



CTV BOARD OF DIRECTORS

SPECIALIZED AGENCY

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Land Acknowledgement

Vanier College is located on the unceded land known as Tiohtià:ke (Montreal) of indigenous peoples who considered this place as home for centuries. The steward of the land is Kanien'kéha Nation, a part of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, who have established strong ties between their lifestyles and the land.

Throughout the conference, the VMUN secretariats encourage all participants to acknowledge this, and appreciate the resources we are given access to.



Letters from Dais

Hello Delegates,

I am Théa-Maria, and I will be your chair for VMUN 2023! This is my second time chairing and I can say that I have fallen in love with the job, which is why I cannot wait to see what you have to bring to the table during this conference weekend. The CTV committee is centered around two very relevant and modern topics that affect our everyday consumption of media. Misinformation and misrepresentation are just a few of the common threats we face when processing large amounts of information. Whether it is in essays, presentations, MUN committees, or even day-to-day conversations, the media has a huge imprint on our lives. Therefore, I truly hope that you will take this committee to heart, and give your best shot when it comes to finding effective solutions to the issues in question. In my three years in Model UN, I have learned that the best way to succeed in a committee is to research properly. It is really that simple. Researching will gradually build your confidence and knowledge about the topic at hand. Before you know it, you find yourself articulating your thoughts as smoothly as they flood your mind, all because you've grasped so much. Ergo, I urge you to research, research, and research as much as you can, to grow certain about your character's stances and opinions. Of course, I also encourage you to come with an open mind, and a desire to learn! On that note, I wish you best of luck in your preparations and look forward to meeting you!

Sincerely,

Théa-Maria El-Moutran

Chair



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Dear Delegates,

I am Gabrielle Starenkyj Perron, and I will be your Co-Chair for VMUN 2023! I am more than excited to see what this committee will accomplish, as delegates will be tackling pressing issues regarding the future of media in developing countries and its impacts on democracies all around the world. I have been involved in MUN since 2021, and can truly say that conferences are one of the best places to learn and grow as individuals, as you are constantly confronted with different perspectives, all of which sometimes bring you to reevaluate your beliefs. The CTV committee will require delegates to think outside the box to find long-term solutions to issues that affect in and everyone's daily lives. Our democratic institutions are constantly being targeted because of fake news and propaganda, this committee will have to answer these urgent matters, while also forging a mediatic path in developing countries. Now, delegates, I suggest you research thoroughly and are ready for one hell of a ride! Be ready to debate and produce creative solutions. Finally, I hope you have a fun weekend with us and learn a thing or two.

See you soon!

Gabrielle Starenkyj Perron

Co-Chair.



Committee Overview

Welcome to the CTV Board of Directors ! As part of this honorary board, you will be developing solutions to two major topics all throughout the conference weekend: mainstream media in developing countries and increased polarization due to media.

Mainstream media plays a crucial role in shaping public opinion and influencing policies. However, access to quality information and media outlets is often limited in developing countries. As members of the CTV Board of Directors, you will be tasked with developing solutions to address this issue, and develop ways to introduce further mainstream media in countries of the global south. In parallel, the rise of polarization due to the media is another pressing issue that requires immediate attention. As media outlets become increasingly partisan and biased, individuals are becoming more divided and polarized. It is up to you, delegates, to find solutions to this modern and pressing concern that affects democracy on every level.

Throughout the conference, you will have the opportunity to engage in lively debates, propose solutions, and collaborate with other delegates to develop comprehensive and effective strategies to address the issues at hand. Hence, you are expected to work together towards a more informed and inclusive board of directors that values the importance of quality news and media.



Topic 1: The Introduction of Mainstream Media in Developing Countries

Media as the power to bring us all together. Whether it be sharing good news or bad, traditional media and social media have become an integral part of our lives and political systems. However, as the media increases, so does the desire to have access to it and its benefit also grows, especially in developing countries. Therefore, Topic 1 seeks to explore the impacts, benefits and feasibility in the introduction of mass media in developing countries.

History of Media

To understand the place that media holds in society today, one must acknowledge its history and evolution.

It all began with the printing machine, created by Johannes Gutenberg, allowed for the mass creation of media, which Friedrich Koenig then industrialised in the early 1800s. These developments paved the way for the daily newspaper, which helped the 19th century's urbanised and mechanised populace to come together.¹ Fast forward to a post World War II time, the United States was prosperous with the introduction of mass media. For example, radio gave marketers a way to reach a large audience in the 20th century, which helped fuel the Great Depression of the 1930s and the 1920s materialism.² Furthermore, television saw a boom following World War II, both domestically and internationally, though some have argued that this homogenization was caused by the consolidation of control among only three main networks.³

¹ [Author removed at request of original publisher], "1.3 The Evolution of Media."

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.



There were more channels but perhaps not necessarily a more varied ownership mix as a result of the expansion of cable and later deregulation in the 1980s and 1990s. This monopoly over the industry was later argued in court with antitrust lawsuits brought forth by the Federal Communications Commission, which went from the West to the East Coast.⁴ The industry of mass media has, thus, been on the rise for ages now, but despite its rapid growth developing countries are only starting to have access to its benefits.

Media Development and its Challenges

Everyone is aware that knowledge is a type of strength. More than ever, the Third World nations are aware of this. They are urging the creation of a new global communication system because of this. They believe that this is just as pressing as creating a new global economic system. Formerly thinking they had escaped colonialism, the newly developed independent nations now recognise that their continued development is in jeopardy.⁵ Their requests for a new economic order will go unmet unless there is a significant improvement in the global information dissemination system. What will be worse, in my view, is that their cultures will deteriorate and merge into the dull uniformity of Holiday Inns, McDonald's, and Levi's.

Definitions for the different types of media sectors

Community media

⁴ Boddy, "The Studios Move into Prime Time: Hollywood and the Television Industry in the 1950s."

⁵ Mitchell, "A Reflection on Media in the Third World."



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These are modest, nonprofit businesses (like neighbourhood radio stations) that seek to represent and serve their local community's needs. Community media organisations frequently face significant funding challenges.⁶

State-owned media

have the largest audiences but are frequently criticised for having a government slant (or being susceptible to political pressure), an emphasis on metropolitan problems, a lack of professional news, and bad programming due to under-resourcing.⁷

Private media

private media outlets are typically motivated by financial gain and contingent on advertising revenues. They may also be affected by commercial interests or the government, for example, through tax breaks or government ads. Additionally, a concentration on financial gains may result in a homogenization of programming and a leaning towards entertainment over educational material.⁸

PSB : Public Service Broadcasting Public Service Broadcasting (PSB) works within a defined legal structure and experiences significant authority over programming and material, in contrast to both state-owned and private media. PSB is frequently supported by public donations and taxes.⁹

In reality, poor professional reporting standards, a dearth of funding, inadequate technological know-how, disjointed legal frameworks, and an undemocratic political system are frequently barriers to media growth.¹⁰ Additionally, there is a chance that in patronage societies, the media

⁶ Haider, Mcloughlin, and Scott, "Media development."

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.



won't be able to overcome its political restraints, will function as a clientelistic ally, or will be taken by private interests (a phenomenon known as "media capture").¹¹ In these conditions, it is unclear how and if donors can guarantee that assisting the media will serve the public good. In particular, can and should contributors favour certain media outlets and media organisations over others? Moreover, changes in the media landscape, in particular the rise of information and communication technologies, also require changes to the way in which media development is conceptualised.¹² Donors can no longer conceive of conventional media as a stand-alone platform for communication, but need to integrate both Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and traditional platforms in media development discourse and practice.¹³ These reflections are the only way to ensure that media in developing countries are introduced for the right reasons and to protect the freedom of speech media provides.

The Impacts of Mainstream Media in Developing countries

The implementation of mainstream media in developing countries can bring a lot of change and good. For example, with the introduction of mass media in Tunisia and Egypt, people were able to connect with one another through social media sites like Facebook and Twitter and start campaigns and public demonstrations.¹⁴ People in developing nations can interact with individuals they ordinarily wouldn't have the opportunity to speak to because they have access to social media. Furthermore, communication can be challenging in many nations due to the

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Borgen Project, "The Positive Impact of Mass Media in Developing Countries - The Borgen Project."



separation of regional and official dialects as well as problems with literacy.¹⁵ With the aid of social media bridges can be built between these gaps. For example, There is a radio station in India that honours local culture and customs while providing news in the local tongues.¹⁶ Moreover, the media can serve as a monitor for the general public's interest in a variety of ways. One of the main ways is to create public awareness regarding what is happening in businesses and government institutions. The media plays an important role in providing people with opportunities to be aware and act against injustice, oppression and misdeeds.¹⁷ On the other hand, media can also be used to facilitate the sharing of extreme ideologies or propaganda. Finally, media, like mass radio transmission, can provide important information regarding health. For instance, Burkina Faso urged parents to take their ill children to the neighbourhood hospitals for treatment. With this massive healthcare outreach, thousands of lives were spared by urging people to bring their children to medical centres.¹⁸ This straightforward method of inspiring others and raising consciousness of specific diseases was made feasible by a straightforward radio broadcast.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.



Questions to consider

- Should Western Media Entreprises be able to implement their media platforms in developing? Why?
- What are the positive and negative repercussions of the introduction of mass media in developing countries?
- How can mass media be introduced in developing countries, while still respecting the cultural boundaries of countries?



Topic 2: The Rise of Polarization in Media

The media landscape has undergone a significant transformation over the last few decades, with the proliferation of cable news, social media, and the internet. However, this transformation has also led to a rise in polarization in the media, caused by people increasingly getting their news from sources that align with their political beliefs. This topic will tackle the rise of polarization in the media, with a specific focus on fake news, and misinformation. It will also explore the repercussions of this phenomenon, including its impact on public opinion, political discourse, and democracy.

Definitions

Before we dive into this issue, it is important to note the differences between misinformation, disinformation, and fake news. Misinformation has been established as false information that is spread “unintentionally or unknowingly”.¹⁹ Constrastingly, disinformation entails the purposeful spread of information, with the deliberate intent to mislead.²⁰ Finally, fake news refers to “purposefully crafted, sensational, emotionally charged, misleading or totally fabricated information that mimics the form of mainstream news”.²¹ It is important to know the difference between misinformation, disinformation, and fake news because it allows for better understanding of the sources and motivations behind the spread of information. Furthermore, understanding the distinction between misinformation, disinformation, and fake news, facilitates

¹⁹ Wardle, “Understanding Information disorder.”

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Zimdars and McLeod, *Fake News: Understanding Media and Misinformation in the Digital Age*.



the fight against polarization by combating the spread of false political information. In fact, exposure to false or misleading information can reinforce existing biases and beliefs, leading to increased polarization and a lack of trust in opposing viewpoints.

Media outlets and polarization

The repercussions of the rise of polarization in media, fake news, and misinformation are significant, and have concerning repercussions on public opinion. When people get their news from sources that are aligned with their political beliefs, they are more likely to believe information that confirms their biases and dismiss information that contradicts them. This phenomenon is known as confirmation bias and can lead to more polarization within societies.²²

Another repercussion of fake news and misinformation is that they negatively impact political discourse. When news networks are highly polarized, they often focus on sensational stories and opinion-driven coverage.²³ This can lead to more divisive political discourse, where people are less likely to engage in civil discussion and compromise. The rise of polarization in media has also been linked to the decline of trust in the media, with many people viewing the media as biased and untrustworthy. This in turn leads to the most dangerous repercussion: effects on democracy.

A healthy democracy depends on an informed citizenry that is able to make informed decisions based on accurate information. When fake news and misinformation are widespread, it becomes more difficult for individuals to make informed decisions. The rise of polarization in the media has also been linked to the decline of political participation, as people are less likely to engage in

²² Farnam Street, "Confirmation Bias And the Power of Disconfirming Evidence - Farnam Street."

²³ McCarthy, "A look behind Real Raw News' sensational (and fabricated) headlines."

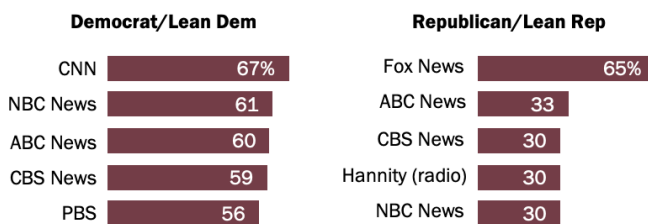


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political discussions and activities. This is largely due to social media, and it's trend of prioritizing attention-grabbing content over accurate and reliable news, through complex algorithms. This, in turn, leads to the amplification of extreme or partisan viewpoints, which can further entrench individuals in their ideological positions.²⁴

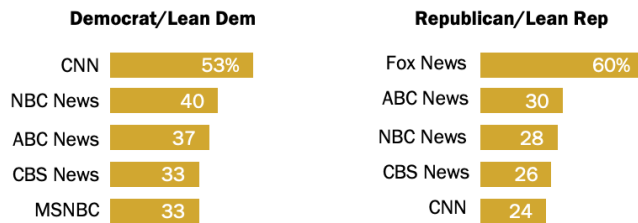
Republicans place trust in one source, Fox News, far more than any other ...

% who trust each source for political and election news (first 5 shown)



... and rely on Fox News far more for political news

% who got political and election news from each source in the past week (first 5 shown)



Note: Order of outlets does not necessarily indicate statistically significant differences.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Oct. 29-Nov. 11, 2019.

"U.S. Media Polarization and the 2020 Election: A Nation Divided"

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Differences between media outlets; CTV, Fox News, *New York Times

There are significant differences between media outlets in terms of their political orientation, editorial style, and content. CTV is known to have a moderate stance, and its objective news coverage is often seen as a counterbalance to the more partisan American news networks. CTV

²⁴ Barrett, Hendrix, and Sims, "How tech platforms fuel U.S. political polarization and what government can do about it."



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covers Canadian news and international news, with a particular focus on Canadian politics. CTV's coverage is well-respected in Canada, and the network is often viewed as a trusted source of news. Fox News, a conservative news network, has been at the forefront of polarization in the media. Founded in 1996 by media mogul Rupert Murdoch, Fox News quickly established itself as a leading conservative voice.²⁵ Fox News is known for its opinion-driven programming, which is often critical of the mainstream media and the left. Finally, the New York Times is a prominent American newspaper that is generally considered to have a liberal bias and often takes editorial positions on issues in addition to its news reporting. The New York Times is known for its in-depth reporting on a wide range of topics, and excellent editorial skills.²⁶ Thus, media outlets of the like have an immense impact on political perception of individuals.

Case Study: 2016 US Presidential Elections

The 2016 US Presidential election brought attention to political tactics such as fake news, propaganda, disinformation, and polarization, and raised questions about their impact on American democracy. Fake news, amplified by social media and "echo chambers," may have played a role in Donald J. Trump's victory and furthered division and polarization in society. During the election, both major candidates and their supporters were accused of spreading false information and propaganda in order to gain an advantage. One notable example was the so-called "Pizzagate" conspiracy theory, which alleged that Hillary Clinton and her campaign chairman John Podesta were running a child sex trafficking ring out of a Washington, D.C. pizza

²⁵ Ray, "Fox News Channel | History, TV Shows, Hosts, & Facts."

²⁶ The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, "The New York Times."



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restaurant.²⁷ Despite being widely debunked, the theory gained traction among some Trump supporters and was even cited as a motive for a shooting at the restaurant in December 2016.²⁸ Fake news as such only has detrimental impacts on voter turnouts, as those often end up reflecting a misinformed voter population. A study by Gunther et al. (2018), demonstrates that voters encountering fake news are much more likely to switch their political party of preference.²⁹ In fact, said study analyzed the voter turnout of 585 participants who believe one of three fake news: Pope Francis having endorsed Donald J. Trump, an Isis leader having urged his supporters to support Hilary Clinton, and finally, Martin Luther King Jr.'s bust having been taken down from the White House, by none other than Donald J. Trump. Thus, it has been proven that participants believing one of these fake news, were almost four times more likely to switch their vote from Democratic to Republican.³⁰ Clearly, media outlets contribute to political polarization, by reinforcing pre-existing beliefs, creating echo chambers, and increasing distrust in the media. This, of course, is without mentioning the role of social media in exacerbating these trends, by amplifying extreme viewpoints and enabling the spread of misinformation.³¹

²⁷ Nelson, "What is Pizzagate? The fake news scandal involving Hilary Clinton and Wikileaks explained - and why it's trending amid Epstein inquiry."

²⁸ Miller, "The Pizzagate gunman is out of prison. Conspiracy theories are out of control."

²⁹ Gunther, Beck, and Nisbet, "Fake News May Have Contributed to Trump's 2016 Victory."

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Roscini, "How The American Media Landscape is Polarizing the Country."



Questions to consider

- What are the underlying factors contributing to the rise of polarization in the media?
- What is the impact of fake news, propaganda, and disinformation on political discourse and democracy worldwide?
- What steps can be taken to address the issue of polarization in the media and combat the spread of fake news and misinformation?



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Character List

Wade Oosterman	President Bell Media
Karine Moses	Senior Vice-President, Content Development and News
Wendy Freeman	Vice-President, CTV News
Peter Angione	Director of News & Information Programming for Bell Media Ottawa
Anderson Cooper	Primary Anchor of the CNN news broadcast show “Anderson Cooper 360”
Rupert Murdoch	Chairman of Fox Corporations and Executive Chairman of News Corp.
Faisal Al-Quassim	Al Jazeera, Host of “The Opposite Direction”
Rachel Madow	American television news program host and political commentator.
Omar Sachedina	Chief News Anchor and Senior Editor for CTV’s national evening newscast
Lea Salamé	Journalist on France24 and host of the “Quelle Époque!” talk-show.
Hu Shuli	Editor in Chief of Caixin Media



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