

Leadership Letter for Global MIL

Voices of Media Literacy: Guillermo Orozco Gómez **02**

CML is delighted to announce the participation of Dr. Guillermo Orozco Gómez in its ongoing Voices of Media Literacy Project, featuring the first-person stories of 20+ media literacy pioneers.

Research Highlights **03**

Interview with Guillermo Orozco Gómez. A lifelong commitment to media literacy and education has propelled the work of Dr. Guillermo Orozco Gómez, a pioneer participating in CML's Voices of Media Literacy Project

CML News **10**

*Shared Transatlantic Challenges – including media literacy – were explored in regards to disinformation and the changing media landscape at an EU-US Young Leaders Seminar in Brussels in April.
A New Infographic summarizes the 5 Key Questions of Media Literacy for Deconstruction*

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Explore the Voices of Media Literacy: 20+ Pioneers share their stories.

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Do you really know what you "know?" Explore with this puzzle to find out if you might be right.

Voices of Media Literacy: Guillermo Orozco Gómez

We are proud and pleased to feature an interview with Dr. Guillermo Orozco Gómez, professor at the University of Guadalajara, as the latest addition to pioneers included in CML's Voices of Media Literacy Project. Dr. Gómez is a long-standing, innovative contributor to the media literacy field from Mexico, but more importantly, his voice has resonated around the world as he has worked closely with leaders from every continent. His story is fascinating and resonates with issues as important today as ever – issues that reflect the global nature of media literacy practice.

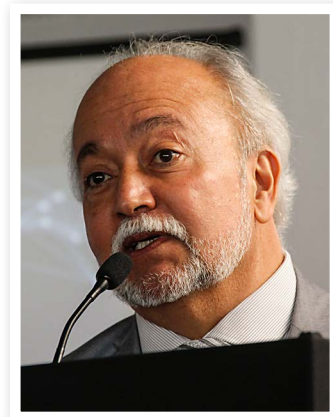
When CML first introduced its Voices of Media Literacy project in 2011, we were excited to contribute to the media literacy field by sharing the stories of its early practitioners and founders, but even then, we underestimated what an impact the Project would have. Through these stories, it is possible to understand more clearly what media literacy is and the benefits it offers; how the field developed and advanced through the years; and how a growing global consensus formed around the theory and practice supporting media literacy. Like all emerging fields, media literacy has endured its share of conflicts and setbacks as well as advances and recognition. Today, media literacy has taken its place as an important discipline that points the way towards education needed for the internet age, to serve the needs of the global village. It is thanks to the efforts of these pioneers, working across the globe, that media literacy has survived and indeed thrived through the years.

The Voices of Media Literacy pioneers provide a clarity about media literacy that is difficult to find elsewhere, especially since there is literally a shortage of experts and practitioners who are steeped in the knowledge of what media literacy is and how it is practiced and implemented. Media literacy sometimes stands in danger of being misinterpreted and misused – yet the pioneers in the field provide a clear path to follow that is needed more than ever. Media literacy can be seen as only involving production or new media platforms – or it can be seen as only involving deconstruction or legacy media. It can be interpreted as only addressing misinformation and disinformation, rather than all content areas in all media forms, anywhere, anytime. Different waves of social issues and concerns have sometimes driven different interpretations of media literacy, but those who have spent their careers in the field and who have contributed to the media literacy community through the years have a perspective that is steady in its nature and determined in its goals of providing the critical thinking skills, the habits of mind that inform how we make meaning from media.

We invite you to explore the valuable perspective that Dr. Guillermo Orozco Gómez has now so generously shared with us – a perspective gained from a career dedicated to helping all citizens to navigate the media terrain online and off.

Research Highlights

Interview with Guillermo Orozco Gómez



Guillermo Orozco Gómez Emeritus National Researcher and Full Senior Professor, University of Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico. Since 2011 director of the Social Communication Studies Department, at Cultural Studies Division, University of Guadalajara, Mexico. Communicator, MA and EDD from Harvard. Member of the Mexican Academy of Sciences and the National System of Researchers. Director of the UNESCO chair: Media and Information Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue for Spanish-speaking Latin America. His academic work has been developed for 30 years along the lines of Media Literacy, TV Fiction and Audience' Analysis. He created and directed the Institutional Research Program (PROIICOM) and the series Communication and Social Practices Notebooks, Iberoamerican University, Mexico. Coordinator of the book series of the International Forum TVMORFOSIS. Author of 80 articles and book chapters, author/coauthor of 18 books. His latest books: Viewership: Communication, Education and Citizenry. Translated into Portuguese: Recepção Midiática, Aprendizagens e Cidadania, 2014. At the Edge of Screens. La Crujía, Ed. Argentina, 2015. TvMorphosis 6: Management and consumption of digital contents. New models. Tintable, Mexico, 2017. He is a participating member of UNESCO's UNITWIN Network for Media and Information Literacy, as well as the Global Alliance for Partnerships in Media and Information Literacy (GAPMIL).

Tessa Jolls (TJ): Please tell us how you became involved in media education? What attracted you to the field? What were some of your early experiences?

Guillermo Orozco Gómez: Communication Sciences was my academic field during my university studies in Guadalajara, Mexico. I graduated as a “communicator” in 1974. During my studies, in summer 1972, I participated in a Social Service Project designed to develop a Radio Education strategy to teach basic Spanish language skills to a dispersed Tarahumaran Indian community at northern states in Mexico. This was my first challenge to link media and education, although using media to teach Spanish. During '73 to '75 I worked with an NGO (Non Government Organization) to help out people coming from rural parts of the country. These immigrants were abandoning the fields in agriculture to come to the big cities to get a job for surviving. They were just incorporating at the edge of the cities without houses, and just fabricating whatever they could to have a small shelter, and access to water. In this situation and environment, I was trying to do, firstly, some instructional work using audiovisual media, so that they could have a better sense of how a big city looks like, and which type of public services they could look for.

During this job I discover the book of a great educator and philosopher: Paulo Freire, a Brazilian teacher who developed a pedagogical methodology for adults literacy: “The Pedagogy of the Oppressed”.

Freire was trying to implement something dialogical with people, and I decided to try his approach. Then, after my first approach focused in providing these new inhabitants information, I formed groups with adults and adolescents, so that they could talk about their living conditions and especially how and why were they leaving the countryside to come to the big city.

I wanted to help these people to process that experience, and I translated ideas about their movement in pictures and in drawings done by themselves. We used this visual material to facilitate conversation among them, so that they could talk about their migration experience easily and in more analytical terms. The main issue was that they didn't want to move from their homes, but they had to, because in the countryside they were starving. I thought it was important for them to discuss their thoughts and idea about this and analyze their memories to be able to understand better and more critically the causes of their poverty and the kind of chances they had to improve their economic and political situation at the edge of the city.

I think, that was my beginning in this field of media education, since I used some slides, pictures, drawings made by the participants, songs and stories told by themselves and other media materials in order to inspire thoughts and a better understanding about their problematic circumstance.

TJ: What were some milestones that you noted along the way?

GOG: From that experience, I realized that I needed a more organized pedagogical structure for my thoughts about education using media. I applied for a scholarship to go to Germany, and I got that scholarship from the German Department of Academic Interchange. I went to Cologne University to study didactics.

Quite frankly I didn't like that program, and so after one year I went back to Mexico City. I started to work at the Barros Sierra Foundation, a research center for “future studies” in education, supported by the Mexican Ministry of Education.

I was very lucky to be at this center, because a professor from Harvard University came for his sabbatical year to work with us, and I became part of his team for two years. That is why I decided to go to Harvard University, to study at the Education School, where they invented Sesame Street.

I hope I'm making it clear that all during my career, I've been moving in two fields - from communication to education, to education from communication, from media sometimes emphasizing more the media side, other times emphasizing more the dialogic experience with people.

Ultimately, I got disappointed with Sesame Street, because although it was a novel way to do some innovating teaching with/from Televisión, this effort was not intended to transform the relationship between teaching – learning itself. Viewers were taken as recipients of information (at least during the first years of this TV program).

My PHD dissertation in Harvard (1988) was the confluence between family education, school education and television “education”. That was informal education

from television, not formal education, as it was with Sesame Street. I started with the hypothesis that people learn much more from regular television than from any other institution around.

With my research, I saw that most of the students were learning different things from television and other media such as film. Depending on the type of family and the intervention families were making with their children, children were more or less influenced by television and other media. I said, "We need to do something for media education." And that's when I came to the realization and decision that my main interest professionally and academically was media education.

TJ: What an epiphany! You came to this great insight that media education is more about teaching people how to deal with the media than it is to try to make the media the teacher.

When you had this insight, where did you go from there, Guillermo? What did you decide to do to achieve your goal of helping people understand media?

GOG: I thought that we had to develop certain materials, didactic materials, so that we could facilitate media education. What I discovered was that at least in Mexico, educators did not understand the role of television in their students' learning and lives. In Mexico, teachers do not bring their students' learnings from media to discuss in classes. Teachers make a division between education – the responsibility of the educational system and of the schools – and TV, a cultural-entertainment institution without a "credential to teach". Teachers say: "No, I don't like television, I don't care about television, I don't want to know anything about television in the classroom."

After many interviews with teachers and school principals, it was clear to me that teachers in Mexico saw television as something that students do outside the classroom, and they did not want to deal with it. Teachers made TV one of their main enemies in the schools.

That understanding goes directly against what the great philosopher John Dewey said: if students are learning something outside the school that influences their learning process inside the classroom, then, that outside learning had to be taken into account ... it would be the responsibility of the teachers to analyze that learning.

At first, I thought that the main problem was to convince teachers in the educational systems to introduce some media education questions and topics, to think more critically about what everybody was watching. I discovered that teachers were watching soap operas, even if they never admitted it to students. They told me, "Professor, yes, we watch this and this and this, but we don't tell the students we are watching soap operas."

I thought this was something I might change. I designed a magazine with a lot of pictures and drawings, and with the permission of the Mexican Educational System authorities, the material was sent to the schools. Some schools took some care of that for a while, but then they did not pay much attention. But I considered that this experiment was a first "call to attention"

I've been always attempting to influence the educational system from the top, so that media education or some type of media literacy could be considered formally within the teaching plans and school policies. But this hasn't been the case, at least in Mexico. Media education is still not embedded in the system. Now recently, with information

requirements for managing all the digital tools we have, professors and teachers are more willing to introduce courses on media education, but courses at the technical level – not for addressing the critical thinking in using the digital tools.

TJ: That seems to be a common problem around the world, even now. In regards to the field of media education and media literacy, do you feel that you've seen change in the field itself as well as just in your conditions in Mexico?

GOG: Let me tell you something about an effort to build up some kind of international movement on media education in the '90s.

A colleague of mine from Spain, Roberto Aparici, was trying to get together the more Anglo-Saxon view about media literacy and the Latin American view on that. He received some funding from UNESO in the mid-90's – '94, '95 and '96 – for doing in sequence three meetings in La Coruna Spain. Roberto gathered people from the British Film Institute, colleagues from the CLEMI in Paris, colleagues from United States and from about ten Latin American countries, as well as Spain and Italy.

We started to see that we could have a real world movement for media education. We were trying to discuss the differences in the more Anglo-Saxon orientation to critical thinking – we were looking at media literacy in terms of the different languages and the different technical approaches. Here in Latin American countries, we were more oriented to critical thinking development, not only analytical thinking, so that kids would perceive what was wrong or good in TV contents.

Barry Duncan was a marvelous bridge between two hemispheres in the world for media education. At that point, Barry Duncan and I went to a congress organized in Sao Paulo Brazil by Roberto Aparici and Ismar de Oliveira, who is a leader in media education in Brazil and in the Latin American world as well.

We had a congress in Sao Paulo and included people from English-speaking countries. It was a success and from that, Barry Duncan offered to organize the next congress in Toronto. We had the Toronto meeting at the end of '98. Roberto Aparici was negotiating the terms of the conference, and the participation. He was very, very careful about the translations, knowing that we wanted to be understood and heard by our English-speaking colleagues.

John Puengente said "Yes, we are going to have translation, don't worry about that" and they had translations. But they had translations only for the main conferences given in English by English speaking colleagues to the Spanish assistants. They didn't translate the other way around. Then, we Spanish speakers were not translated into English, so that English speakers would understand what we were saying. We were really angered by this Congress, and Barry Duncan was really disappointed too. The efforts to get together this small community was on the floor. We thought "Okay there are differences," but we felt really badly treated and offended by our English-speaking colleagues.

TJ: You were disenfranchised in terms of being heard. This is very painful, and very sad – a loss for the field, for sure.

GOG: Yes, it was a really bad experience. We did not think that it would happen, but it happened. From there on, academicians – haven't made other really important attempts to interchange and get together and have a common agreement about what media education is.

UNESCO has come into the picture in recent years, offering materials, analyses, etcetera, and of course, international conferences, and this has helped. But, I would like to talk about the approaches that caused different understandings.

TJ: Yes...

GOG: At first, we – Latin Americans – were placed ideologically in a more defensive or protectionist approach. We thought that we had to give tools to teach people to defend themselves from the TV messages. We were oriented more by perspectives which focused on ideological content of the messages. Efforts in the '70s, '80s and even '90s, were directed to the content and the protectionist approach to media education. At that time. The book: "Promote or Protect....." published by Ulla Carlsson in '99 or '98, captured very well the two different perspectives: the protect one emphasized the defense, and the promote was trying to make people analytical and aware of what they were interacting with, but not in a defensive way but in a more proactive and empowering way.

I don't think we have superseded this debate between defend or promote, and I think this remain as a main difference between northern hemisphere countries and southern hemisphere countries.

The other thing that we have to supersede now, is the "instrumental perspectives" on media education. I recognize that mastering digital technology is a key for being able to go further to a more analytical level. But that do not necessarily mean real understanding of the whole package.

During many years, media educators wanted to give students a different ideology, a "correct" vision to interpret reality. Now, I think that educators in general, but especially media educators, have to be able to make evident to the viewer what is presented in the screens, discourses that are not evident by themselves. For example, hate speech, racism, sexism, classicism, and etcetera.

We need to get critical through thinking and the tools we need to promote are the analytical tools for the mind, so that anyone can arrive to a decision, critical or not, but people need to arrive at a conscious position about what they are dealing with in media and or in other technology.

TJ: It's the analytical process that can be global, in this sense, something that we can encourage no matter where the person is from. It also can address any ideology, it can address any particular political situation. It's the thinking that counts, the habits of mind...

GOG: Yes, I think so too. If we just focus on children and adolescents about dealing with media content and propositions, I think that we have to stress the abilities to produce and exchange new insights and content and be able to think about the process of

constructing them. In a way we could make creators to think about what they wanted to say and what others interpreted they said, and think about the causes of that difference.

Here, my focus is to understand what could be the motivation that children and adolescents go through by dealing with media and technology,... I think, this can facilitate an understanding of their approach of doing things, and of sharing things, and would teach us through which type of production children interact with...

We, media educators, need to know more about the children's actual motivations and desires to produce and interchange information and knowledge throughout social networks. For example, one of the adolescents' major interest in writing is to be read by others, not to get a good grade in grammar class in the school. As educators, we need to change the reason "why" to encourage students do something. We would like students to say, "I write because I want others to read what I wrote". Or: "I want to say this, because I want others to interact with what I said."

This is what I'm exploring now as a pedagogy for media education. I want to push people to create and to do something so that others can read that, enjoy that, contest that, and exchange ideas and grow a dialogue. I believe that this is the best motivation for children to be aware communicators, and to be analyzing what they create and interchange.

TJ: That helps answer a question: where would you like to see things go?

GOG: I would like to go even further to provoke young people to be hackers in a nice way – in the way where being a hacker means to take a challenge to go further, not in order to destroy, but to take on a challenge to supersede propositions in the way of doing things. The motivation is like in a video game, go to the limits so that you can get the first position and win. This situation in video games is the reason why children and adolescents can spend hours in front of a video game: they are emotionally , not intellectually, stimulated to go further and further and further ...

That gives the players some happiness. I deal with students and I'm looking at some colleagues working here, and we can see how that happiness motivates people to keep themselves engaged, to invent and discover new ways of doing something different as it was done before.

The pedagogical intervention from a media educator (in the case of videogames) would be to push the gamers analyze and go deeper and deeper into the meaning of what they are doing in their interactions with the plot of the game and with others gamers.

TJ: When you think about where you would like to see the field to go, you'd like to see more emphasis on discovery, on production, on exploration. Are you seeing that media education is going in that direction, and that there is more acceptance of that educational philosophy, or do you feel like it's being frustrated at a very deep level?

GOG: Yes, I think we are moving in the positive direction. I will speak about my country, Mexico. Here there is more acceptance for incorporating creative approaches through technology in some schools. Teachers are getting more involved in technology and they

are more tolerant about mixing media and technology with education in the classroom. Today everybody has to be involved in technology in some minimal way to survive. I hope that this helps the media education movement, so that we go from survival to a more profound approach to media education.

I think the media education movement gives people hope. I really appreciate what UNESCO is trying to do, facilitating that around the world by getting people together from different cultures and countries, and pushing people to think about what they want to do now, or later in the future.

This is a movement that could be very productive to get not only more insights about media education, but to feel that we are coming to something visible for our effort to promote media education. This is another challenge we have as media educators: we need to know and to feel that we are not alone. UNESCO is helping us feel just that: we are not alone.

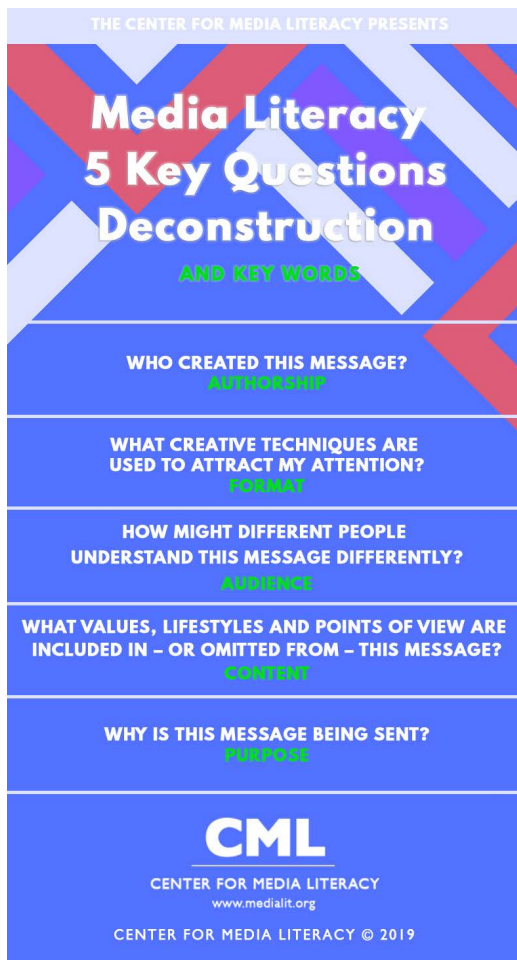
TJ: I think UNESCO's pulling these international meetings together has been very helpful, yes. Now, thinking about surprises through the years with the field, have there been any things that have surprised you about the way things have developed or has it just unfolded and you take it as it comes? Did you have some expectations that you felt like "Well, I didn't expect that but here we are."

GOG: Difficult, but a crucial question for a media educator!! I would say that with the years, I have come to the feeling (a feeling for now, not yet a conviction) that we, media educators, have to abandon emphasis on teaching about the media and about our ideal relationship with them, in order to emphasize how to deal and to be creative with media, and even transcend that. This includes the discussion of audience's communication rights, on the one hand, and on the other, push audiences to be "hackers". In this endeavor, our role as media educators would be more of a companion and as facilitator to get them connected to others, to feed their creativity through technological devices and information.

TJ: Do you have any advice or any special message for media education practitioners?

GOG: We need to keep in mind and heart the hope that we can transform the lives of citizens as audiences. I'm really convinced about this. I will continue working on that from different sides with different intensity according to the circumstances, and I invite others to develop networks and to do the same. This is our privilege as media educators and should be our hope for now and for the future.

“Shared Transatlantic Challenges: Disinformation and the Changing Media Landscape” was the theme of the EU -US Young Leaders Seminar in Brussels, Belgium, held April 7-8. A Panel Discussion moderated by Joel Santaularia Boquet entitled “Civil Society and Shared Solutions” featured Michael X. Delli Carpini, University of Pennsylvania, Nad’a Kovalcikova, GMF Alliance for Securing Democracy, CML’s Tessa Jolls, and Agniete Pocyte, a graduate researcher. The U.S. Mission to the European Union hosted a reception at the University Foundation for all participants.



Infographics

The Five Core Concepts of media literacy (see <http://www.medialit.org/sites/default/files/Media%20Literacy%20Concepts.png>) inform a process of inquiry that can be applied to any media content – whether you are producing or consuming media messages. This new CML Infographic features CML’s Five Key Questions for Deconstruction (<http://www.medialit.org/new-infographic-key-questions-media-literacy>) – each associated with a Concept – to ask when deconstructing media messages, regardless of whether those messages are disseminated on social media, video, billboards or logos. These questions are just a starting point for exploration – but they are a reliable starting point that provide a handy way to collaborate with others and zero in on key concerns for making meaning and understanding.

More Media Literacy Infographics are available on the [CML website](#).

About Us...

The Consortium for Media Literacy addresses the role of global media through the advocacy, research and design of media literacy education for youth, educators and parents. The Consortium focuses on K-12 grade youth and their parents and communities. The research efforts include health education, body image/sexuality, safety and responsibility in media by consumers and creators of products. The Consortium is building a body of research, interventions and communications that demonstrate scientifically that media literacy is an effective intervention strategy in addressing critical issues for democracy: <http://www.consortiumformedia literacy.org>

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Uniting for Development

Media Literacy Resources

Voices of Media Literacy

Voices of Media Literacy is a collection of interviews that were conducted in 2010-2011 with 20+ media literacy pioneers who were active in the field prior to 1990. These pioneers represent the English-speaking countries of the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and the United States. Their views not only shed light on the development of media literacy, but also on where they see the field evolving and their hopes for the future. These 20+ transcripts may be found as follows (in alphabetical order):

[Neil Andersen \(Canada\)](#)

[Cary Bazalgette \(UK\)](#)

[David Buckingham \(UK\)](#)

[Marilyn Cohen \(U.S.\)](#)

[David Considine \(U.S. by way of Australia\)](#)

[Barry Duncan \(Canada\)](#)

[Lesley Farmer \(U.S.\)](#) New addition!

[Jean Pierre Golay \(U.S. by way of Switzerland\)](#)

[Renee Hobbs \(U.S.\)](#)

[Douglas Kellner \(U.S.\)](#)

[Robert Kubey \(U.S.\)](#)

[Len Masterman \(UK\)](#)

[Barrie McMahon \(Australia\)](#)

[Kate Moody \(U.S.\)](#)

[Renee Cherow-O'Leary \(U.S.\)](#)

[James Potter \(U.S.\)](#)

[Robyn Quin \(Australia\)](#)

[Marieli Rowe \(U.S. by way of Switzerland\)](#)

[Dorothy G. Singer \(U.S.\)](#)

[Victor Strasburger, MD \(US\)](#)

[Elizabeth Thoman \(U.S.\)](#)

[Kathleen Tyner \(U.S.\)](#)

[Chris Worsnop \(Canada\)](#)

[Read News Release](#)

[See Presentation](#) from NAMLE Conference 2011, launching the Voices of Media Literacy Project.

Confirmation Bias: How do I argue against myself?

Research shows that we are more than twice as likely to seek out information that confirms and conforms to our opinion than information that contradicts or disproves our opinion. This is called confirmation bias. But only seeking out information that confirms our current opinion is a hindrance to expanding our knowledge base and making a truly informed decision. How can we overcome our confirmation bias? Instead of reading articles or reports that confirm your opinion, you need to seek out credible information from reliable sources that claim the opposite. Can you rationally counter-argue to other argument, and can you back it up with unbiased data? If you can't it doesn't mean you're wrong, but you have a new set of questions to answer and research to pursue. The important point is to argue against yourself! It will force you to think hard about why you could be wrong. Not only does it force you to expose yourself to confirming ideas and data, but it can strengthen your original opinion and enhance your overall knowledge level.

AHA! I like to be right, so I look for information that confirms my opinions.

Grade Level: 9-12

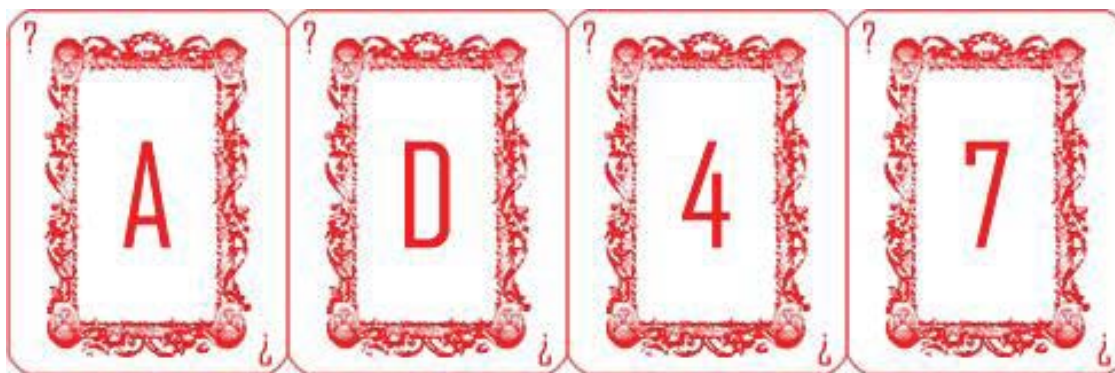
Materials: Projector to show the activity

Key Question #3/Consumer: How might different people understand this message differently?

Core Concept #3: Different people understand the same media message differently.

Activity:

Suppose we lay out the following 4 cards like this.*



Then we give you the following statement.

If a card has a vowel on one side then it has an even number on the other side.

Our question to you is which two cards do you need to flip over to prove this statement true?

- A & 4
- A & 7
- D & 4
- D & 7

Did you choose A & 4?

Then you're like the majority of people, wrong.

People flip over these two cards **to confirm the statement**. If they flip over the A card and a vowel appears the statement is correct. If they flip over the 4 card and a vowel is on the other side then the statement is also proved correct.

Instead of asking you to prove the statement true, what if we asked you **to prove the statement false**. Which two cards would you flip over now?

- ~~• A & 4~~
- A & 7
- D & 4
- D & 7

The answer is A & 7.

Flipping over the A card can confirm the statement but also disprove the statement if an odd number is on the other side. You would flip over the 7 card because you can disprove the statement if a vowel was on the other side.

*This test is the [Wason Selection Test](#) and it shows our confirmation bias in action. This activity is adapted with permission from an investment newsletter published by American Money Management LLC, P.O. Box 675203, Rancho Santa Fe, CA 92067.