

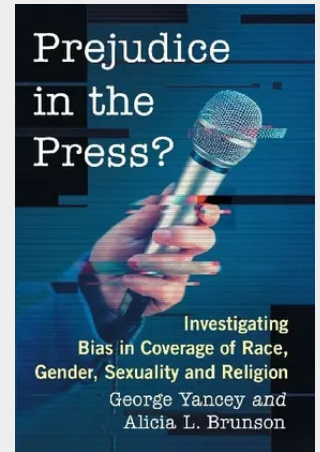
George Yancey is Professor of Sociology at the University of North Texas. His books include What Motivates Cultural Progressives?: Understanding Opposition to the Political and Christian Right.

Prejudice in the Press?

Investigating Bias in Coverage of Race, Gender, Sexuality and Religion

Charges of "fake news" tend to be politically motivated whether they are made by Republicans or Democrats. Yet the potential for media bias is real and deserves an honest assessment. Using an audit technique—providing journalist with similar scenarios but altering key details—the authors evaluate whether reporters and editors write different narratives depending on the characteristics of the principles in the story. The results indicate that issues of race, sex, sexuality and religion have little effect on whether a story will be covered, but do color the story that will be written. Data suggest that news personnel may be operating in ways that promote progressive political leanings. The results of this study are important for journalist seeking to move closer to objective standards of reporting.

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