



# MEDIA LITERACY FOR A POST-TRUTH AGE

An Integrally-Informed Approach to Media Literacy for  
Media Consumers and Makers

Mark Allan Kaplan, Ph.D.

# Defining the Post-Truth Age

The Post-Truth Age is a time in which it is hard to discern what is true and what is a lie or a half-truth. It is an age of fake news, reality bubbles and invisible propaganda networks.

As the Oxford Dictionary notes, these circumstances create an atmosphere in which “objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief.”

In the Post-Truth Age how do we find the truth?



# The Four Elements of Post-Truth Media Literacy

Identifying Truth Frames

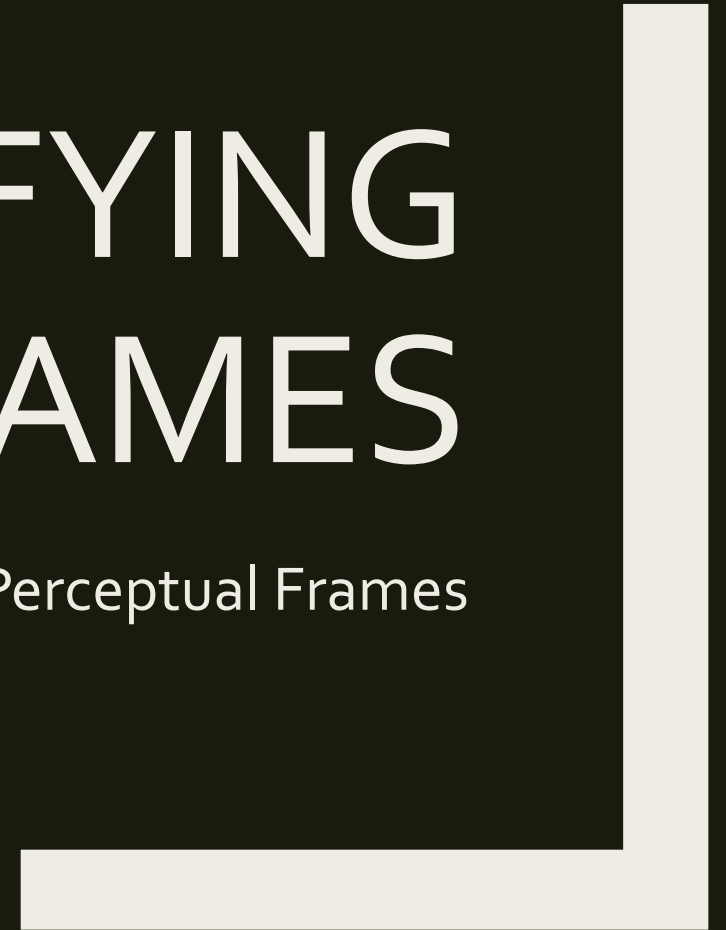
Discerning the Types of Truth

Sorting Truth by Spotting Propaganda Framing Techniques

Practicing Good Media Literacy Hygiene

# IDENTIFYING TRUTH FRAMES

Truth and Perceptual Frames



# Perceptual Framing and Truth

Information of any kind is communicated through some filter or framing. Sometimes we may be aware of these frames; often we are not.

- **Visual:** What we choose to include or exclude from the visual frame are equally important when it comes to communicating the truth.
- **Textual:** Our choice of words frames what we are communicating in profound and subtle ways.
- **Internal:** Our minds frame what we are perceiving using previously received information, our past experiences, beliefs, needs and desires.
- **External:** Collective cultural and social perceptual frames also affect our capacity to perceive the “truth.”



# What is True, INSIDE and OUTSIDE the frame?

What truth claims are being made and what techniques are being used to frame these claims?

How true are the claims of the source and what information has been excluded from their perspective that could alter the perception of these claims?

## Information Frames

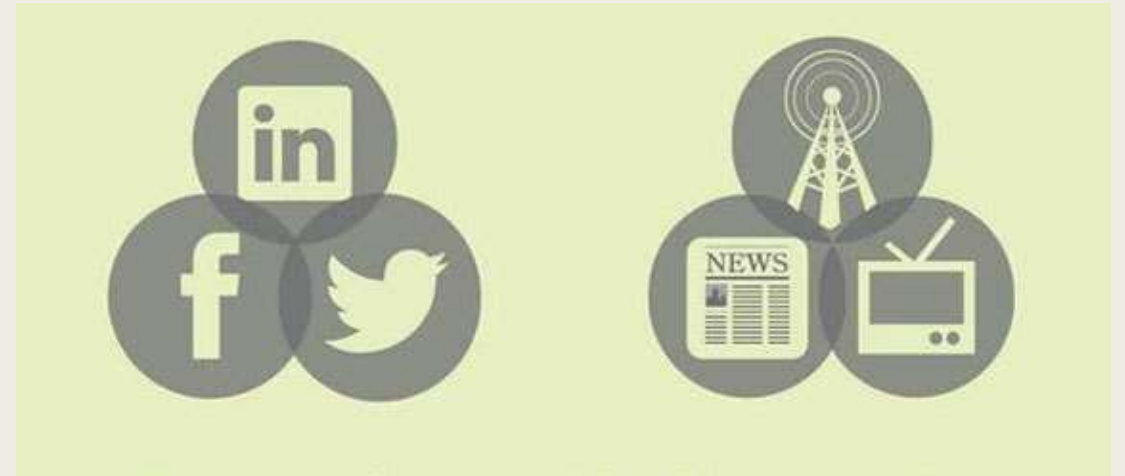


# WHO is doing the framing and WHY?

Who is the source of the information? Who is the author or reporter, what sources are they quoting, and what are their potential biases?

What cultures and organizations do these authors or reporters exist in? What cultural and systemic constructs and agendas may be affecting the framing of the information?

## Source Frames



What frames are  
YOU using and how  
do they affect your  
perception of truth?

What are your mental, emotional and  
perceptual constructs that might be  
coloring your view of the information?

## Self Frames





# What are OTHERS saying, and what is the truth within and between sources and frames?

What are the consensual constructs in the collective field around the issue or topic?

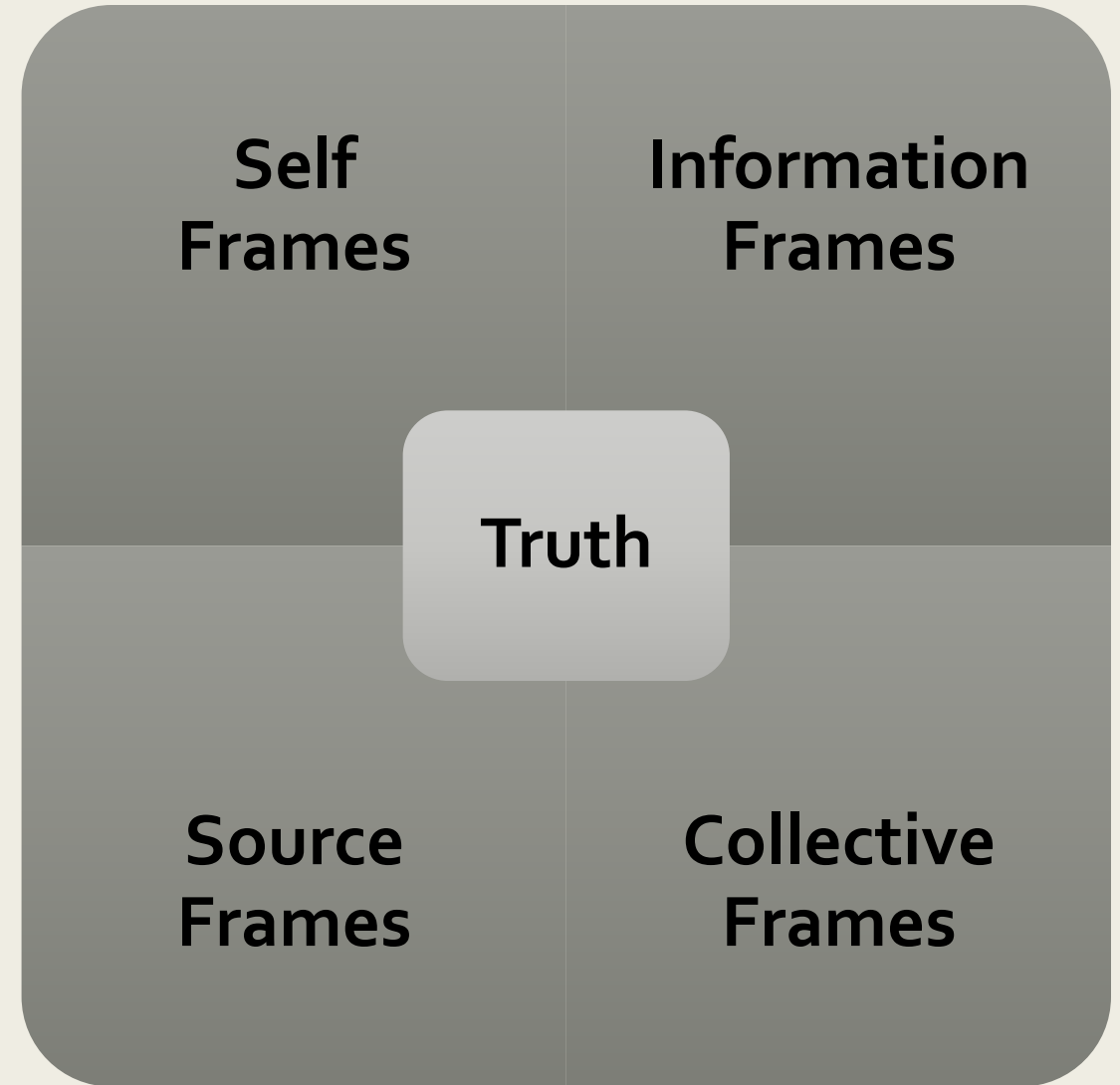
Are you able to step outside your media bubble and see what constructs other groups are holding around these same issues or topics?

## Collective Frames



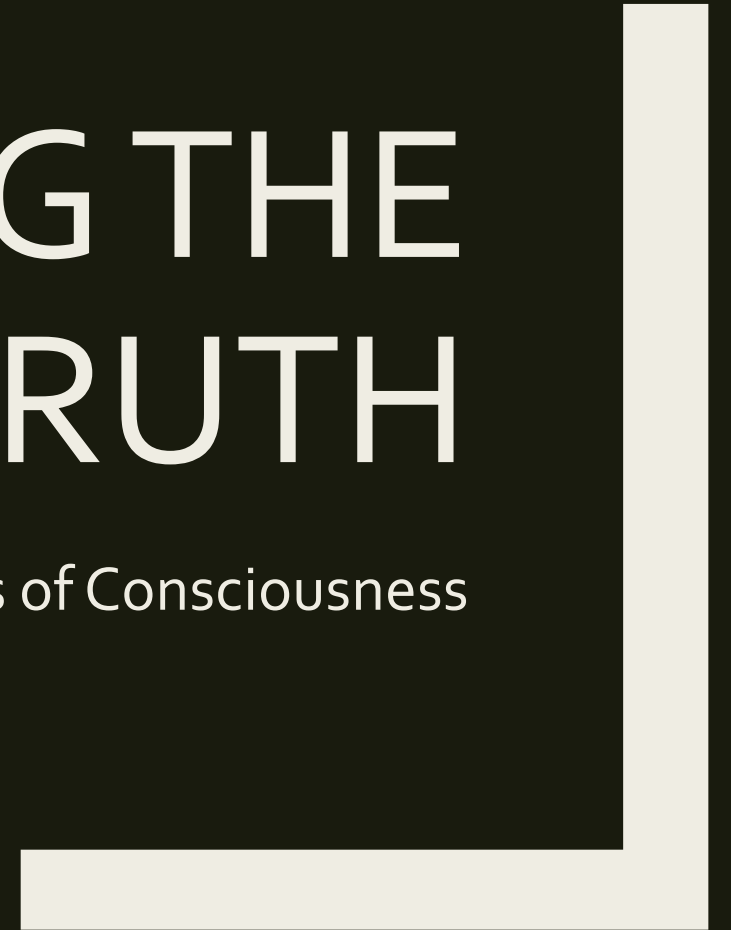
# What is the COMMON truth at the core of all truth frames?

What is the integrated truth that emerges from  
a reflection on all these truth frames?



# DISCERNING THE TYPES OF TRUTH

Truth and Structures of Consciousness

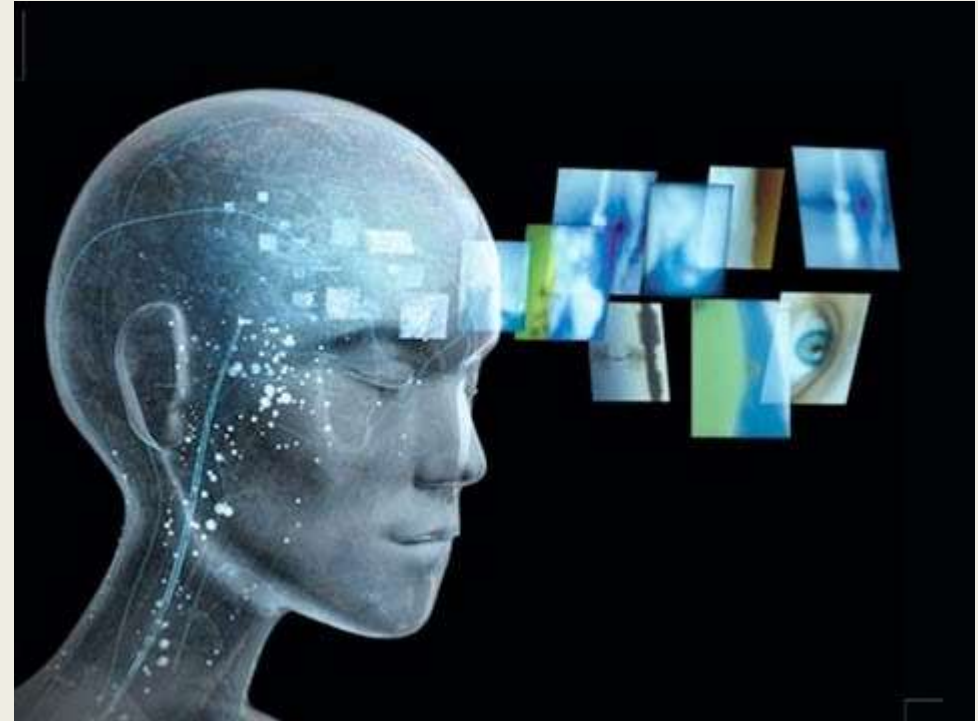


# Structures of Consciousness and the Truth

Different developmental levels, or structures of consciousness, look at truth differently. By illuminating these we can more fully discern how we and others are holding and framing the truth.

Individuals, cultures and societies seem to evolve through at least seven developmental structures:

1. **Archaic**
2. **Magic**
3. **Egoic**
4. **Mythic**
5. **Rational**
6. **Pluralistic**
7. **Integral**



# Defining Structures of Consciousness

Structures of consciousness are defined as major levels of individual and collective human development that include a constellation of many different lines and levels of development in various domains of human existence. The worldview line of development is the most commonly used defining line. Other major lines that correlate to these worldview structures of consciousness include *Circles of Care and Concern* and *Techno-Economic Systems*. Note that each level or stage transcends and includes the previous ones. For instance the World-centric Circle of Care and Concern embraces all previous levels and expands outward from the last level of Socio-centric or nation-centric to a worldly or global sense of caring, concern and identity.

Worldview	Circle of Care and Concern	Techno-Economic System
Archaic	Survival-centric	Foraging
Magic	Tribal-centric	Horticultural
Egoic	Ego-centric	Manorial
Mythic	Ethno-centric	Agrarian
Rational	Socio-centric	Industrial
Pluralistic	World-centric	Informational
Integral	Kosmo-centric	Convergent-Virtual

# Different Truths for Different Structures of Consciousness

**Archaic**

- Pre-Truth (Undifferentiated/Survivalist)

**Magic**

- Subjective Truth (Imaginal/Consensual)

**Egoic**

- Deferred Truth (Manipulative/Tyrannical)

**Mythic**

- Absolute Truth (Doctrinal/Theological)

**Rational**

- Objective Truth (Scientific/Empirical)

**Pluralistic**

- Relative Truth (Perceptual/Phenomenological)

**Integral**

- Qualified Truth (Altitudinal/Developmental)

# Pre-Truth (Survival-Oriented)

## **Archaic Structure (Survival- centric)**

- What do we *need* to be True for our sense of safety and security?
- Challenge: To become aware of how we or others filter out any information that threatens our sense of safety and security.

# Subjective Truth (Consensual)

## Magic Structure (Tribal-centric)

- What do we *need* to be True for our world to make meaningful sense?
- Challenge: To become aware of how we or others filter out any information that challenges accepted views of the world.



# Deferred Truth (Tyrannical)

## **Egoic Structure (Ego-centric)**

- What Truths do we defer to those in authority?
- Challenge: To become aware of any sources of information that we elevate to a position of unchallenged authority.

# Absolute Truths (Theological)

## **Mythic Structure (Ethno-centric)**

- What we believe to be absolutely True according to our faith, culture or society?
- Challenge: To become aware of any internal or external cultural-, social- or faith-based bias and any dualistic black or white, right or wrong thinking.

# Objective Truths (Empirical)

**Rational  
Structure  
(Socio-centric)**

- What is objectively and verifiably True?
- Challenge: To become aware of any internal or external efforts to frame objective and factual information as subjective or relative, or to elevate objectivity to the exclusion of subjective or relative aspects of situations and issues.

# Relative Truths (Phenomenological)

## **Pluralistic Structure (World-centric)**

- What is True from our unique Individual Perspective?
- Challenge: To become aware of any internal or external efforts to frame subjective or relative information as objective, or to over emphasize subjectivity and relativity to the exclusion of objective information.

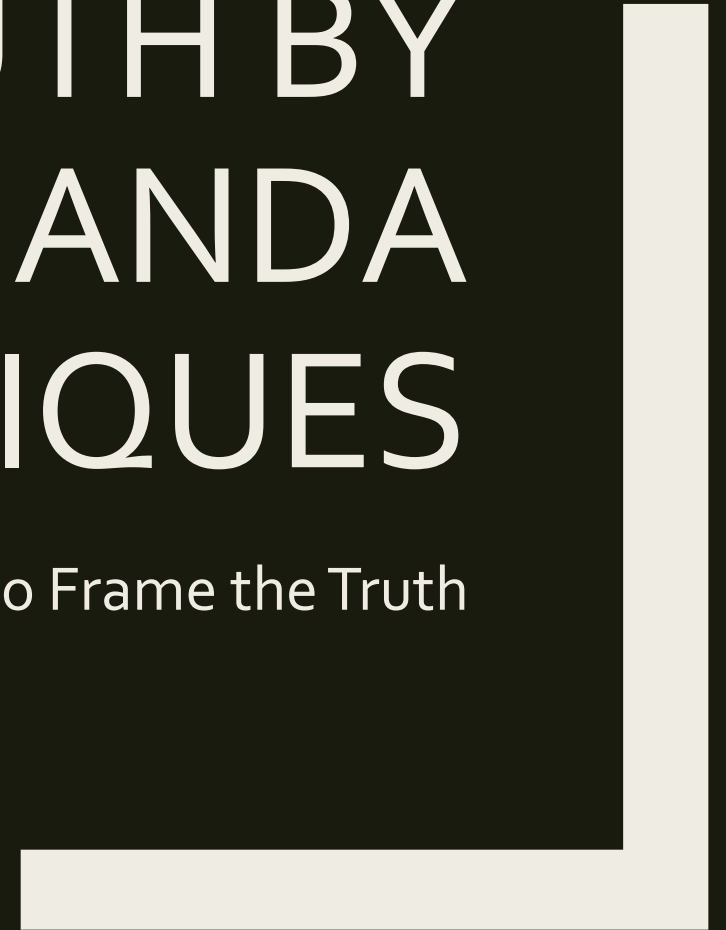
# Qualified Truths (Developmental)

**Integral  
Structure  
(Kosmo-centric)**

- What is True from the Perspective of a particular Stage of Development?
- Challenge: To become aware of how Truth varies depending on our own or the source's worldview.

# SORTING TRUTH BY SPOTTING PROPAGANDA FRAMING TECHNIQUES

Propaganda Techniques Used to Frame the Truth

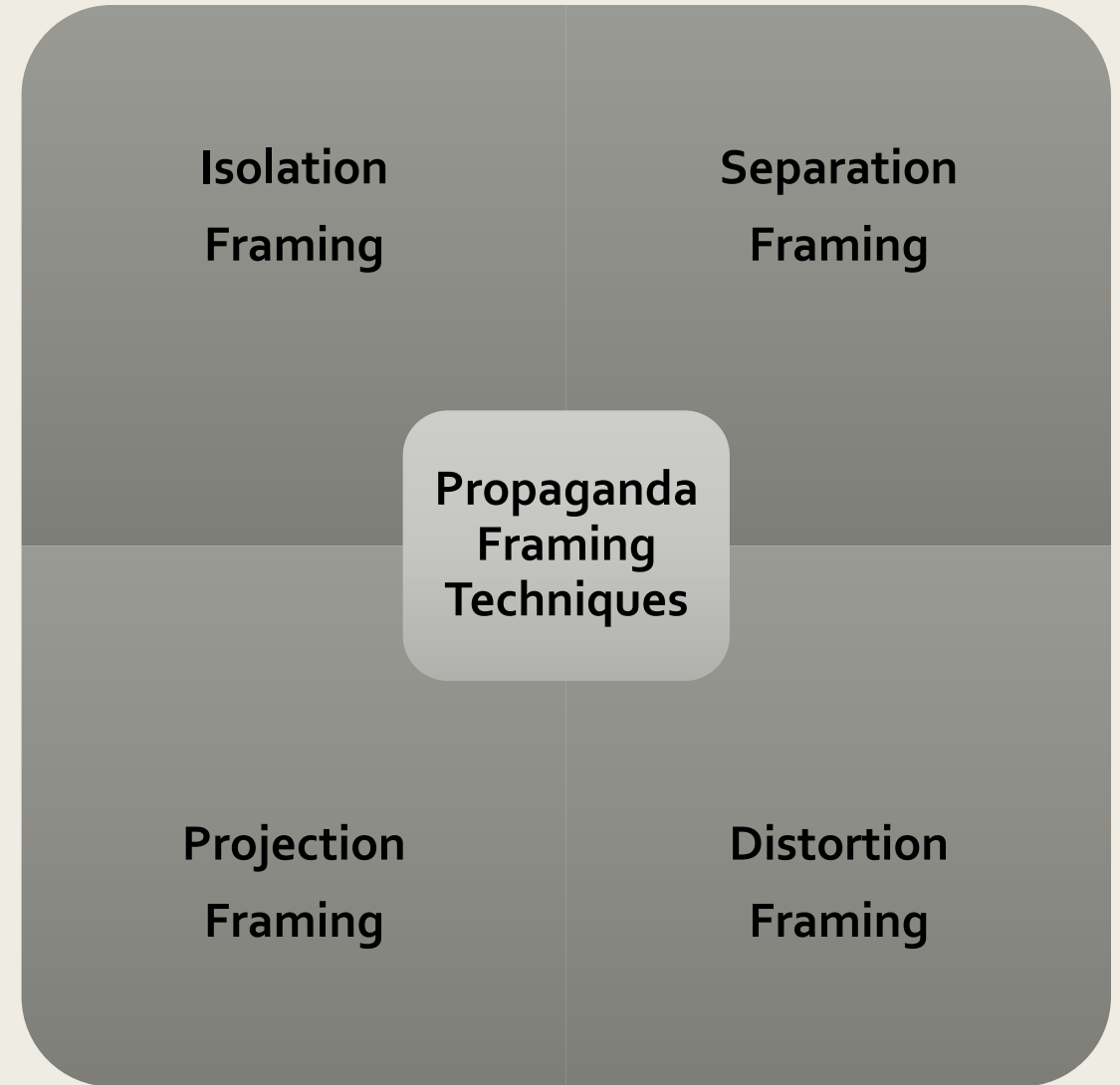




# What are the major Propaganda Truth Framing Techniques?

The numerous individual propaganda truth framing techniques appear to fit into four major categories:

- Isolation
- Separation
- Projection
- Distortion





# Isolation Techniques

Isolation propaganda techniques are designed to isolate the viewer, reader or user and tend to target the individual's thoughts and perceptions. Isolation techniques include:

- **False Dichotomies** – Conditions viewers into believing they only have an either/or choice.
- **Ad Nauseam** – Conditions viewers into believing an idea through constant repetition; usually used to isolate viewers from other sources of information.
- **Cognitive Dissonance** – Conditions viewers into a specific bias or worldview that causes the viewer to avoid conflicting information that could challenge that bias or worldview.



# Projection Techniques

Projection propaganda techniques are designed to create enemies external to the viewer, reader or user. Projection techniques include:

- **Transfer** – projecting positive or negative qualities (praise or blame) of a person, entity, object, or value onto another to make the second more acceptable or to discredit it.
- **Character Assassination** – Attacks an individual person by discrediting, defaming, demonizing or dehumanizing them.
- **Scapegoating** – Assigning blame to an individual or group, thus alleviating feelings of guilt from responsible parties and/or distracting attention from the need to fix the problem for which blame is being assigned.



# Separation Techniques

Separation propaganda techniques are designed to appeal to fear and foment separation between cultural and social groups. Separation techniques include:

- **Minority-Baiting** – Used to prey on fear that is based on otherness.
- **Coded Language** – Uses words or phrases that trigger anxiety between cultural, racial and social groups while also using language that allows plausible deniability.
- **Stereotyping** – Uses techniques in which pre-existing ideas about a racial, ethnic, or cultural group are exaggerated and used to make generalizations that usually perpetuate discrimination and inequality.



# Distortion Techniques

Distortion propaganda techniques are designed to foster alternate realities for the viewer, reader or user. Distortion techniques include:

- **Misinformation** – The spread of false information that is intended to deceive.
- **Confusion Induction** – Uses conflicting information to purposely confuse the viewer.
- **Rewriting History** – Uses lies about events that have already happened to shape a desired narrative.



# PRACTICING GOOD MEDIA LITERACY HYGIENE

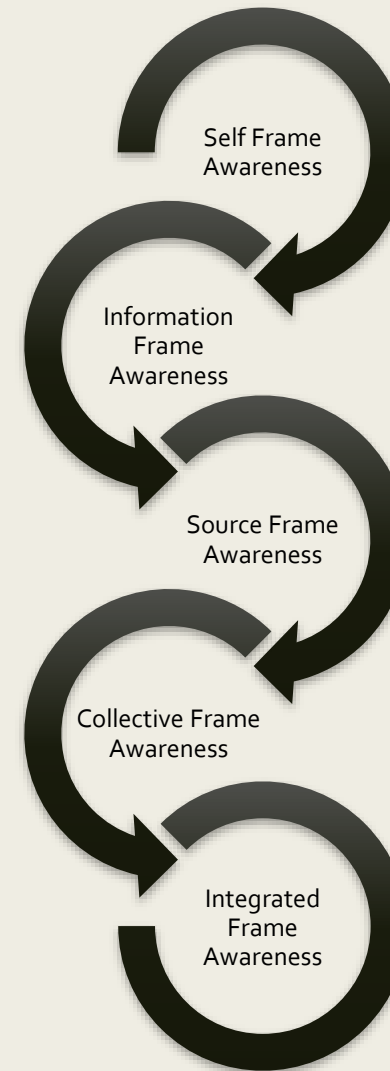
Basic Media Consumption Practice for Discerning the “Truth”





# Frame Awareness Practice

1. *Self Frame Awareness*: Start by knowing your own Self Frames and how they are potentially filtering your reception of the information.
2. *Information Frame Awareness*: Extend your awareness to the information itself while also keeping in mind how this interfaces with your own Self Frames.
3. *Source Frame Awareness*: Extend your awareness further to include unpacking the Sources of the Information.
4. *Collective Frame Awareness*: Extend your awareness even further, beyond your own media bubble and see how other cultural and social segments are framing the information.
5. *Integrated Frame Awareness*: Attempt to integrate all the frames in your awareness by looking for both conflicting information and areas of agreement.



A thick black L-shaped frame surrounds the text. The top-left corner is a horizontal bar extending to the right, and the bottom-right corner is a vertical bar extending upwards. The rest of the frame is implied by the negative space.

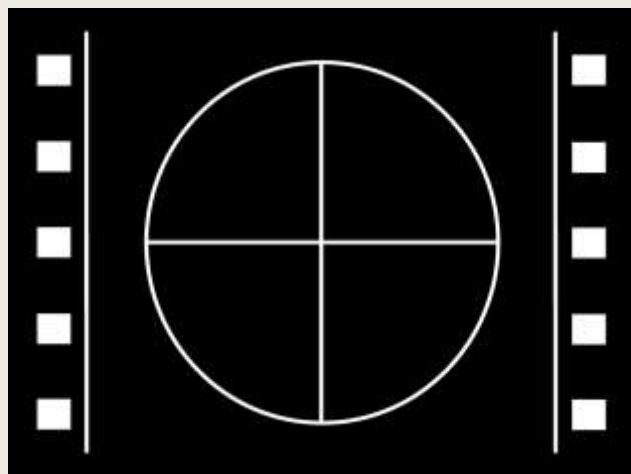
# MEDIA LITERACY FOR A POST-TRUTH AGE

Mark Allan Kaplan, Ph.D.

Presented to the Carey Institute for Global Good

June 1, 2017





# INTEGRAL CINEMA PROJECT

[integralcinema.com](http://integralcinema.com)