



MicroModule: Bias

REVIEW Page

Below is the entire module on one page.

What is Bias?

This is how the [Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary](#) defines bias:



BENT , TENDENCY b : an inclination of temperament or outlook; *especially*: **a personal and sometimes unreasoned judgment**: **PREJUDICE c** :an instance of such prejudice **d** (1): deviation of the expected value of a statistical estimate from the quantity it estimates (2): systematic error introduced into sampling or testing by selecting or encouraging one outcome or answer over others

Here's what [Roget's II: The New Thesaurus, Third Edition](#) says:

Exhibiting bias: biased, **one-sided**, **partisan**, **prejudiced**, **prejudicial**, prepossessed, tendentious. *See* LIKE, STRAIGHT. **2**. Disposed to favor one over another: favorable, preferential.

When it comes to modern media like news, advertising and the Internet, bias on demand has become the profession of spin-

doctors who specialize in spinning anything negative into something positive.

Why should we check the bias of information on a web page?

Would you trust information unsupported by facts or logical reasoning? A biased author may not pay attention to all the facts or develop a logical argument to support his or her opinions.

Bias is when a statement reflects a **partiality, preference, or prejudice** for or against a person, object, or idea. Much of what you read and hear expresses a bias. Bias is when a writer or speaker uses a selection of facts, choice of words, and the quality and tone of description, to convey a particular feeling or attitude. Its purpose is to convey a certain attitude or point of view toward the subject. As you read or listen to biased materials, keep the following questions in mind:

- What facts has the author omitted?
- What additional information is necessary?
- What words create positive or negative impressions?
- What impression would I have if different words had been used?

Biased information tries to change your mind, how you think. Being aware of bias and knowing how to identify, analyze, and assimilate biased information properly is a skill to be treasured. It puts you in charge of how you think instead of the print and media world. ([Cuesta College Critically Evaluating the Logic and Validity of Information](#))

What are some indicators of bias on a web page?

- The language of the document is often **extreme**; statements have all or nothing connotations.
- The argument appeals more to the emotions than to logic.
- Things are worded with the intent to oversimplify or over generalize.
- The author wishes to present a limited view of the topic.

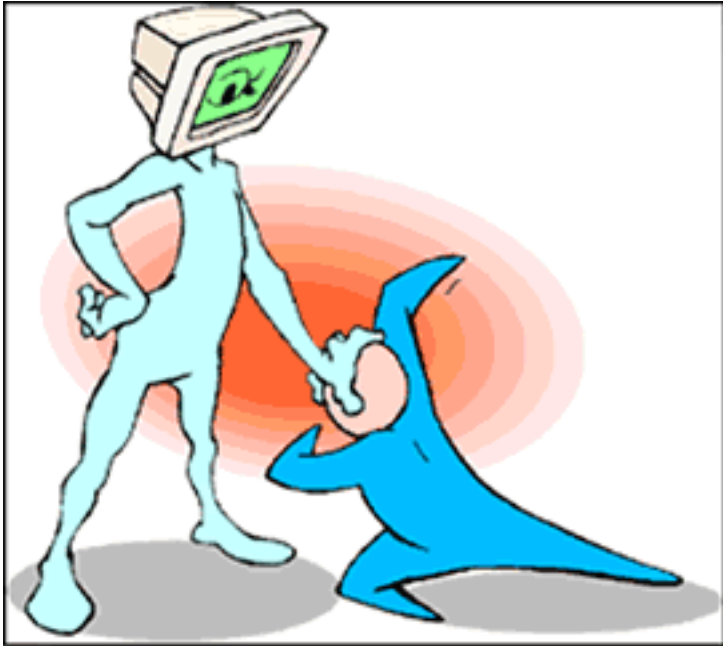
You should expect bias on webpages that are dedicated to selling you something. Additionally, webpages dedicated to controversial topics are likely to have a bias.

Questions to keep in mind as you seek indicators of bias:

- What is the author's political point of view?
- What does the author stand to gain?
- Who is paying for the website?
- Does the author present alternate points of view?

- If so, are those views presented objectively, or with scorn

Propaganda Techniques Work on the Web



Propaganda is the dark side of bias. Propaganda techniques are designed to influence opinion by manipulating the truth. A propagandist is completely biased in favor of some point of view.

Knowing propaganda techniques will help you analyze webpages, understand advertising, and recognize bias when you see it.

Authors who use name-calling and strive to evoke fear are using tried and true propaganda techniques. Appealing to the group, using glittering generalizations, and relying on testimonials are very persuasive techniques, especially if the audience is unaware of how propagandists operate.

Understanding Propaganda

For in depth information on propaganda techniques consider visiting these sites:

- [Disinfopedia](#) (Index of topic information.)
- [Yahoo Search Directory: Propaganda](#) (Index of topic information.)
- [Recognizing Propaganda Techniques and Errors of Faulty Logic](#) (Cuesta College Information page.)
- [Propaganda Techniques in Literature and Online Political Ads](#) (9-12 Lesson Plan rich in resources.)

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End of Micromodule - Bias.

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