News Analysis Assignment, POLS 1 Spring 2021

# Introduction

By now, you will have read about the role of the media as well as about misinformation and disinformation. This is covered in the required readings (listed in the [Week 7 overview](https://csus.instructure.com/courses/73844/pages/overview-of-week-7-public-opinion-and-the-media) and [syllabus)](https://csus.instructure.com/courses/73844/pages/syllabus-and-course-details). You might also have watched the extra credit talk about [disinformation](https://csus.instructure.com/courses/73844/assignments/1062888) (“Does the Truth Matter”) if you missed it, it is available as a recording).

# Assignment Specifics

For this assignment, you need to read four articles about the same topic from different news sources. They are attached as pdfs, but you might also find it useful and interesting to view the articles online. Links are included with the articles. Some have accompanying videos. Some newspapers allow a limited number of views by nonsubscribers (e.g., The New York Times). You do not have to pay for any articles to complete this assignment. You do not have to look up further information other than these articles and the required course readings.

The topic is the recent passage by the U.S. House of Representatives of H.R.7120 - George Floyd Justice in Policing Act of 2020. (In case you are interested, the bill can be found here on Congress’ website: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/7120>) Every bill that goes through the House of Representatives is assigned an identifying number. “H.R.” refers to House of Representatives, and is followed by the bill’s number.

The four short articles about this bill are from the New York Times, Fox News, NewsMax and Daily Kos. The articles and the links for the online articles are listed below in the works cited. A pdf copy of each article is available through links in the online assignment.

*The New York Times* is considered a reliable news source that “leans” left-of-center (toward liberal), while Fox News “leans right-of-center” (toward conservative). MediaBiasChart.com characterizes NewsMax as “hyper-partisan conservative” and “propaganda/contains misleading info.” (MediasBiasChart.com classifies some Fox programs such as the Daily Wire similarly). It classifies Daily Kos as “hyper-partisan liberal” and “selective or incomplete story; unfair persuasion.”

After reading the articles, write 150-250-word short essay that answers the following:

1. Briefly, what are the basic facts of this topic? What is the bill that the U.S. House of Representatives passed? What are the issues involved? Who opposed and who supported the bill? What happens next for a bill to become a law?
2. How does the coverage in these articles differ? Why might they be different? (Are some articles more thorough and include more facts than others?)
3. Do you have more confidence about the information in some of the articles than others? Are some articles more, or less, accurate and reliable than others? Why do you think this? Can you spot any partisan bias?

Write the essay in paragraph form. Do not use the numbers that are in the prompt. You can assume that the list below is a Works Cited for your essay that you do not have to include. You can refer to “the New York Times article,” or “In Barrabi’s article” or “Freeman says.” If you use course readings, you can assume that the syllabus is your “Works Cited.” You can refer to “Ginsberg et al.” (“Et al.” means “and the rest” and takes the place of having to list all of the authors.) If you use another source besides these, you will need to include the usual publishing information (such as author’s name, the title, the publisher, date, and link). Let the instructor know if you have any questions!

# The Articles (and “Works Cited”)

Barrabi, Thomas. “House passes George Floyd Justice in Policing Act in party-line vote,” *Fox News* (March 3, 2021) <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/house-passes-george-floyd-justice-in-policing-act-in-party-line-vote>

Clawson, Laura. “House passes George Floyd Justice in Policing Act before shutting down due to possible militia plot.” *Daily Kos* (March 4, 2021) <https://www.dailykos.com/stories/2021/3/4/2019301/-House-passes-major-police-reform-bill-but-qualified-immunity-will-be-a-sticking-point-in-the-Senate>

Fandos, Nicholas, Catie Edmondson, and Karen Zraick. “The House passes a policing overhaul bill named for George Floyd, whose death spurred nationwide protests,” *New York Times* (March 4, 2021). <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/04/us/george-floyd-act.html>

McCarthy, Charlie. “Oops! GOP Lawmaker Says He Mistakenly Hit Wrong Key Voting for Police Reform Bill,” *NewsMax* (March 4, 2021). <https://www.newsmax.com/politics/house-lancegooden-house-georgefloyd/2021/03/04/id/1012559/>

U.S. Congress. House. *George Floyd Justice in Policing Act of 2020*. HR 7120. 116th Cong. Introduced in the House June 8, 2020. <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/7120>