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TAKING SIDES 立场

辩证思维训练

(美) ALISON ALEXANDER
JARICE HANSON 编

传媒与社会篇

12th 第12版 EDITION

CLASHING VIEWS IN
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藏书章

(美) ALISON ALEXANDER
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TAKING SIDES: Clashing Views in MASS MEDIA AND SOCIETY

Twelfth Edition

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英语思辨，攻错他山

朱绩崧

学界奉为圭臬的《牛津英语大词典》（*The Oxford English Dictionary*）在side (n.)[1]条目的18.a.义项里，把18.b.所收词组“to take a (or one's) side, take sides. Also to hold side (with one)”里的side解释为[t]he position or interests of one person, party, etc., in contrast to that of an opposing one，个人立场相反、党派利益对立之意，了然无疑。

惜我愚钝，近年才明白，take sides不仅仅是英语词典里的一个词组，甚至可说是英国议会制度的根本；而议会制度，实在是英国对人类文明进步最大的贡献之一：通过take sides，把思辨，而非独断专行，尊奉为国事决策那不可撼动的核心机制。我们不会忘记，电影《铁娘子》（*The Iron Lady*）里梅里尔·斯特里普（Meryl Streep）新学一口英国腔就来西敏寺宫滔滔激辩的场景，那不是骂街，虽然嘘声迭起，那是两股思想在龙争虎斗，最终推进历史。

谈到西方好争论、善思辨的传统，古希腊已臻化境，垂范千古。但这并不意味着我国真如某些评论家所言，为定于一尊的儒学所戕害，使得读书人唯服从传承是务，从不挑战权威。

《古文观止》读到最后几卷，便会看到编注者吴楚材、吴调侯叔侄鼓励读者对古时定论大胆质疑的用心。如建文忠臣方孝孺的名篇《豫让论》，标新立异，一反古说，直指春秋时代为主雪仇的刺客豫让“不能扶危于未乱，而捐躯于既败者”，不配“国士”之誉。

甚至，在我们历史课本一向蔑之为“埋头故纸”、“皓首穷经”的乾嘉学派里，多数学者的考据也都具有很高的思辨性。从王念孙的《读书杂志》、刘宝楠的《论语正义》，到戴震“由字义以明经义”的治学方法和段玉裁《东原先生年谱》所载的戴氏札记——“仆生平著述最大者为《孟子字义疏证》一书，此正人心之要。今人无论正邪，尽以意见误名之曰理，而祸斯民，故《疏证》不得不作”——从文本到现实，立场鲜明，无不指向对真理的上下求索。

读书为求真。这句话，是儿时由老师灌输给我的，我不曾怀疑过。可也正是老师告诉我“乾嘉学派在历史上的作用是反动的”、“高考答题时，如遇到岳飞，不能勾选为民族英雄，他打的仗是人民内部矛盾”等等当年不容我怀疑辩驳的“事实”。

往事固不可追，令我大失所望的却是“寓教于乐”、“反对应试教育”了不知凡几年，中小学生竟在变本加厉地背记历史、语文的“标准答案”，到了易只字则为错的地步。有人甚至把中小学生语文水平的普遍降低归咎于英语课太多，视母语、外语修习为零和博弈，全然不去审视、拷问、批判当下严重阻碍思辨与创造的文科教育体制本身。试问这样的教育，又如何能培养出活泼泼的人来？如何能引导他们求真？

求真，真真何其不易也。有时，权威发声，莫敢深究。有时，缺乏条件，无从寻觅。信息爆炸、思路开阔的今天，更多情况下是众说纷纭，莫衷一是，乃至有时在“是”与“非”这两者之间，都不知何从矣。

而相对综合型、重意合（parataxis）的汉语，英语是分析型语言，重形合（hypotaxis），语法规则更明确，对指代、性数格一致等形式要求更高，且有强烈的时态观。不能不说，这在很大程度上避免了汉语常见的因文害意：把一些站不住脚的歪理，用华丽辞藻一包装，就算是“美文佳构”了。（这方面，韩愈的个别名作，如为名教张目的《原道》，可算反面教材，远逊柳宗元的《驳复仇议》。后者的论理，简朴而流畅，本质上与今天英美法院经典判词如出一辙，堪称我国古代taking sides的典范。）加之英美学者好辩的传统在当代通过课堂教育、学术论文等形式得以强化，思辨的局面委实优于我国。

我素为古罗马倾倒，曾读国人编著的几种罗马史，又看了英国剑桥大学克里斯托弗·凯利（Christopher Kelly）教授写的《罗马帝国简史》（*The Roman Empire: A Very Short Introduction*），后者末章呈现的学者思辨生动别致，过目难忘，非我国传统重介绍“史实”的史书可比：20世纪初，英国历史学家、律师、自由党政治家詹姆斯·布赖斯（James Bryce）认为罗马帝国与大英帝国非常相似，都能维持高水平的内部和平与秩序，民人深谙工程技术，勇猛活跃，不畏困苦；牛津古代史教授弗朗西斯·哈弗菲尔德（Francis Haverfield）进一步说明，罗马帝国的成功，在于把行省居民同化为一个秩序井然、富有凝聚力的文明；曾奉职印度的英国古典学会会长埃弗林·巴林（Evelyn Baring）持不同看法，在“同化”问题上，大英帝国与罗马帝国有不可弥合的区别，单论印度语言、宗教、种族的多样性，就和罗马人征服的任何地区不同；哈弗菲尔德不同意巴林，认为英国之所以有印度问题，是因为征服印度时，印度已经发展成发达社会，文明形态稳固；牛津的古代史专家、考古学家D. G. 霍加斯（D. G. Hogarth）也反对巴林，认为罗马帝国有三个阶段，即“尚未同化”、“有意同化”、“积极同化”，大英帝国对印度犹处“尚未同化”的第一阶段。

把学者taking sides过程中的各种观点陈列出来，供读者思辨，是我国各阶段教材的短板。同时，也应注意，为提高我国学生的思辨水平以及英语能力，taking sides的内容不宜学科专业化程度过高（上述关于罗马帝国与大英帝国的争辩即有此虞），还是具有一定社会影响力、为民众熟知的话题更宜为组织教材的出发点。

美国著名的*Taking Sides*丛书，其宗旨正在于满足成长中的思考者兼英语学习者的需要。这套书系，诞生于20世纪80年代，迄今出版52种专题分册，多数一版再版，其中传媒凡12版，经济、环境达15版，社会、教育更已有17版之多。畅销程度，不劳赘言。

从题材看，外研社首批择取的七册分别覆盖了社会、教育、经济、环境、科技、大众传媒与全球性问题，无一不是当下公众话题的焦点。但呈现的手法却很“单一”，即先提出问题，再摆出正反双方最典型、最具说服力的论证，最后引导读者作进一步的阅读与思考：

问：计算机对学生成长是否有副作用？

正：有。学校对电脑技术的迷信与滥用，导致学生心智发育与创造力受损。

反：无。如对电脑善加利用，能促进教学革新，从而使学生获益。

后记："学校"或许正在由"地点"转变为"概念"，随着计算机技术的进步，许多教育手段都不必在课堂实施，但随之而来有许多新问题，需要探讨。多媒体能让学生与更多的信息产生互动，但往往也减少了学生与学生、学生与所在环境之间的互动。相关研究请见……（扩展阅读涉及三十余处学术资源）

（《教育篇》第10话题）

目录并不冗长，但当读者学完全书，必会惊喜地发现，自己在这一领域的知识结构已搭建得初具规模。摆在面前的问题往往庞大空疏，报章常见，迄无公断。从这个角度思考，有这样的道理可知；从那个方面切入，有那样的结论可得。读者的任务，就是跟着两派的思路各走一遍，最终判定哪派有理。当然，结果也可能是两派皆不尽善，或者需要修正调和之后才能获得正解。但无论如何，这一过程本身，实在是智力上的一次奥德修斯式的旅行（an intellectual odyssey）。

之所以要用荷马史诗的隐喻，是因为读*Taking Sides*与看街边吵架或中学生议论文最根本的差别，就是需要调用的思想、学术资源极多。以《社会篇》第8话题为例，菲利普·迪瓦恩（Philip E. Devine）在得出"酷刑不可保留"的结论之前，将自由主义政治学、康德学说、功利主义、自然法等一一引出，要言不烦。对迪瓦恩这位哲学学者而言，这些理论或许早已熟烂于胸。但对一般读者而言，为了确证作者没有断章取义，至少得就上述内容再读通几本导论、简介之类的书。顺便一提，酷刑当否的问题，我在近年畅销的一部法律通俗读物《法治》（*The Rule of Law*）论恐怖主义的一章中，也曾读到评论。作者、已故英国前首席大法官汤姆·宾厄姆（Tom Bingham）反对向恐怖主义犯罪嫌疑人施以酷刑的理由本质上与孔子的"己所不欲，勿施于人"无异，认为这是对法治原则的破坏。与迪瓦恩相较，其说直指人心，唯于学理微缺然。

事实上，*Taking Sides*书系所选文章，无论篇幅修短，莫不观点鲜明，针锋相对，而每一方都有强大的理据支撑，乍看难以撼动。由此，我们也不得不感叹，人类文明在今天呈现出的多样性，自有其道理，无论是同一文明内还是不同文明间发生的碰撞冲突，其背后都有复杂的理性动因，绝非皂白可以分明，需要我们全面观察，深度分析，最终选定立场。

我出身英文系，工作后常应媒体之邀，写些时事评论。落笔之前，现已养成习惯，会去新浪微博、知乎、Quora等网站，浏览各方的理性评论，在争议极大的问题上，熟悉*Taking Sides*封面上印的那两个词：Clashing Views（对立观点）。这是我在"后大学"时期补上的一堂课。

回想本科求学时，这方面所受教育几乎为零。教育的重点是背同义词、反义词

与词形变化。文章，读通便好，却读不透，因为读通之后，总觉所言有理，不会想着去倾听“不同的声音”。这个弊端，到写毕业论文时曝露无疑：说明文还凑合，议论文就写不好了。名虽论文，连核心的论点都渺不可寻。这几年，本专业内，我还常常看到号称博士论文的研究综述，或者连文献回顾都没有的论文。

为了矫正这一通病，不少学校从编教材上下功夫，课文引入争议性话题，意在以此激发学生的critical thinking——“批判性思维”遂成高校英语教师培训班极为青睐的广告亮点。可惜，在我有限的学术视野内，能一变风气的作品，尚阙如焉。我看到过浅尝辄止者，其内一篇课文，取自美国某小报，讲一对夫妻人工受孕后离婚，胚胎留在医院冰箱里，不知如何处置，遂对簿公堂。最终，作者只是提出问题，没能向学生指出解决的途径。如果有至少两种具备一定思想深度与差异性的观点呈现在教材里，附上扩展研读的书目、提要，教育的效果定会面目一新，我们也会真正地开始在语言教育中培养思想者，而不只是机械的记忆者、复制者。这一任务，如前所示，*Taking Sides*完全胜任。

我乐于推荐该书系作精读教材的另一项理由在于语言质量。就量而言，目前的精读课（Intensive Reading），阅读量普遍过低，一两千词的文章，一读就是十天半月，课程设计者不明白唯有大数量与短时间的结合，方成就intensive之效。与此相比，以本书系一卷之量，读一学期，日均1500词左右，恰到好处。以质而论，本书系符合我的外语习得理念：中高阶学生，应以非虚构作品（non-fiction）为“主食”。例如，本书系中有大量美国国会证言（congressional testimony），思维严谨，语言地道，学习西方法律、外交以及高等翻译等专业的学生如能熟读成诵，其英语学习的眼界势必更上层楼。从实用的角度看，有理、有力、有节的明快文风才是日常工作、生活所需，是语言的“常态”；文学作品中因作者意图而创造出的丰富表达，只是语言的“变态”。由常入变，初地坚固，发展空间亦大。反是，恐事倍功半。

至于“泛读”，也有一个基于*Taking Sides*的策略可行：各个话题牵涉到的著作，一学期可读上三五本。如读《环境篇》，可辅读雷切尔·卡森（Rachel Carson）的《寂静的春天》（*Silent Spring*）；读《科技与社会篇》，可辅读阿道司·赫胥黎（Aldous Huxley）的《美丽新世界》（*Brave New World*）。此时，不妨多些文学作品，加深对“精读”义理的体悟思辨，可全“文以载道”之功。

此外，*Taking Sides*对如今各高校流行的英语辩论也有直接的指导作用，无论其辩题还是论据，都可在模拟阶段直接取用。我更相信，认真研读过本书系的学生，其论文一定不会沦为简介、综述，不会抄袭维基、百度，因为他们掌握了论文写作的核心技术：如何灵巧运用事实与逻辑来作严肃的学术之论，而非执着于印象、习惯、偏见的意气之争。

总之，希望*Taking Sides*书系的引进，能综合我国英语学生的语言习得与思维训练，既提升交流的效率，更开启求真的法门，在乱云飞渡的当今时代，帮助读者迅速达成思想之质与辞藻之文的兼美共谐。

Topic Guide

This topic guide suggests how the selections in this book relate to the subjects covered in your course. You may want to use the topics listed on these pages to search the Web more easily. They are arranged to reflect the issues of this Taking Sides reader. You can link to these sites by going to www.mhhe.com/cls. All the articles that relate to each topic are listed below the bold-faced term.

Advertising

3. Is Advertising Good for Society?

Body Image

1. Do Media Cause Individuals to Develop Negative Body Images?

Cultural Images

1. Do Media Cause Individuals to Develop Negative Body Images?

Cyberbullying

9. Are Online Services Responsible for an Increase in Bullying and Harassment?

Digital Rights/Intellectual Property

6. Do Copyright Laws Protect Ownership of Intellectual Property?

First Amendment

5. Does Online Communication Compromise the Rights of an Individual When Information Is "Anonymous"?

Information Age

5. Does Online Communication Compromise the Rights of an Individual When Information Is "Anonymous"?
10. Are People Better Informed in the Information Society?

Internet

5. Does Online Communication Compromise the Rights of an Individual When Information Is "Anonymous"?
9. Are Online Services Responsible for an Increase in Bullying and Harassment?
10. Are People Better Informed in the Information Society?

Journalism

4. Does Fake News Mislead the Public?
7. Should Newspapers Shut Down Their Presses?
8. Are Youth Indifferent to News and Politics?

Media Law

5. Does Online Communication Compromise the Rights of an Individual When Information Is "Anonymous"?
6. Do Copyright Laws Protect Ownership of Intellectual Property?

Media Businesses

3. Is Advertising Good for Society?
7. Should Newspapers Shut Down Their Presses?

Politics

4. Does Fake News Mislead the Public?
8. Are Youth Indifferent to News and Politics?

(Continued)

Newspapers

7. Should Newspapers Shut Down Their Presses?

Privacy

5. Does Online Communication Compromise the Rights of an Individual When Information Is "Anonymous"?

Representations in Media

1. Do Media Cause Individuals to Develop Negative Body Images?

Social Media

10. Are People Better Informed in the Information Society?

Television

4. Does Fake News Mislead the Public?

Video Games

2. Do Video Games Encourage Violent Behavior?

Violence

2. Do Video Games Encourage Violent Behavior?

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Introduction

Ways of Thinking about Mass Media and Society

Alison Alexander and Jarice Hanson

Media are everywhere in the industrialized world today. It is likely that anyone reading this book has access to more forms of media than their grandparents could have ever dreamed of. Many readers are probably adept at multitasking—a term unheard of when this book series began in 1987. Many readers are probably adept at using so many technologies that deliver content over the Internet or cell phones that it almost seems strange to think that broadcast TV, cable TV, film, radio, newspapers, books and magazines, and the recording industry all once were thought of as different forms of media, all delivered in different ways, and all with different economic structures. The convergence of these media over wired and wireless distribution forms now presents us with words, sounds, and images that often blur former distinctions among media forms and industries.

Media are also often scapegoats for the problems of society. Sometimes the relationship of social issues and media seems too obvious *not* to have some connection. For example, violence in the media may be a reflection of society, or, as some critics claim, violence in the media makes it seem that violence in society is the norm. But in reality, one important reason that the media are so often blamed for social problems is that the media are so pervasive. Their very ubiquity gives them the status that makes them seem more influential than they actually are. If one were to look at the statistics on violence in the United States, it would be possible to see that there are fewer violent acts today than in recent history—but the presence of this violence in the media, through reportage or fictional representation, makes it appear more prevalent.

There are many approaches to investigating the relationships that are suggested by media and society. From an organizational perspective, the producers of media must find content and distribution forms that will be profitable, and therefore, they have a unique outlook on the audience as consumers. From the perspective of the creative artist, the profit motive may be important, but the exploration of the unique communicative power of

the media may be paramount. The audience, too, has different use patterns, desires for information or entertainment, and demonstrates a variety of choices in content offered to them, as well as what they take from the media. Whether the media reflect society or shape society has a lot to do with the dynamic interaction of many of these different components.

To complicate matters, the "mass" media have changed in recent years. Not long ago, "mass" media referred to messages that were created by large organizations for broad, heterogeneous audiences. This concept no longer suffices for the contemporary media environments. While the "mass" media still exist in the forms of radio, television, film, and general interest newspapers and magazines, many media forms today are hybrids of "mass" and "personal" media technologies that open a new realm of understanding about how audiences process the meaning of the messages. Audiences may be smaller and more diverse, but the phenomenon of using media to form a picture of the world and our place in it is still the fundamental reason for studying the relationship of media and society.

As we look at U.S. history, we can see that almost every form of media was first subject to some type of regulation by the government or by the media industry itself. This has changed over the years so that we now have a media environment in which the responsibility for the content of media no longer rests entirely in the hands of the FCC or the major corporations. We, as consumers, are asked to be critical of that media which we consume. This requires that we become educated consumers, rather than relying on standards and practices of industry or government intervention into questionable content. While this may not seem like a big problem for adult consumers, the questions and answers become more difficult when we consider how children use the media to form judgments, form opinions, or seek information.

Our habits are changing as the media landscape grows. The average American still spends over three hours a day viewing television, which is on in the average home over seven hours a day, but recent statistics indicate that the "average" American actually spends about 10 hours a day facing a screen of some sort—whether that is a TV screen, computer screen, or cell phone screen. That interaction with media clearly warrants some understanding of what happens in the process of the person/media interaction and relationship.

Politics and political processes have changed, in part, due to the way politicians use the media to reach voters. A proliferation of television channels has resulted from the popularity of cable, but does cable offer anything different from broadcast television? Videocassettes deliver feature-length films to the home, changing the traditional practice of viewing film in a public place, and video distribution via the Internet is now a practical option for anyone with

transmission lines large enough to download large files. The recording industry is still reeling over the impact of MP3 and free software that allows consumers to sample, buy, or steal music online. Communications is a multibillion-dollar industry and the third fastest-growing industry in America. From these and other simple examples, it is clear that the media have changed American society, but our understanding of how and why remains incomplete.

Dynamics of Interaction

In recent years, the proliferation and availability of new media forms have changed on a global scale. In the United States, 98 percent of the homes have at least one telephone, but in 2008 the number of cell phones outnumbered land phones. On a global scale, about half of the world's people now have access to a cell phone. In the United States, over 98 percent of the population has access to at least one television set, but in some parts of the world, televisions are still viewed communally or viewed only at certain hours of the day. The use of broadband connections continues to grow in the United States, while some other countries (usually smaller countries, with high GNP) are reaching saturation with broadband technologies, and other countries still have limited dial-up services for the Internet.

But apart from questions of access and available content, many fundamental questions about the power of media in any given society remain the same. How do audiences use the media available to them? How do message senders produce meaning? How much of the meaning of any message is produced by the audience? And increasingly important for discussion is, how additional uses of media change our interpersonal environments and human interactions.

Progress in Media Research

Much of media research has been in search of theory. Theory is an organized, commonsense refinement of everyday thinking; it is an attempt to establish a systematic view of a phenomenon in order to better understand that phenomenon. Theory is tested against reality to establish whether or not it is a good explanation; so, for example, a researcher might notice that what is covered by news outlets is very similar to what citizens say are the important issues of the day. From such observations came agenda setting (the notion that the media confer importance on the topics they cover, directing public attention to what is considered important).

Much of the early media research was produced to answer questions of print media because print has long been regarded as a permanent record of history and events. The ability of newspapers and books to shape and influence

public opinion was regarded as a necessity to the founding of new forms of governments—including the U.S. government; and a good number of our laws and regulations were originally written to favor print (like copyright and freedom of the press). But the bias of the medium carried certain restrictions. Print media necessarily were limited to those individuals who could read. The principles that emerged from this relationship were addressed in an often-quoted statement attributed to Thomas Jefferson, who wrote, "Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter." But the next sentence in Jefferson's statement is equally important and often omitted from quotations: "But I should mean that every man should receive those papers and be capable of reading them." Today, however, the newspaper is no longer the primary distribution form for information that is critical to living in a democracy.

Today, media research on the relationships of media senders, the channels of communication, and the receivers of messages is not enough. Consumers must realize that "media literacy" and maybe even "technological literacy" are important concepts too. People can no longer take for granted that the media exist primarily to provide news, information, and entertainment. They must be more attuned to what media content says about them as individuals and as members of a society, and they need to be aware of how the ability for almost everyone to create media (like blogging, or social networking) challenges traditional ownership and privacy laws and regulations. By integrating these various cultural components, the public can better criticize the regulation or lack of regulation that permits media industries to function the way they do.

The use of social science data to explore the effects of media on audiences strongly emphasized psychological and sociological schools of thought. It did not take long to move from the "magic bullet theory"—which proposed that media had a direct and immediate effect on the receivers of the message, and the same message intended by the senders was the same when it was "shot" into the receiver—to other ideas of limited, or even indirect, means of influencing the audience.

Media research has shifted from addressing specifically effects-oriented paradigms to exploring the nature of the institutions of media production themselves, as well as examining the unique characteristics of each form of media and the ability of the media user to also produce media products. What most researchers agree upon today is that the best way to understand the power and impact of media is to look at context-specific situations to better understand the dynamics involved in the use of media and the importance of the content.

Still, there are many approaches to media research from a variety of interdisciplinary fields: psychology, sociology, linguistics, art, comparative literature, economics, political science, and more. What these avenues of inquiry have in common is that they all tend to focus attention on individuals, families or other social groups, society in general, and culture in the broad sense. All of the interpretations frame meaning and investigate their subjects within institutional frameworks that are specific to any nation and/or culture.

Many of the questions for media researchers in the twenty-first century deal with the continued fragmentation of the audience, caused by greater choice of channels and technologies for traditional and new communication purposes. The power of some of these technologies to reach virtually any place on the globe within fractions of a second will continue to pose questions of access to media and the meaning of the messages transmitted. As individuals become more dependent upon the Internet for communication purposes, the sense of audience will further be changed as individual users choose what they want to receive, pay for, and keep. For all of these reasons, the field of media research is rich, growing, and challenging.

Questions for Consideration

In addressing the issues in this book, it is important to consider some recurring questions:

1. Are the media unifying or fragmenting? Does media content help the socialization process, or does it create anxiety or inaccurate portrayals of the world? Do people understand what they are doing when they post personal information online or open themselves to immediate criticism and feedback?
2. How are our basic institutions changing as we use media in new and different ways? Do media support or undermine our political processes? Do they change what we think of when we claim to live in a "democracy"? Do media operate in the public interest, or do media serve the rich and powerful corporations' quest for profit? Can the media do both simultaneously?
3. Whose interests do the media represent? Do audiences actively work toward integrating media messages with their own experiences? How do new media technologies change our traditional ways of communicating? Are they leading us to a world in which interpersonal communication is radically altered because we rely on information systems to replace many traditional behaviors?

Summary

We live in a media-rich environment where almost everybody has access to some forms of media and some choices in content. As new technologies and services are developed, are they responding to the problems that previous media researchers and the public have detected? Over time, individuals have improved their ability to unravel the complex set of interactions that tie the media and society together, but they need to continue to question past results, new practices and technologies, and their own evaluative measures. When people critically examine the world around them—a world often presented by the media—they can more fully understand and enjoy the way they relate as individuals, as members of groups, and as members of a society.

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