

**This sample outline is meant to guide you through your own outline. Your outlines should show a progression of your paper topic while indicating which sources you intend to use and how you will use them to prove your point**

**Your outline should also include a works cited page listing each of your sources in MLA format. Remember: If you are getting your sources from the databases, there is a specific format for it. From Purdue OWL:**

### ***An Article from an Online Database (or Other Electronic Subscription Service)***

Cite articles from online databases (e.g. LexisNexis, ProQuest, JSTOR, ScienceDirect) and other subscription services just as you would print sources. Since these articles usually come from periodicals, be sure to consult the appropriate sections of the Works Cited: Periodicals page, which you can access via its link at the bottom of this page. In addition to this information, provide the title of the database italicized, the medium of publication, and the date of access.

Junge, Wolfgang, and Nathan Nelson. "Nature's Rotary Electromotors." *Science* 29  
Apr. 2005: 642-44. *Science Online*. Web. 5 Mar. 2009.

Langhamer, Claire. "Love and Courtship in Mid-Twentieth-Century  
England." *Historical Journal* 50.1 (2007): 173-96. *ProQuest*. Web. 27 May 2009.

#### **I. Introduction**

- A. Discussion of the problem of climate change, including brief description of the science. I can also cite Michael Mann's *Dire Predictions: Understanding Global Warming - The Illustrated Guide to the Findings of the IPCC* to show how urgent the matter is.
- B. Edwin Baker, in Media Concentration and Democracy, acknowledges the age-old idea that a free press is vital to a democratic society but cautions that the free press could be threatened from either the "abuse of government power or from private power and the dynamics of the market" (xi).
- C. Beyond these institutional hurdles, there are personal impediments that also negatively influence our decision making.
- D. Thesis: While corporate and government forces shape public discourse about global warming, the ultimate causes of our inaction are cultural and psychological.

#### **II. Government vs Corporate Controlled media**

- A. The abuses of state-owned mass media are well documented, and a cursory review of media practices in any totalitarian state will uncover bias, omission, and even propaganda. I will use James Wertsch's *Blank Spots in Collective Memory: A Case Study of Russia* to show what government censorship looks like

and how the collapse of the Soviet Union gave us a rare glimpse into the level of control totalitarian states have.

- B. Government censorship can likewise happen in more traditionally “free” societies. For instance, the US government has censored climate change information in the past, according to Oliver Burkeman’s *Memo Exposes Bush’s New Green Strategy*.
- C. At the same time, “free” media,” here understood to be owned by a corporation and protected by a legal framework, such as that provided by the 1<sup>st</sup> amendment carries similar risks. News stations sometimes censor their coverage for fear of offending corporate sponsors, such as depicted by Akre and Wilson in *Modern Media’s Environmental Coverage: What We Don’t Know Could Hurt Us*.
- D. A proposal for balance: Chomsky anecdote about censorship in Iran vs. censorship in America from *Necessary Illusions: Thought Control in Democratic Societies*. Discussion of the need to balance both government (public) and corporate interests in information

### III. Problems of Psychology

- A. I will use *Polarized Political Communication, Oppositional Media Hostility, and Selective Exposure* by Arceneaux, Johnson, and Murphy to show how people avoid media that contradicts their preconceived notions of the world.
- B. Joe Keohane’s *How Facts Backfire* will help me prove my point that we are unfortunately psychologically hardwired to reject uncomfortable truths.

### IV. Problems of Culture

- A. There is a culture of celebrity worship pervasive in America. I will use the TED Talk on media coverage of Ana Nicole Smith. I can also use *Climate Change—Humans Remain the Same* by Anis H. Bajrktarevic to discuss the disproportionate amount of news coverage given to athletes.
- B. I will tie all this back to psychology and democracy. Because if we have a free market mass media, don’t they only ultimately show what we demand? I don’t have a source for this; I will just have to come up with my own argument for it!

### V. Proposed Solution

- A. Lewandowsky et al.’s *Misinformation and Its Correction* and the Harvard Law School’s *Short Guide to Consensus Building* offer strategies for approaching controversial topics such as climate change. I can show how this approach can be applied to media coverage of global warming.
- B. I must show that public broadcasting or state-controlled media can be used to counter the fluff of ratings-driven, free market news stations. Consider it the medicine we have to take after overloading on the sugar of celebrity gossip news. Yet, I must also acknowledge that the existence of the free market media keeps the state-controlled media in check. Both must exist in order for counterbalance the other, even though currently it seems that free market media holds much more sway.

## Works Cited

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- "Consensus Building Handbook." *PON - Program on Negotiation at Harvard Law School*, [www.pon.harvard.edu/shop/consensus-building-handbook/](http://www.pon.harvard.edu/shop/consensus-building-handbook/). Accessed 24 Aug. 2017.
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