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Chapter 8
Individual Journalistic Bias Leads to Public Propaganda:
The Integration of Social Intuitionist Model (SIM) and Hierarchy of Influences Model (HIM)

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ABSTRACT

The social intuitionist model (SIM) highlights the superiority of intuitive emotions over reasoning process in the link of moral judgment and reasoning, addressing the issues of private or individual intuitions of moral judgments on an interpersonal communication level. While the SIM can be applied to explain why journalists are biased and prone to producing intuitive news stories, the hierarchy of influences model (HIM) offers a theoretical framework that affects media content, which journalists and media organizations create in a social and cultural approach to propaganda. This chapter explores how the integration of SIM and HIM demonstrates the path to propagandistic news stories manufactured by intuitive journalists and their biased news outlets on the macro social structure level.

INTRODUCTION

Since the Social Intuitionist Model (SIM) of moral judgment was introduced by Jonathan Haidt (2001), scholars from a wide range of different academic fields have engaged in the discussion of how humans make moral reasoning and justify their action or belief. Such fields include psychology, religion, neuroscience, philosophy, journalism, and business (Andersen, 2018; Dedeke, 2015; Jung, 2012; Kennett & Fine, 2009; Leffel et al., 2015). They critique, agree, or disagree with the Haidt's descriptive model,

which argues humans in a biased way feel a need to support their moral judgments when asked by others. The SIM places more weight on intuitive emotions over reasoning process in the link of moral judgment and reasoning. The core of the SIM is to demonstrate how humans struggling with everyday moral decisions end up making the final moral judgments in a complicated and biased way, beginning from confronting a situation, eliciting intuitions, processing moral reasoning to justifying final moral judgments. More important, the SIM emphasizes that most humans are not accustomed to adopting logic or reason immediately when attending to physical reactions, as opposed to the claims of rationalists who advocate the fundamental human ability of making rationalized moral decisions from logic, not intuition from the brain.

In association with the SIM, behavioral economist Daniel Kahneman (2011) characterizes the human brain as having two systems regrading moral judgment: System 1 – the intuitive system and System 2 – the reasoning system. The former describes human moral judgments as a rapid process of spontaneous, impulsive, emotional, and unconscious decision-making, while the latter is based on reasoning deliberately processes situations through thinking and careful analysis to arrive at rational moral judgments. The SIM highlights the key role of System 1, in which moral judgments occur at lightning speed first, and then System 2 follows as a conscious product to justify the conclusion of intuitive moral judgments. Moral reasoning is located between the process to bridge the gap. In short, moral judgments arise as a result of the intuitive natural reaction to human situations, and reasoning not as a major player but as a substitute takes part in justifying biased post hoc justification.

THE SIM AND SIX LINKS OF WEIRDNESS

To emphasize the SIM as a descriptive model not a prescriptive one, Haidt (2001) conceptualizes the human moral judgment process with six basic links in the SIM. They are (1) intuitive judgment, (2) post hoc reasoning, (3) reasoned persuasion, (4) social persuasion, (5) reasoned judgment and (6) private reflection. Individual moral judgments by intuitions are applied to the first four (Links 1- 4), while the last two are used for a group of or a majority of normal people by reasoning. It is worth noting that these links focus on an exploration and illustration of how humans make a quick judgment on the rightness or wrongness of an action, similar to the expression of gut feelings on moral judgments. All the links together complete the process of moral reasoning likely to be a post hoc attempt to justify an individual initial judgment.

Rather than destroying moral reasoning, the SIM replaces it with the post hoc reasoning link where an individual judgment arises as a means of justifying a decision he or she already made based on biased intuitions. For example, individuals reacted to the story of Joe Biden's Son, Hunter, who started a romantic and sexual bond with the widow of his late brother, Beau, in May 2015. When given such a story of incestuous affair, an individual would intuitively say "no" although the true story clearly makes no harm to other people. Haidt (2001) assumes that most people say something like "I just know it's wrong, I can't explain it" (p. 814). Not surprisingly, real people on Twitter say of the story, "weird or bizarre." Since the origin of the SIM departed from the question of "what model of moral judgment allows a person to know that something is wrong without knowing why?" the first link of intuitive judgment on the story is made quickly in an effortless and unconscious fashion (p. 814). The gut feeling of intuition drives moral judgment first and foremost, according to "good-bad" or "yes-no" or "normal-weird" categories.

In other words, individual moral judgment is already a done deal, and the rest is all about the process of justifying the individual moral judgment if asked why by others.

In the case of Hunter Biden, Link 2, post hoc reasoning, plays an important role in yielding effortful reasoning as a means of moral judgments. If someone found the affair "weird," and was asked to explain why, the person is expected to be engaged in searching for a moral argument that would support the already-made "weird" judgment. Sleegers, Proulxb, and Beesta (2019) argue that humans were born with psychological tendency "to search for, interpret, favor and recall information in a way" that confirms their preexisting beliefs (p. 76). Once their minds about a moral situation is made, humans tend to disregard information that conflicts with their pre-existing beliefs. In psychology, this process is known as confirmation bias, in which humans seek only evidence which justifies what they already believe rather while disregarding contradicting information (Sellgers, Proulxb, & Beesta, 2019). As the Hunter Biden affair may be morally judged as weird by an individual, reasoning for the "weird" judgement depends on the biased search that supports the intuition of weirdness. There is no effort to make an effortful judgment between intuitive judgment and post hoc reasoning. No reasoning is needed to make an unbiased judgment since the first gut reaction was made and justified by the natural tendency of confirmation bias.

Link 3, reasoned persuasion, is an extra attempt after post hoc reasoning. The attempt involves a justification process of convincing others that the individual's already-made "weird" moral judgment on Hunter Biden should sound intuitively reasonable to other listeners. For example, the individual expects others to agree with his moral intuition, saying, "It just sounds weird to me to make love to my brother's wife right after his death, don't you feel the same way? I bet your gut says so." Very little of logically compelling arguments in Link 3 can occur in terms of persuading others, but emotionally triggered intuitions can have a great influence on those who have biased attitudes. The self-convinced individual after post hoc reasoning tends to convince others with intuitive interactions instead of rational or logical ones. Because the individual's moral intuition is shaped by past experiences and present beliefs, moral decisions tend to be emotionally customized for his self-assured confirmation on moral judgment with others.

Link 4, social persuasion, offers a continuous process of an individual's making a moral judgement on a social level. While Link 3 focuses on an individual's effort to convince others, Link 4 explains how others as a group can have a moral impact on the individual. For example, a group of conservative friends can exert a direct influence on a politically independent individual about the affair of Hunter Biden by calling it a weirdly incestuous event. The individual simply with not much of thinking or reasoning about it accepts the moral judgement and agrees with the group's decision. As the agreement within the group is morally settled without any opposite or different opinions, moral reasoning by the individual can barely raise an objection. Hewlin (2017) conceptualizes such a moral agreement as a facade of conformity, in which members outwardly conform to group values such as "obedience to authority and individual propensities to conform and cooperate" in group settings (p. 180). In so doing, the individual intuitively attempts to eschew moral incongruence with others.

The four links proposed by Haidt as the four fundamentals of the SIM (2001) describe how humans arrive at a personally biased moral judgment on confrontational situations while skipping the procedure of rational and conscious decision making. Although a wealth of research has introduced factors that play a significant role in making moral judgments other than intuitions, including personal goals, preferences, social influence, and situational events, it is obvious that human intuitions are much more powerful when it comes to making moral judgements, which directly links gut feelings of mind and spirit.

Such gut feelings are derived from the millions of nerve cells of the human brain, especially from the subconscious part of neurotransmission from gut sensory epithelial cells (Hoffman & Lumpkin, 2018). In a similar vein, a prevailing theory in neuroscience suggests that humans make moral decisions from "integrated global calculations that occur within the frontal cortex of the brain" (Hathaway, 2019, para. 1). Another army of neuroscientists empirically found that the frontal lobe of the brain affects the typical development and maturation of moral decision making (Benton, 1991; Eslinger et al., 2009; Zahn et al., 2007). If the frontal lobe is damaged, the maturation of cognition and emotions of humans is directly connected to deficits in moral decision making. As a result, human brain adopts "neural activation patterns associated with cognition and emotion involved in moral judgments" (Eslinger et al., 2009, p. 160).

Haidt (2001) and other neuroscientists highlight the power of intuitions in making moral decisions, including the process of when moral reasoning relies on the intuitive output and when it engages more effortful logic among the four links. These links demonstrate a theory that humans seldom change their initial intuitive judgments on a personal level even after they are given enough evidence of the wrongness of the judgements. The evidence inspires a reasoning process, but humans as biased individuals tend to ignore the evidence to stick to their initial gut feeling of judgment. For example, if the weird feeling toward Hunter Biden's affair arrives at an individual's moral judgment, any evidence telling that Hunter and his sister-in-law had never done anything wrong while his brother was alive would not affect the individual's capability of engaging in private moral reasoning within the four links. However, as Aristotle defined human beings as rational animals, some humans are possibly able to change their initial intuitive moral judgments by "mulling the matter over by themselves" (Haidt, 2001, p. 819). The last two links – reasoned judgment and private reflection – allow a particular group of people to facilitate strong moral reasoning to reach moral judgments despite its rarity. Link 5, reasoned judgment, suggests that only highly trained philosophers are capable of overriding their initial intuitions through effortful logic because private self-reasoning is a state of being rational out of reason, not out of instinct. However, the initial intuitive judgment may still exist under the surface of reasoned judgment even with philosophers because intuitions are stubborn. Link 6, private reflection, arises when the individual, after thorough moral reasoning from the initial intuition, reaches a new intuition that overrides the initial intuitive judgment. Such an event usually takes place when the individual takes a different role. For example, an individual who emotionally felt weird about the Hunter affair at first may change the feeling to sympathy after putting himself/herself into the Hunter's shoes. The final judgment comes after moral reasoning "on the basis of the conscious application of a rule of principle" (Haidt, 2001, p. 819). Both Link 5 and Link 6, as opposed to the SIM's fundamental four links, represent more rationalism, the viewpoint that considers reasoning the main link of intellectual knowledge. Therefore, the SIM advocates Link 1, 2, 3, and 4, in which the theory focuses on addressing the issues of private or individual intuitions of moral judgments on an interpersonal communication level. Most important, the SIM states that individual moral judgments are made by motivated tendencies that make reasoning biased. Haidt (2001) and Liao (2011) claim that moral reasoning is biased only on a personal level.

MASS COMMUNICATION AND THE SIM

The SIM clearly posits that moral judgements unconsciously arise when human activities are triggered by intuitive tendencies of personal bias and spontaneous gut feelings from social and cultural experiences. The theory embraces individual moral emotions and intuitions, associated with interpersonal

communication in pursuit of an exchange of persuasive information between people who have direct influence on each other (Zollo, 2020). The SIM is heavily preferred by a collection of researchers in the fields of interpersonal communication and psychology in that they attempt to analyze how individuals end up making moral judgments with their innate bias contrary to logical reasoning. Quick and automatic intuitions by individuals lead to moral judgments that influence other individuals on the interpersonal communication level, especially for Link 3 and Link 4.

This chapter, however, demonstrates that an individual's biased moral judgment does not have to limit its impact to a small number of individuals, but can influence the general public. Although the SIM on the interpersonal communication level focuses on shedding light on persuasion through personal communicative interactions, it can expand the focus on the mass communication level through the media such as television, newspapers, and social media platforms. In a nutshell, an individual's biased moral judgment affects not only several other individuals but a majority of people in society if the individual acts as a journalist or an opinion leader/influencer.

According to former President Donald Trump, journalists are biased, and they manufacture and spread fake news (Alexander, 2020). While most journalists were committed to gunning for Republicans by exploiting their capability of using mass communication tools, few bothered themselves to produce a fair amount of national news during the Trump administration era (Goldberg, 2020). Even Democratic Governor of New York Andrew Cuomo, who exchanged insults in the media with Trump, agreed with him, saying at a press conference, "There are reporters who just are unprofessional, don't know the facts and ask really biased questions" (Evans, 2020, papa. 4). Unlike a biased individual who reaches a moral judgment out of instinctive feelings with trivial impacts on others, biased journalists have the power of wielding massive influence on the public through the way they set news agendas and frame news stories. The SIM explains that individual reasoning is biased, and such bias originates from the individual's intuitive feeling of anger, disgust or other emotion with a limited impact on others. However, the SIM can be extended to the level of a huge impact on the public if the individual is an influential person like a journalist, an opinion leader or influencer. A theoretical combination of the SIM and the hierarchy of influences model (HIM) provides explanatory frameworks for understanding how human intuitions with biased individual moral reasoning affects public moral judgments in the public sphere, as well as individual moral judgments in the private sphere.

Whereas the SIM is categorized as a psychological theory for interpersonal communication,

the HIM is considered a social theory for mass communication. From a social-psychology perspective, mass communication sends tailored messages through biased journalists in a form of objective media stories to a large audience unknown to each other, so the audience as a mass forms public opinion guided by such messages that are interpreted by biased opinion leaders who are self-righteous at psychologically persuading those failing to interpret the meaning of messages (Glynn, 2004). Mass communication theories aim to explain the influential procedure of persuasive messages toward the public, embracing key players such as journalists, opinion leaders, the media, and public opinion. Journalists play the key role in sensationalizing public sentiment that engages public moral judgments in theory and practice. Journalists as news professionals are bound to gather, update and correct information throughout the life of an unbiased news story (SPJ Code of Ethics, 2014), but they as intuitive individuals are entitled to have the freedom of expressing emotional values grounded in the sentiments. It might be natural for the journalist as a human being to have an emotional preference and biased tendency in moral making situations, but as a professional under ethical code of conduct the journalist is supposed to make unbiased moral judgments with obligation that asks to support the open and civil exchange of views, which

even the journalist finds emotionally repugnant (SPJ Code of Ethics, 2014). Wilkins (2011) argues that journalists tend to face the dilemma of implementing professional ethical behavior – moral action – while negotiating between two of the profession's most ethical philosophical tenants: "freedom and responsibility" (p. 804). Although emotions affect the process of making imperfect moral judgments on an individual level, journalists are "theoretically and practically" subject to reasonable unbiases that appear to trump intuitions for their occupational responsibility (p. 807).

Within political or democratic society journalists have duties and obligations to hold their acts and influences morally accountable. Unlike media consumers, they are trained to use professional rationality instead of emotions when reporting stories in an unbiased fashion. It should not be them but the media consumers who decide what is right or wrong about reported issues on television or in press. Fox News Channel used the slogans "Fair and Balanced," and "We Report, You Decide," which in fact symbolize the core concepts of any kinds of news and journalistic principle: fairness and unbiasedness for both-sides. It is no secret that Fox News journalists manufacture biased reporting in favor of Republican politicians and conservative causes. However, other journalists of different news channels such as MSNBC and CNN are also far from being fair and unbiased while customizing favorable news for Democrats and liberal causes. Journalists recognize their role as servants of the people, neither of government nor of the powerful. From a social justice perspective, they are supposed to serve as the channels through which fair information flows to ordinary people. Their vital role in any democratic society is to position themselves as watchdogs to protect civil rights and fight corruption, but it unexpectedly guarantees the power of controlling the media and influencing the public. The HIM illustrates and explains how journalists armed with biased intuitions function as nothing but propagandists in collaboration with emotional opinion leaders in political or democratic society. More important, the theory offers us a platform to illustrate who can produce unbiased news, what counts as public opinion, and whose interest journalists serve with what empathetic or antagonizing intuitions in a professional capacity.

THE HIERARCHY OF INFLUENCES MODEL (HIM) AND THE SIM

The hierarchy of influences model (HIM) offers a theoretical framework that affects media content, including professional issues of journalists and larger macro social structures, considering factors at multiple levels of analysis (Reese & Shoemaker, 2016). Such levels include from the micro to the macro: (1) individual characteristics of specific news workers, (2) their routines of work, (3) organizational-level concerns, (4) institutional issues, and (5) larger social systems. Coupled with the five levels, the HIM highlights "the multiple forces that simultaneously impinge on the media and suggest how influence at one level may interact with that at another" (Shoemaker & Reese, 2014, p. 1). According to the theory, although journalists can be used as mere tools of upper social class and their interests from a political economic perspective, their job performance can be guided by their own moral conviction.

As soon as the journalist makes moral decisions on a news story she is assigned to report as an individual news worker, she delves into the story by following news routines such as interviews and the deadline while focusing on highlighting news value of the story. The journalist can easily manufacture and frame how the story or a person in the story is viewed in a positive or negative light in the form of news. By taking a side based on her intuitions, the journalist is led by the post hoc moral reasoning link of the SIM to report a biased story. For example, Fox News anchor Maria Bartiromo accused journalists of the *New York Times* and CNN of becoming "the mouthpieces" for the Democratic Party, while she was

also to blame for being the same tool for the Republican Party (Morgan, 2020). Most journalists are stuck with intuitive mechanisms of bias they were born and raised with plus their individual characteristics, as the HIM states. This is where the SIM's post hoc reasoning link overlaps with the HIM's individual characteristics of specific news workers.

News is an organizational product, and journalists comply with their organizational goals and missions. Even disagreeing with news directions for biased stories, journalists on the organizational level embrace their organizational policies and economic imperatives through the chain of command. Now that more media outlets after mergers and acquisitions by the same industry (The *Wall Street Journal* by Rupert Murdoch's News Corp) or corporations (The *Washington Post* by Jeff Bezos's Amazon), media outlets enter into a structured dependency relationship with other major systemic players. This explains institutional issues of the HIM. Journalists know what kind of manufactured news stories their parent companies or owners expect; they deliver biased stories for them. This is where the HIM is similar to the SIM's social persuasion link, in which social forces elicit individuals' biased outward conformity. In other words, journalistic intuitions are trumped by social institutionalism on a macro level of analysis. For example, Fox News journalists covering the Republican debates for 2016 presidential candidates were given the mission of framing Donald Trump as the strongest presidential candidate among other Republican presidential hopefuls at a distinctive institutional stage. Finally, the HIM explains that the social system level is concerned with traditional theories of society and power that assume journalists' self-righteous balance of interests. When journalistic decision-making becomes problematic, "powerful interests become directly implicated, and more critical political economic explanations consider journalism to be an extension of class and corporate power" (Reese, 2016, para. 21). Journalists at this level have no autonomy in terms of how to report or frame stories in that they are obliged or expected to comply with the interests of media outlets and owners.

THE SIM AND THE PROPAGANDA MODEL

The SIM on an individual level and the HIM on a social level explain the reason journalists are intuitively biased, as well as institutionally obedient. Despite their proud professional pledge to objectivity or the pursuit of objective detachment, journalists are subject to a personal and cultural approach to biased evidence. As a result, biased practice of intuitive journalists manufactures propagandistic messages embedded in news stories. This process can be better analyzed by the propaganda model of Herman and Chomsky (1988) in collaboration with the SIM and the HIM. The propaganda model assumes that journalists and media outlets play central roles in disseminating information and persuading target audiences to promote the special interests of powerful groups that dominate the political and private economy while the processes of control on information are often unconscious (Klaehn, 2005). They function as effective and powerful ideological catalysts that carry out a system-supportive propaganda strategy by reliance on "market forces, internalized assumptions, and self-censorship" with covertly subconscious coercion (Herman & Chomsky, 1988, p. 306) Moreover, it concedes that journalists who work for mainstream news organizations with bigger salaries and higher reputation share common political, economic and social interests with the powerful and ruling class. The way they report stories reflects these interests because of both journalistic bias and market force.

The propaganda model suggests that public opinion, combined with journalistic bias and market interests, is manipulatively formed by elite institutional sectors that aim to manufacture public consent

for the powerful. Political parties and corporations are the main clients of subsidizing the mass media and gaining special access to the impact on journalists. Once more, journalists are human beings who make quick moral judgments guided by their individual intuitions and gut feelings, which lead to the establishment of media bias. Whereas journalistic objectivity requires journalists not be on either side of an argument and not be on selective evidence presentation, it is a difficult challenge for them to approach stories in an unbiased manner with unemotional intuitions. As the term *media bias* refers to the bias of journalists in the mass media sector, media bias has a great impact on the coverage of news events and stories in terms of how they can be portraited and framed. There exists a wide range of media bias, but popular are gatekeeping bias (decision on story selection/deselection), statement bias (preference of pro- or anti issue), mainstream bias (avoidance for offensive stories), corporate bias (favor for the owners of media), partisan bias (support for a particular political party) and false balance bias (skewed use of evidence). Since the last two biases are strongly connected with journalistic propaganda in mass communication, the propaganda model can be used to criticize journalists' political bias of news coverage with disproportionate amounts of evidence, slanted toward or against particular political figures or social issues. The emergence of mass media since the early 20th century enlightened journalists to practice unbiased reporting as an integral part of journalistic ethics during the Progressive Era, which recognized them as a powerful social force. However, mass communication as a mechanism for propaganda has developed a tendency in favor of either a liberal bias or a conservative bias, especially in the United States where mainstream news outlets hardly dispute the labeling of liberal or conservative identification. Rather than making an effort to maintain journalistic integrity of unbiased objectivity, the outlets cave into political and economic pressure by manufacturing meanings at intuitive and post hoc reasoning levels of the SIM.

Journalists serve the interests of their news outlets, which are profit-based operations. The larger size a media outlet they work, the higher tendency they seem to adapt their journalistic principles and practices to constrictions of ownership and political power. When their intuitive bias and their political obligation for the ownership are amalgamated, newsworthy events under their scrutinization are placed in a psychological process of infiltrating story directions, anti- or pro – events (Herman & Chomsky, 1988). Simply put, journalists are able to manufacture and push in meanings of the event, based on their intuitions and their organizational operations to reach a mass audience of viewers, listeners, and readers. The easiest tactic is the use of false balance bias, in which they only choose sources and evidence that support their biased reporting directions. If the journalist intuitively hated President Trump's border wall policies, he would focus on reporting the sensationalized tears of separated, detained families at the U.S. Border Patrol Central Processing Centers. Not only does it satisfy his journalistic intuition, but he would expect public support for his anti-border wall sentiment, which is expressed through his privilege of utilizing the media. Furthermore, it illustrates the steps of how public opinion can be formed and targeted by journalists via journalistic sensationalism or simply propaganda.

There is little doubt liberal journalists and conservative journalists call each other right or left propagandists. They turn out to be poor journalists and political propagandists especially when they handle the news about President Trump and President-elect Biden. Conservative news outlets such as Fox News Channel and the *Wall Street Journal* and liberal outlets such as CNN and the *Washington Post* did not bother to show their journalistic bias, and they wound up bringing the practice of propaganda journalism back to the Trump era. Journalists who covered the war intuitively hated the war and the U.S. involvement in it, treated "every major U.S. victory — and there were many — as defeats; every minor enemy success, no matter how small, was exaggerated and reported as a U.S. setback …. [even] the 1968 Tet

Offensive, which was a massive defeat for the North Vietnamese and the biggest U.S. victory in the war, but one that the media, especially television, turned into a defeat" (Lucas, 2020, para. 1-4). The wartime journalists sensationalized U.S. setbacks at the war, turning American public opinion against the Lyndon Johnson presidency, and the manipulated public opinion instigated by anti-war activists succeeded in turning the American public against the war (Hanson, 2002).

The tradition of biased reporting has continued and even been exaggerated in too overt coverage of pro- or anti- President Trump, who also barely concealed his fury toward most journalists. Liberal or conservative bias in the mainstream media is created and practiced by journalists and the media corporations they work for. Research shows that either media consumers stay tuned to intentionally biased or slanted news organizations, or biased journalists convince neutral media consumers to appreciate their biased media contents consistent with their intuitive convictions and beliefs (Crouse, 1973; Goldberg, 2020; Ruschmann, 2006). Such bias affects a certain process of forming public opinion. This means that an individual's intuition is not limited to the individual's moral judgment but extended to the public moral decision and even social disturbance. In fact, journalists' intuitive judgments on a particular issue or person, associated with corporate media organizations, lead to a formation of manipulated public opinion through intuitively manufactured news. As the well-known theories of agenda-setting and framing posit, a multiple degree of established bias in the news distorts objectivity of journalism; there is almost little boundary with propaganda at this matter.

THE SIM AND CARD STACKING PROPAGANDA

Similar to commercials that make products appear to be credible and authentic, journalists manufacture news stories in a such a way that they appear trustworthy to the public. Whereas commercials are designed to build preference for promoted products' excellence over competitors, biased news stories are aimed to influence and manipulate attitudes of the public from a propaganda perspective. Known as card stacking propaganda, this is a popular method that journalists adopt to achieve public influence and manipulation through news stories in the name of information distribution. They decide which part of their news stories get highlighted or downplayed or left out. As the term *card stacking* originated from gamblers trying to stack the deck in their favor, card stacking propaganda refers to a way that an information producer "omits facts, distorts information, under- and over-emphasizes, confuses, and uses every deceptive device" (Fleming, 1995, p. 10). For journalists to use card stacking propaganda, an easy maneuver is to withhold information that would not add to a biased aspect of the news. After thorough investigation into a particular news source, the journalist places only the information that supports or promotes his already-judged views in the news story. In other words, not the whole story but a specific part of the story can receive more attention in the biased attempt. This often happens by leaving out important facts and truth by the journalist, who disseminates the biased information manufactured through a filter of the biased journalist's moral judgment that convinces the public to think and feel about the information in the same way. According to Fleming (1995), journalists as propagandists expect the public or media consumers not to recognize that the news story is "not the whole story, not the fully accurate story, and that much has been left out on purpose" (p. 10).

Media coverage of the Occupy Wall Street movement serves as an example of card stacking propaganda. The movement officially began on September 17, 2011 when dozens of protesters and activists gathered to protest income inequality at Zuccotti Park, in Manhattan's financial district. Journalists

frame the movement as the top 1% vs. bottom 99% battle, and most of the journalists characterized the movement as social justice activism against corporate greed and the influence of money in politics. Their intuitively judged news coverage focused on the positive side of the movement promoting social and economic justice and new forms of a democratic awakening (Matchar, 2011; Sanchez, 2016). Amid the movement, the activists asked for more and better jobs, more equal distribution of income, tightening of banking-industry regulations, and investigation into corporate corruption in politics. Journalists with their sympathetic tone portrayed the movement as a revolutionary national phenomenon for social moral justice. One reported that the movement aimed to fight the "appalling statistic that the top 1 percent of households in the United States own somewhere between 30 to 40 percent of all privately held wealth. And counting" (Gautney, 2011, para. 12).

The 99%-will-no-longer-tolerate- the-greed-and-corruption-of-the-1% framing of such sympathetic news coverage reflected with the moral judgements of journalists on the movement. They were with the 99%. However, they were facilitating a card stacking propaganda tactic to demonstrate their intuitive judgment and justify their post hoc reasoning on an individual level of the SIM. On an organizational level of the HIM they complied with the news directions most liberal media outlets were headed with the political ideology democratic politicians such as Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders promoted. While generating countless headlines a day about the movement, few journalists reported the activists' growing violence, including looting, sexual assault, stabbing, and clashes with the police. They might have acknowledged such issues as newsworthy but left out and minimized the impacts by facilitating card stacking propaganda to justify their intuition in pursuit of advocating their already-made judgment on the 99% movement. Their biased judgment, which led to propagandistic coverage of the movement, definitely affected public opinion on the movement a few weeks later: An October poll about a month after the movement began found that 59 percent of Americans agree with the movement while 31 percent disagree, and other polls found broad support for the movement with Democrats' plan to make the rich pay more (Cooper, 2011).

The most important fact is that the movement began with a vague agenda, a nonexistent leadership structure and no mission or vision (Lalinde et al., 2012). The beginning was obscure with no projected outcomes, no bottom lines and no talking heads (Levitin, 2015). It was the sympathetic journalists who helped the occupiers gain a foothold by setting and framing a new agenda to the American public: the 99% versus 1%. Such news coverage of the occupiers attracted support from liberal opinion leaders such as Democratic lawmakers, union leaders and celebrities. Then President Obama showed his support for the occupiers despite public discussion of lawlessness (MacNicol, 2011). Public opinion was formed in favor of the occupiers. Left out was the coverage of a revolving group of demonstrators engaged in crimes and dangerous behavior at the site with the spiked number of arrests and crimes (Buckley & Flegenheimer, 2011). The movement was reported in the biased coverage by liberal journalists. Opinion leaders chimed in, and public opinion was formed and guided toward the occupying side. The coverage of Occupy Wall Street Movement illustrates the steps of how a journalist's intuition leads to the collection of public opinion on social moral judgment instead of being limited to an individual moral judgment. Journalists seek to write stories in a certain tone guided by individual and institutional biases, and a particular media story attracts public attention that evolves into a social issue. How the public feels or intuitively judges about the issue becomes public opinion that affects social or legislative decisions in political socialization. If the biased journalist did not cover an issue or event, or the biased news outlet did not publish the report, it was as if it did not exist. As a result, the journalist belongs to the levels of intuitive judgment and post hoc reasoning while the outlet is on the levels of organizational concerns

and institutional issues in regard to both the SIM, which offers a descriptive account of what drives individual moral reasoning, and the HIM, which illustrates what forces impinge on the news.

CONCLUSION

Biased individuals allow intuition to cloud their moral judgments. Kahneman (2011) argues that intuition is thinking that humans know without knowing why they do. Intuition does not guarantee accuracy but provides biased confidence in human decision making. Journalists are humans with intuition. However, they differ from other humans because they have the power of empowering their intuition to influence other humans' moral judgments in the public sphere. Media consumers have a tendency to make moral judgements on a person or event based on the first offered piece of information via the news, also known as anchoring bias (Cen, 2013). The framed portrayal of an issue manufactured by a biased journalist tells the public what the journalist already believes and validates his bias. As the propaganda model assumes, journalists can be integral actors in class warfare, "fully integrated into the institutional framework, and act in unison with other ideological sectors, i.e. the academy, to establish, enforce, reinforce and police corporate hegemony" (Klaehn, 2005, p. 139). The fact that journalists are capable of cherry-picking and filtering sources of information for their misleading stories to influence group attitudes establishes a certain direction of public opinion. Biased journalists in collaboration with their news outlets have been often condemned to become one of the most effective vehicles of political propaganda (Sotirovic, 2019). Even though obliged to impartial professionalism, journalists can hide propaganda behind their personal intuitions of objective journalism. Sotirovic (2019) argues that propaganda grows to an even more formidable force, easier to detect but more difficult to combat in the journalism profession. For example, liberal journalists live in an emotional liberal bubble and do not even necessarily regard their views as liberal, as do conservative journalists (Goldberg, 2020). Leftist or rightist journalists might unconsciously believe they are moderate and fair-minded with high moral reasoning. Such individual intuitions play a role in manufacturing ideological propaganda.

Little dispute systematically emphasizes even today that conscientiously objective journalists cannot avoid accusations of bias. Before journalists, they are just humans with personal moral judgment that colors their journalism profession. Stories for both-sides lead to objectivity and balance of journalistic accounts, but the bias of journalists and news outlets within the mass media plays an important role in the selection of many events and stories about how they are covered and framed. Haidt's six basic links in the SIM elaborate on major reasons journalists as intuitive individuals can hardly be free from making conscious moral judgements (2001). The links of intuitive judgment and post hoc reasoning explain how biased humans can be, rather than making an effort to employ the careful, reasoned consideration of all available information. Other links such as reasoned persuasion and social persuasion take into account persuasion with emotionally charged attempts that impinge on a small number of close listeners at some point after post hoc reasoning; the small group's moral judgment also influences the individual. The SIM limits the power of moral judgment to the individual moral reasoning boundary, suggesting that intuition is the main factor of personal moral judgment process.

The SIM lays the foundation for an investigation, in which the degree of pervasive bias is engaged by journalists. From a media sociology perspective, journalists fit in a larger organizational structure that offers a platform for how they pick stories and manufacture news messages. The HIM explores the process of mass communication and ways the public responds to biased news stories. The process is

mostly influenced by the journalist's intuitive moral judgment and the news outlet's social-institutional factors. At the core of the HIM, biased traits of journalists with the presumption that these traits are consequential to public opinion lead to the production of propaganda, in which the news outlet has its own policies and economic imperatives to reflect the goals of the ownership. The combination of individual and organization biases has an impact on the ways that news stories are framed, and interests of powerful people are served. The HIM treats media content as the biased product of systematic regularities and different levels of social structure, aimed to promote the interests of the powerful on the individual and organizational level. Synthesizing the SIM and HIM assumptions in the area of mass communication, this chapter summons the propaganda model from the 1980s to explore biased journalists and media outlets that capture political and economic influences in social settings. To validate their biases, card stacking propaganda espoused by journalistic confirmation bias is still used as a common means of manipulating information to impact public opinion. In a nutshell, an application of the SIM and HIM to mass communication proposes that intuitive moral judgment by journalists and media outlets has never stopped revolving around the long-lasting historical debate of biased journalism practice or simply propaganda exercise in mass communication.

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