

# A Matter of Perspective

*What do you see in this exhibit?*

*The same event, with headlines written differently by the exhibited newspapers.*

*Why is the story perspective different across the newspapers?*

*Aren't they reporting about a similar event?*

All three articles are reporting on the same event but they have the 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment right to provide their own perspective on the topic.

The same event or topic may be seen differently by people, depending on variables that include the writer's background or opinions, the owner's or publisher's opinions, the ability to attract advertisers and the preferences of the audience accessing the information. Clearly these headlines show how front page news stories can be interpreted differently.

Any content we access, not just newspapers, radio, tv and the Internet, but also the books we read and the speeches we listen to, all have the 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment right to provide information from whatever perspective they choose. This isn't inherently a bad thing, provided we know up front there is an underlying bias in the information being communicated. We can then make our own decisions about accessing that information or evaluating its credibility. Of course, the facts surrounding a news story can be intentionally or unintentionally misrepresented.

It is our responsibility to be skeptical of any information we access or encounter. That doesn't mean we can't access information that supports our perspective on a topic. All topics are likely more complicated than we are willing to investigate.

The best critical thinkers are always skeptical of facts and bias. When consuming news or other information, we should work to access information from many perspectives, even those we disagree with, in order to understand the complete nature of a topic.

