**Inform Yourself**

***Analyzing and Evaluating Political Communication***

**Your Name** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Choose and analyze two**visual, text, or other media items that are political in nature on the same topic area. The media items can be the same or different formats but should be from within the past year.

**Media Item 1 Name "Trump allies furious as Kamala Harris basks in left-wing 'propaganda'"**

Screenshot or Copied Text:

The media is being accused by supporters of former President Donald Trump of being friendly to Vice President Kamala Harris. Although Harris has had minimal press interactions, publications such as Time magazine lauded her campaign, likening it to Barack Obama's initial days. The coverage has been criticized as media bias by supporters of Trump, particularly after Harris suggested measures similar to ones previously enacted by Trump.

How to Access:

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/trump-allies-accuse-left-wing-media-of-kamala-harris-propaganda-9mzfsw9qz>

Identify the messages (one well-written paragraph):

The article highlights the dissatifaction8 among Donald Trump's supporters regarding the positive media coverage of Vice President Kamala Harris. It centers on situations where media outlets made positive comparisons of her campaign to that of Barack Obama, therefore fueling allegations of media partiality. The article also presents allegations of similarity of Harris's proposals to those of Donald Trump, which continues to fuel allegations of media partiality. The general tone is that certain media outlets are partial by overwhelmingly slanting towards Democratic candidates, hence influencing citizens' perception as well as political discourse.

Analyze the biases (one well-written paragraph):

The selection bias in this media outlet is seen in the fact that it focuses on positive coverage of Kamala Harris at the expense of similar coverage of other political leaders. By only presenting coverage of Harris's positive image, the article implies a trend of favorable coverage by the media of Democrats. This selective coverage may cause readers to believe the media are biased, based on their politically slanted coverage. The inclusion of such language as "left-wing 'propaganda'" also implies loaded language, intended to provoke strong emotion in readers and establish a perception of media bias. This kind of word selection has the potential to sway readers' emotion as well as perception, further establishing the article's built-in bias.

**Media Item 2 Name "Female 2020 Democratic Presidential Candidates Face a 'Gender Penalty' Online, Study Finds"**

Screenshot or Copied Text:

2020 Democratic women presidential candidates were attacked far more online compared to their male counterparts, according to a study by Lucina Di Meco and Marvelous AI. Twitter discourse on Joe Biden, Bernie Sanders, Pete Buttigieg, Elizabeth Warren, Kamala Harris, and Amy Klobuchar was analyzed as part of the "#ShePersisted: Women, Politics and Power in the New Media World" report. Women candidates, particularly Warren and Harris, were singled out with negative frames related to their character/persona and their identity, as compared to their electability or issues. These were amplified by social media algorithms that applied a 'gender penalty' to women.

How to Access:

<https://time.com/5717376/female-democratic-candidates-2020-twitter-study/>

Identify the messages (one well-written paragraph):

The article reports on research that females running for the Democratic presidential nomination in 2020 received a disproportionate level of negative social media coverage as compared to their male counterparts. It discusses how social media discourse tended to center on the character and the persona of the women politicians, detracting from their policies as well as their competence. The article observes as well that social media algorithms tended to amplify this sexism, leading to a "gender penalty" that demoted women's political achievements. The deeper message is that women struggle politically, especially online, and that something needs to be done about it.

Analyze the biases (one well-written paragraph):

**The media item's bias of omission is that it focuses on negative treatment of women candidates as the only issue, failing to discuss the overall environment of political discourse, which includes negative treatment of male as well as female candidates. By discussing only the problems women face, the article can cause readers not to see the nuance of online political participation. The use of the word "gender penalty" is also loaded since it has a negative meaning that positions the situation in a certain context, possibly affecting readers' perception as well as their emotional states. This selective presentation as well as the use of certain words directs readers towards a certain interpretation of the problems women face in politics.**

**Evaluate the media's impact.** How have the media changed over time, and how has this affected political communication? In a well-written paragraph, answer this question in your own words. 

The media environment has undergone lots of changes over the last quarter century, mainly as a result of technological progression and the advent of digital media. This has, in turn, resulted in a flood of sources of information, as well as news delivered according to individual consumer needs. Diversity has also contributed to information silos, where one is mainly exposed to information that reflects one’s own belief system, leading to polarization along party lines. Furthermore, the speed at which information travels online has made it difficult to check the truthfulness of information, thus spreading both fact-based information as well as misinformation at a very rapid pace. All these changes have had a great impact on political communication, as it has become faster as well as more extensive, yet also increasingly prone to bias as well as misinformation. Being a consumer of news, therefore, it's very important to cultivate media literacy to cope with this complex information environment.