



SSC2030: Evaluating bias and its effect of analysis and presentation

This week we are looking at the past, present and future of coal power. Today, coal is a somewhat controversial subject in the US. To mitigate GCC it's essential that we move away from coal. But that shift is affecting regional economies and changing people's lives. Rather than embracing change and helping those most affected to weather the storm and prosper, some have chosen to cling to the past.

Some believe we should leave remaining coal reserves in the ground. Others think we can develop 'clean coal' technology that will allow us to use coal without its high carbon emissions. And still others believe that carbon capture and storage technology is essential to drastically lower emissions from fossil fuels and all other energy sources, even bioenergy.

There is evidence that cultural, regional, sociological and political factors affect our views on energy systems and all things related to climate change. It's essential that we learn to differentiate fact from opinion and point of view; what we might call 'spin'.

This assignment asks you to:

- (1) Consult AllSides.com. You'll probably have to register but it's free.
<https://www.allsides.com/unbiased-balanced-news>
- (2) Once in AllSides, do a balanced search on a **coal-related topic**. We'll talk about some good search terms in class.
- (3) Choose two articles, one from the left and one from the right.
- (4) Read the articles carefully and evaluate them for factual content, citations, evidence of bias, and whether the author differentiates between fact and opinion.
- (5) Write a short paper, at least two pages, that:
 - (a) Summarizes each article or source;
 - (b) Compares and contrasts the evidence made by each source;
 - (c) Evaluates the strength of both articles and their supporting evidence; and
 - (d) Identify the article that you find more convincing and valid and explain why.

Use your now sharpened skills to evaluate the sources, their data, references and arguments. Remember that lateral reading may help. And don't forget to list your references and cite your sources using either APA or MLA format.