy, on drugs and having no interest in changing their situation; often, no evidence whatsoever is given to confirm these claims. In addition, media often make discriminatory references are to impoverished communities as underclass groups, linked with pathological behaviours in urban areas (Gans, 1995). Fairclough (2000) argues that journalists are missing an opportunity to contribute to social change, at precisely the time when politics is becoming increasingly mediatized, opening a space for media to have greater influence in framing debates around social problems like poverty.

In China, it is more common for the media to report on the state's poverty-alleviation related policies rather than cover stories purely about poor or wealthy individuals, in of themselves. This reflects a clear shift in media reporting on poverty, which occurred after the publication of "China Rural Poverty Alleviation and Development Program (2011-2020)". For example, there was an increased reflection on the current situation of poverty and poverty alleviation with more attention paid to the voices of the poor. Journalists go to the front line of poverty alleviation for in-depth investigation of implementation of poverty alleviation policies (Wei & Chen, 2020).



## Case study: Thinking about frames

[http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2018-12/05/c\\_1123808227.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2018-12/05/c_1123808227.htm)

This news story attempts to discuss the social issues brought by the 'welfarized' subsistence allowance. Social issues should be reported based on the accurate presentation of facts, avoiding rumors and unsubstantiated statements, but the logic and the accuracy of the phrase and sentence structure raise some questions.

Shutterstock / bluedog studio

Xinhua Net, China

December 12, 2018

### Creating Contradictions, Fostering Lazy People and Inducing Corruption-- the "Welfare" of the Subsistence Allowance Results in Many Sequelae

The subsistence allowance was "life-saving money", but now it has become "Tang monk meat".

The "welfare" of subsistence allowance can easily lead to contradictions at the grass-roots level.

The rural subsistence allowance is the bottom guarantee for low-income farmers and has played a positive role in solving the practical problems of the deprived people. In a recent interview at the grass-roots level, the reporter of China Comment learned that various localities have greatly improved the chaos of "human allowance," "money allowance," and so on through the development of special management of rural subsistence allowance, but new contradictions are emerging.

Some farmers and grass-roots cadres reflect that in addition to ensuring the basic life of low-income farmers, rural subsistence allowance has also added higher standards of comprehensive security functions such as medical care, student assistance, and disability assistance, which to a certain extent can easily lead to the dependence on welfare at the grass-roots level and the contradiction between farmers.

#### 1. With many benefits on it, subsistence allowance may become "privileges".

Some farmers say that the subsistence allowance subsidy is nothing, but with the status of subsistence allowance, you can apply for reimbursement at about 90% when going to the hospital, while the average household can only apply for reimbursement at about 60%, which is very eye-catching.

The headline only covers the first two sections: 1. With many benefits on it, subsistence allowance may become "privileges" and 2. Creating contradictions and fostering lazy people become the sequel of welfare policy.

The third section of '3. The policy of subsistence allowances should be reduced and special assistance should be strengthened' was missing in the headline.

? (CHRISTINA specify what sections).

Says who? If it is a journalist than data needed to support the claim, if otherwise source of information needed.

The social problems posed at the beginning not get illustrated by examples later in the text.

Explanation needed on 'human allowance' and 'money allowance'.

Commonly used in news coverage but vague. Farmers from where? What level of grassroots cadre? What are they doing?

Generalization needs precision.

<p>Which county, name it.</p> <p>Has the journalist checked that these statements are accurate? If not, why not? Source of information needed.</p>	<p>Wang Lizhi, a 58-year-old farmer in Chifeng City, from <b>some county</b> in Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, was found to have lung cancer two years ago. She received subsistence allowance at the beginning of this year and paid only a few dozen yuan for each hospitalization and chemotherapy fee. Her husband said that a few years ago, they saved some money by working in the city, his wife spent more than half because of her cancer, subsistence allowance solved most of the medical expenses, and the whole family was able to live a decent life. “But some people feel that my family has taken advantage of the country, always speak sarcasm behind their backs, and it is uncomfortable to meet the neighbors.”</p>
<p>Generalization needs precision</p>	<p><b>Some villagers</b> in the same village as Wang Lizhi said that anyone in the village who has cancer on the stall will not be able to make ends meet, but if he receive the subsistence allowance, he can have such superior medical security. Where do the new rural cooperative medical insurance and serious illness medical assistance figure in? <b>It is not fair for non-subsistence allowance households with low income and low expenditure to include families with high income but high expenses into serious diseases, which not only gives money, but also gives such a high level of medical benefits.</b></p>
<p>The reporter should list the selecting criteria for becoming a beneficiary of the basic living allowance.</p>	<p>Some marginal households with subsistence allowance also have some views on the preferential policy of medical reimbursement. Mayou, a 63-year-old farmer in Huade County, Wulanchabu City, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, has been working for a long time because of years of poor harvest on cultivated land. The old couple earn less than 5000 yuan a year, and the lives of their two daughters are also tight. In recent years, the wife spent six or seven ten thousand yuan on the treatment of gallstones, uterine myoma and eye diseases, and only enough money to eat and wear in his hand.</p>
<p>The whole paragraph does not match the sub-heading. It did not address the issue of privilege. Three examples of people unhappy about health care and school aid policies - gives one side of the story.</p>	<p>“Those who are worse than my family have assessed the subsistence allowance, waived the premium for the new rural cooperative medical insurance, also had preferential electricity charges, and were able to apply for reimbursement for 90% or so when seeing a doctor. Our family pays nearly 1,000 yuan of new rural cooperative medical insurance fee a year, but can only apply for reimbursement about 60% in hospital. The policy we enjoy is much worse than that of subsistence allowances households, “he said. Mayou said.</p>
<p>Lack of articulation of where the policy is unreasonable.</p>	<p>The student assistance policy related to subsistence allowance has a good starting point, but it also gives some people an opinion. The reporter learned from many aspects that in 2014, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region issued a policy of 30,000 yuan or 40,000 yuan for disposable subsidies for freshmen from families with subsistence allowance. However, a small number of people took advantage of their gaps and dropped out of school when they got the money. Some people see that subsistence allowances households get so much money for nothing, and they have a lot of opinions. Later, the autonomous region improved its policy and changed it to annual distribution of funds, but the way of giving money directly still made some people feel unbalanced.</p>
<p>Lack of interpretation and analysis of the policy, just saying that it is unsatisfactory, where exactly is it unsatisfactory.</p>	
<p>The three examples are all from Inner Mongolia. Is there any cases from other places as the reporter was saying it's national problem?</p>	

## 2. Creating contradictions and fostering lazy people become the sequel of welfare policy.

<p>Says who? If it is a journalist than data needed to support the claim, if otherwise source of information needed</p>	<p>The subsistence allowance was originally a “life-saving money,” but now it has become a “Tang monk meat,” carrying too much welfare, so that some farmers who can not comment on the subsistence allowances complain everywhere, or make some people find ways to compete for the subsistence allowances, become lazy people, and also induce a small number of cadres to take risks and violate discipline and break the law.</p>
<p>Direct quotation from where?</p>	<p>The struggle for subsistence allowance has led to discord in the neighborhood and unhealthy village climate. Reporters went to the village to interview and learned that the high subsistence allowance benefits are causing fierce competition among farmers, some people complain everywhere, who do not have enough subsistence allowance conditions and can not enjoy the policy.</p> <p>“ This son drives BMW while his father is on subsistence allowance, that son as a cadre but his mother is on subsistence allowance. “ There are all kinds of stories flying around. The reporter verified and learned from a number of villagers, village cadres, and township civil affairs staff that these reports are not true, but they have stirred up discord in the neighborhood and the atmosphere in the village is bad.</p>
<p>Hua De county in which province?</p>	<p>Too much welfare is easy to foster lazy people, which hinders the development of the countryside. Xiao an, a 38-year-old farmer in Hua De county, said at a young age that he did not have the strength to work, and that farmers had to rely on the help of older villagers when they were busy. Village cadres asked him to go to the hospital for examination and appraisal, but he did not cooperate on the grounds that he had no money for physical examination, and his daily life could not be separated from tobacco and alcohol. After asking him about his roots and interviewing a number of villagers, the reporter learned that he saw a good policy for subsistence allowances households and poor households, and he also wanted to be. “The government gives money, responsible for seeing doctor, and children can also go to school, so they don’t have to struggle to make ends meet.” Xiao an said.</p>
<p>Explain what it means by welfarization?</p>	<p>The reporter found that the welfarization of rural subsistence allowance hinders, to a certain extent, the enthusiasm and initiative of some farmers to extricate themselves from poverty and become rich, and is not conducive to the implementation of the national rural revitalization strategy .</p>
<p>This claim needs support</p>	
<p>Who are they? From where?</p>	<p>Induce a small number of cadres to take risks and violate discipline and break the law. Some people in charge of the local civil affairs bureau told reporters that the benefits of subsistence allowance are many and seductive, and that some people have tried their best to find relationships and go through the back door, thus increasing the risk of corruption among grass-roots cadres. Recently, a banner in Chifeng City reported three cases in which grass-roots cadres defrauded grass-roots cadres of defrauding freshmen from their</p>

families for bursaries, all of which directly changed the subsistence allowance list. Discipline violators were mainly concentrated in the main responsible persons of the two committees of the village, and they gave priority to their relatives, friends and acquaintances by taking advantage of their duties.

Source of information needed. The entire section is conceptualized and lacks concrete examples as proof.

In 2016, a city in western Inner Mongolia found that 48 state financial support personnel, prison inmates and compulsory drug addicts in the city illegally enjoyed subsistence allowances, resulting in a national financial loss of more than 400000 yuan, causing adverse social impact.

### 3. The policy of subsistence allowances should be reduced and special assistance should be strengthened.

Says who? Reporter's comments? Or cite form policies? Unclear. If it is the reporter, further evidence are needed to support the claim, if otherwise source of information needed.

The rural subsistence allowances should be made up according to the standard to ensure that the poor people should be guaranteed as much as possible. At the same time of implementing the subsistence allowances system, we should gradually establish all kinds of special assistance to form the basic framework of social assistance system.

There's no need to use words that indicate a turn here.

In 2014, the state promulgated the Interim Measures for social assistance to improve the social assistance system. However, the special relief provided by the measures is mainly carried out around the target of subsistence allowances.

Interpretation needs factual support.

Nowadays, subsistence allowances is bound up with special assistance such as medical treatment, education and disability assistance. It is overburdened, which goes against the bottom line of the subsistence allowances policy, and also caused new social injustice. "Serious illness, disability and children's going to university are the main reasons for farmers' poverty. We should take measures separately. We should solve whatever problems are and do not need to put them into the basket of the subsistence allowances policy." A grassroots cadre said.

Name the cadre or adding 'prefer not be named'.

Generalization needs precision.

Many grass-roots cadres have called for the loosening of the subsistence allowances, so that the subsistence allowances and other special assistance can give full play to their respective functions, so as to make the positioning of various policies more clear and avoid excessive overlapping of welfare.

Why mentioned the issue of disability here? It was not mentioned earlier. The whole article is about poor people and subsistence allowance.

Efforts should be made to increase the security for patients with serious diseases, and reduce the superposition of medical assistance and subsistence allowances. At present, the communication between some departments is not smooth, the financial support is limited, the reimbursement proportion of some serious diseases can not meet the national requirements, and the farmers bear heavy burden at their own expense. The grassroots hope to increase the rescue efforts for patients with serious diseases.

We should improve the inclusive subsidies for the disabled and determine reasonable subsidy standards. In particular, more effective protection should be provided for the first and second level of severe disabled people, so that the

Too vague. Reporters comments, a summary of grass-root cadres' viewpoints, or policy cited from nowhere?

If it is the reporter than the grass-root cadres needed to support the claim, if otherwise source of information needed.

The whole news article lacks persuasive facts

relief for the disabled and the subsistence allowances policy can be released. At present, the special subsidy standard for the disabled is low and the scope is limited. It is hoped that the state will raise the standard and expand the scope of the subsidy for the disabled on the basis of strengthening the medical identification of the disabled and enhancing the authority of the identification.

The special aid for education and the policy of subsistence allowances should be released. We should adjust and improve the policy of subsidizing the enrollment of new students from low-income families, increase the guarantee of credit student loans in the places where students come from and national student loans, let the policies of grants and scholarships incline to students from low-income families, encourage them to study hard, change their fate, and weaken the extensive assistance methods such as direct payment.

## Tutorial outline

### Questions:

- What voices are heard in the news article?
- Who talks and who is talked about?
- Does the heading and sub-headings match the news content in each section?
- Is there a clear logical flow of this report? If no, what leads to ambiguity and how to revise it?
- Is there a key argument in the news article? If yes, what is it and how it is developed and constructed?
- How are the people with different social status portrayed?
- What is the main storytelling frame?

### Tips for reporting social status

- Report on social issues that affect people with lower social status such as unemployment, homeless and illiterate issue.
- The voice of people with lower social status or social disadvantages should be heard.
- Verify the statements of all sources of information
- Avoid negative labels attached to people with lower social status.
- Place social tensions in context
- Separate facts from opinion but treat opinion as relevant
- Treat people with low social status as individuals with rich histories and complex inner lives.

### Recommended readings:

- Lugo Ocando, J. (2019). Poverty in the news media: Continuities, ruptures, and change in the reporting socioeconomic inequality. *Sociology Compass*, 13(7), e12719.
- Clawson, R. A., & Trice, R. (2000). Poverty as we know it: Media portrayals of the poor. *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, 64(1), 53-64.

# Conclusions

The news media have a set of roles they are supposed to play: facilitate the formation of public opinion, foster public engagement with the issues of the day, allow clashes over decision-making, have a 'watchdog' function in relation to the government and are in general arenas of arbitration. The fact is that the journalistic field itself consists of a plurality of viewpoints, and clashes between different interests (owners, editors, journalists, managers) ensure that a single set of interests will never prevail.

The position of journalism in defining identities and social relations, a position of a mediator, prevents the journalistic field from becoming a public sphere in Habermas's (1989) definition of the concept. Although it satisfies the first part of Habermas' definition – the public sphere is “a realm of our social life in which something approaching public opinion can be formed” – it misses the second part: “Access is guaranteed to all citizens. A portion of the public sphere comes into being in every conversation in which private individuals assemble to form a public body” (Habermas 1964, p.49). Habermas argues that party politics and the manipulation of mass media have resulted in a “refeudalization of the public sphere” where representation and appearances outweigh rational debate (Habermas 1989, p.162).

This handbook presented a number of case studies that could be used in a classroom to unpack the issues of journalism's contribution to the creation of social meanings. By highlighting points that deserve justification and/or seek alternative course of action we made an argument for improving journalism practice in terms of inclusiveness. The idea of inclusive journalism carries a potential to open up hidden lines of the media discourse and unpack the process of legitimization of dominant perspectives. Inclusive journalism can be defined as a set of normative discourses, editorial policies and reporting practices that have arisen and have been developed to provide a diversity of voices in the media domain. Rooted in the political notion of inclusive democracy and a political system that goes beyond recognizing formal equality of all individuals, the idea of inclusive journalism examines actions and special measures journalists use to address and respond to inequalities of unjust social structures.

The objective of inclusive journalism is to develop inclusive communicative competence to enable reflective thinking, experience of social, political and cultural pluralism, and recognition of otherness and a critical stand towards the process of constructing identities (Rupar and Pestic 2012). As an analytical tool, inclusive journalism looks at media representation of people in social settings. Reporters' choice of sources and the decision to include and exclude, correlate to functional differentiation where establishing who is inside and who is outside of a boundary, defines 'included' only in relation to 'excluded'.

Democratic societies see inclusion as a criterion of the political legitimacy of its outcomes. Young (2002) distinguishes two forms of social exclusion: 'external' where groups and individuals are openly excluded of the decision-making process and 'internal' where 'the terms of discourse make assumptions some do not share, the interaction privileges specific styles of expression, the participation of some people is dismissed as out of order' (p.53). In their overview of theoretical perspectives that engage with the question of inclusion and exclusion, Staheli and Stichweh (2002) note that 'function systems are confronted with a tension between an all-inclusive semantics of the inclusion of everyone (e.g. human rights, construction of citizenship etc.) and phenomena of exclusion at the level of social structure'. Those who are to be included are 'persons' in communication processes, not simply as individuals but as representatives of groups. The process of classifying a person into a representative of a class of persons determines how the distinction between inclusion and exclusion operates.

Academics, journalists and policymakers have not agreed upon an all-encompassing definition of social inclusion and exclusion. For academics, the most intriguing issue is media's role in social exclusion. For wider society, social inclusion comes as a part of 'lived experience' and actions (Ewart and Snowden 2012). For journalists, reporting on poverty, immigration, religious tensions, the gender pay gap and similar, is challenging and underpinned by the gap between the ideal of harmonious all-inclusive society and the reality that certifies the opposite.

Journalism's response to the ongoing processes of social diversification and political measures, laws and legal norms surrounding minority rights - a set of activities that stand behind the idea of inclusive society (Kymlicka 2007) - has been marked by its provision of diversity of voices in public domain. But as the policy based on social inclusion has to focus on increasing opportunities and participation for everyone (Mitchell and Shillington, 2002) so does journalism.





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