



Berkman

The Berkman Center for Internet & Society  
at Harvard University

# MODULE: SAME IMAGE, DIFFERENT STORY?

DRAFT



## Youth and Media

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## Overview

This module familiarizes participants with the numerous points of view from which any situation can be understood. Focusing on the particular case of the “Kissing Couple” during the Vancouver riots of 2011, participants view and assess several videos, photos, and news articles in their explorations of the topic, and consider the importance of evaluating multiple sources and perspectives when developing an opinion of cases discussed online and in news media.

## Objectives

Participants will be able to:

- Understand how news stories can be told from different points of view by highlighting or omitting certain characters and facts.
- Appreciate the importance of taking different points of view into account when trying to reconstruct or investigate an event.
- Learn how to distinguish between the points of view in different sources of information and develop competencies with selecting and filtering sources for applied purposes.

## Age/Grade

13-18 years old

Grades 8-12

## Audience

Entry level and up (no experience necessary)

## Duration

80 minutes

- What is Point of View (25 minutes)
- Video Footage (20 minutes)
- Newspaper Articles (20 minutes)
- Closing Activity (15 minutes)

## Materials

- Computer/projector
- Whiteboard
- 2x3 cutups of the couple photograph (2 of police, 2 of fans, 2 of couple). *See attached.*
- 2-3 videos of different types on the topic (news reports, raw footage on Youtube, etc.). *See attached.*
- 2 newspaper articles (*Links included*)

# What is Point of View?

(25 minutes)

**Goal:** To explore different points of view and how they affect what we understand of a story.

**Materials:** 2x3 cutups of the photograph (see below), pens/paper

*[Divide participants into groups of 3-5. Give each group a different cut up of the photo.]*

**Say:** What is happening in this photograph? Work in your group to create a short paragraph or list of facts. Remember to keep these questions in mind:

- What is happening?
- Who is involved?
- Why? When? Where?

*[Ask participants to present their stories. Write down on the board the different answers and discuss briefly that there are different participants involved in the event. The protesters, the kissing couple, and the police each have a specific view of the event.]*

**Say:** The different understandings of the event are what we call “points of view.” How many different points of view did we just discuss?

*[Show the picture as a whole and contextualize the event, telling participants that it happened after the final game of the Hockey Stanley Cup 2011 in Vancouver, after the Boston Bruins beat the Vancouver Canucks. This picture was taken on June 15 by Richard Lam of Getty Images, while the riots were occurring.]*

**Say:**

- When you see the picture as a whole, do you get a more complete picture of what happened?
- What do you think was going on?
- What happened?
- Why did the riots occur?

# Video Footage

(20 minutes)

**Goal:** To explore this idea of perspective through another form of media - video.

**Materials:** Links to YouTube videos.

**Say:** Other media also discussed this picture. They were intrigued by this image and were wondering the same thing that you are: Why was this couple making out in the street under these circumstances? This picture was shared on different social media networks internationally. Different people were trying to explain what was going on. Many different videos were shared on YouTube. Let's take a closer look at some of them.

The first video deals with the perspective of **two reporters**.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kX29Tt5d2Is>

**Say:** While looking at this video, please try to answer the following questions:

- According to the news reporters, what is happening in the photograph?
- Where the reporters close to the event where the photograph was taken?

*[Ask participants to provide descriptive terms that make up the news story's coverage of the image. Note that the reporters approach the photograph in various ways: comical, artistic, amusing, and concerning.]*

**Say:**

- What is the narrative or story that the reporters are telling?
- How, or why, does the image get this type of a reaction from the reporters?
- What material did the reporters have to work with?
- Were the reporters on location when it happened?

**Say:** This second video is taken from the **point of view of an amateur videographer**, a bystander who was standing on the top of a building.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ot3vhxSj9o>

**Say:** While looking at this video, please try to answer the following questions:

- Whose perspective is this (bystanders in a room)?
- What is happening in the video?
- How does the point of view of the amateur videographer change the story we talked about so far?
- How would you describe the video in comparison to the one we just saw?
- What is the story being told here?
- Are there any other points of view that we have not yet talked about or taken into consideration?

# Newspaper Articles

(20 minutes)

**Goal:** To explore this idea of perspective through another form of media – newspaper.

**Materials:** Newspaper articles (enough copies for groups of 3-5 participants)

- Guardian: “Vancouver kiss couple ‘were knocked down by riot police’.”  
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/jun/17/vancouver-kiss-couple-riot-police>
- New York Times, The Lede (blog): “Overlooked Vancouver Video Shows ‘Kissing Couple’ Was Knocked Down by Riot Police”  
<http://thelede.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/06/24/overlooked-vancouver-video-shows-kissing-couple-was-knocked-down-by-riot-police/>

*[Divide the participants into their original groups of 3-5.]*

**Say:** We are now going to hand out two articles from different newspapers that also covered the event of the kissing couple during the riots. In your groups, read and summarize the articles, and try to find new points of view on the event.

*[Allow groups time to discuss, then steer conversation towards these questions.]*

**Say:**

Regarding the Guardian Article:

- *After reading the article, did your opinion of the police change?*
- *If your opinion stayed the same, did the reasons for your opinion change after reading it?*

New York Times Article:

- “In an e-mail to The Lede on Friday, Mr. Wing, a truck driver who calls himself ‘an aspiring photographer,’ added that, from his perspective, on a parking garage just above the street, it looked like Ms. Thomas and Mr. Jones ‘were participants in the riot’ and ‘likely should have been arrested.’ What do you think?”
- How do you feel about the articles? Do you believe them?

# Closing Activity

(15 minutes)

**Goal:** Listening to and recognizing the multiple points of view present in an event can be beneficial for understanding and for contextualizing an event.

**Materials:** Video of kissing couple explaining what happened:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tXtqtjot9-o>

**Say:** [In the discussion, try to touch upon these questions.]

- After seeing the full image, watching two videos, and reading two articles, do you have a more complete understanding of what was going on in Vancouver and in the streets during “the kiss?”
- How do you understand the story so far?
- Are there still other points of view that we have not talked about yet? (e.g. the kissing couple themselves, the hockey player, an injured person, people that live on the street, etc.)

*[Show video of kissing couple]*

**Say:** How does this interview complement the other versions of the story we have reviewed?

*[Conclude the conversation by reinforcing the main points of the activity.]*

**Say:** Today we discovered that every event or story can be understood from multiple points of view. Depending on the point of view from which a story is told, different characters, details, and facts are included or omitted.

- How many points of view did we discuss today? *[Photographer, reporters, bystanders, police, and couple]*
- Why is it important to be aware of the different points of view? *[As you get different points of view on what happened, you get a more complete picture of the event.]*
- Is it possible to obtain all the different points of view? Is it necessary? *[In real life, you do not always have enough time to gather all the different perspectives. We need to remember to keep this in mind.]*

**Say:** Listening to and recognizing the multiple points of view present in an event can be important for understanding and for putting an event in a context. **What is the advantage of having different versions of the story?**

# Materials

- Kissing Couple Photograph:  
[http://cdn.theatlantic.com/static/infocus/vancouver2011/v06\\_16466376.jpg](http://cdn.theatlantic.com/static/infocus/vancouver2011/v06_16466376.jpg)
- Perspective of two reporters:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kX29Tt5d2Is>
- Perspective of amateur videographer  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ot3vhxSj9o>
- Guardian: “Vancouver kiss couple ‘were knocked down by riot police’.”  
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/jun/17/vancouver-kiss-couple-riot-police>
- New York Times, The Lede (blog): “Overlooked Vancouver Video Shows ‘Kissing Couple’ Was Knocked Down by Riot Police”  
<http://thelede.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/06/24/overlooked-vancouver-video-shows-kissing-couple-was-knocked-down-by-riot-police/>
- Video of kissing couple explaining what happened:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tXtqtjot9-o>











