### Civics & Economics CE.9 -

### Role of the Media (new 2023 standards)

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## CE.9a – Role and Rights of the Press in Reporting Events

a) explain the role and rights of the press in reporting events

**Freedom of the Press** means the government cannot control what the media publishes or broadcasts. This is protected by the **First Amendment** to the U.S. Constitution.

The **press** includes newspapers, TV, radio, online news sites, and blogs.

A **free press** is essential to democracy because it:



Freedom of the Press is protected by the First Amendment

- Informs citizens about events and issues.
- Investigates and reports on government actions.
- Provides a platform for different viewpoints.
- Holds leaders accountable

**Example: Investigative journalists** exposing corruption, such as in the Watergate scandal, which led to President Nixon's resignation.

## **CE.9b – Effect of Biased Reporting on Public Opinion**

b) describe the effect biased reporting can have on public opinion

The media informs policymakers and **influences public policy**.

**Media bias** occurs when a news outlet presents information in a way that **favors one perspective** over another.

Bias can show up in:

- The choice of words or tone.
- Which facts are included or left out.
- The images used.

#### Impact: Biased reporting can:

- Influence how people view events or candidates.
- Cause group polarization (people only listening to sources that agree with them).
- Reduce tolerance for different viewpoints.

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**Example:** Two news channels covering the same protest might portray it either as peaceful civic action or as disorderly, depending on their perspective.

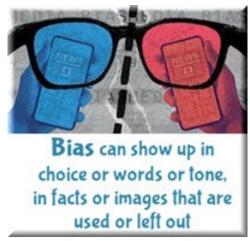
## CE.9c – Role of Individuals in Policy-Making Through Media

c) explain the role that individuals play in the political policymaking process by expressing their opinions formally or informally via print media, electronic media, or in-person

Citizens can **influence government** policy by **sharing their opinions**:

- **Print media** Letters to the editor in newspapers or magazines.
- **Electronic media** Emails to officials, online petitions, opinion pieces.
- In-person Speaking at public meetings, rallies, or community forums.
- **Social media** Posting about issues, using hashtags to raise awareness.

**Example:** Social media campaigns like #MeToo brought national attention to harassment and influenced workplace policy changes.



# CE.9d – Effect of Social Media on Campaigns, Politics, and Civic Discourse

d) evaluate the effect of social media on political campaigns, politics, and civic discourse

**Social media platforms** like Instagram, TikTok, X (Twitter), and Facebook have transformed politics by:



An echo chambers is where people only see opinions they already agree with.

- Allowing candidates to reach voters instantly.
- Giving citizens a voice to share opinions widely.
- Enabling grassroots fundraising and organizing.

#### Positive effects:

- Quick spread of information.
- Encourages participation from younger voters.

#### **Negative effects:**

- Spread of misinformation.
- Heated or disrespectful online debates (poor civic discourse).
- **Echo chambers**, where people only see opinions they already agree with.

### **CE.9e – Identifying Sources and Possible Bias**

e) identify the source of information and consider possible motivations or biases of its creator

- Check who created it Is it a journalist, organization, political group?
- Ask why it was created To inform? Persuade? Sell something?
- Look for loaded language or selective facts.
- Consider funding sources Who supports the platform or person?

**Example:** A climate change article from a scientific journal is likely more fact-based than one funded by a fossil fuel company.

#### **CE.9f – Evaluating Multiple Sources**

f) evaluate multiple sources describing the same event or idea and reflecting on the reasons for any discrepancies

When **different sources** describe the same event, details can vary because of:

- Different eyewitness perspectives.
- Intentional focus on certain facts.
- Time constraints in reporting.
- Bias or editorial decisions.

#### Best practice for informed citizens:

- Compare multiple credible sources.
- Look for common facts across reports.
- Think critically about why differences exist.

**Big Picture:** A free and responsible media is crucial for:

- Holding leaders accountable.
- Providing accurate, diverse perspectives.
- Helping citizens make informed decisions