

# Framing Theory

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Framing theory helps us  
understand how people  
develop their perception of  
reality

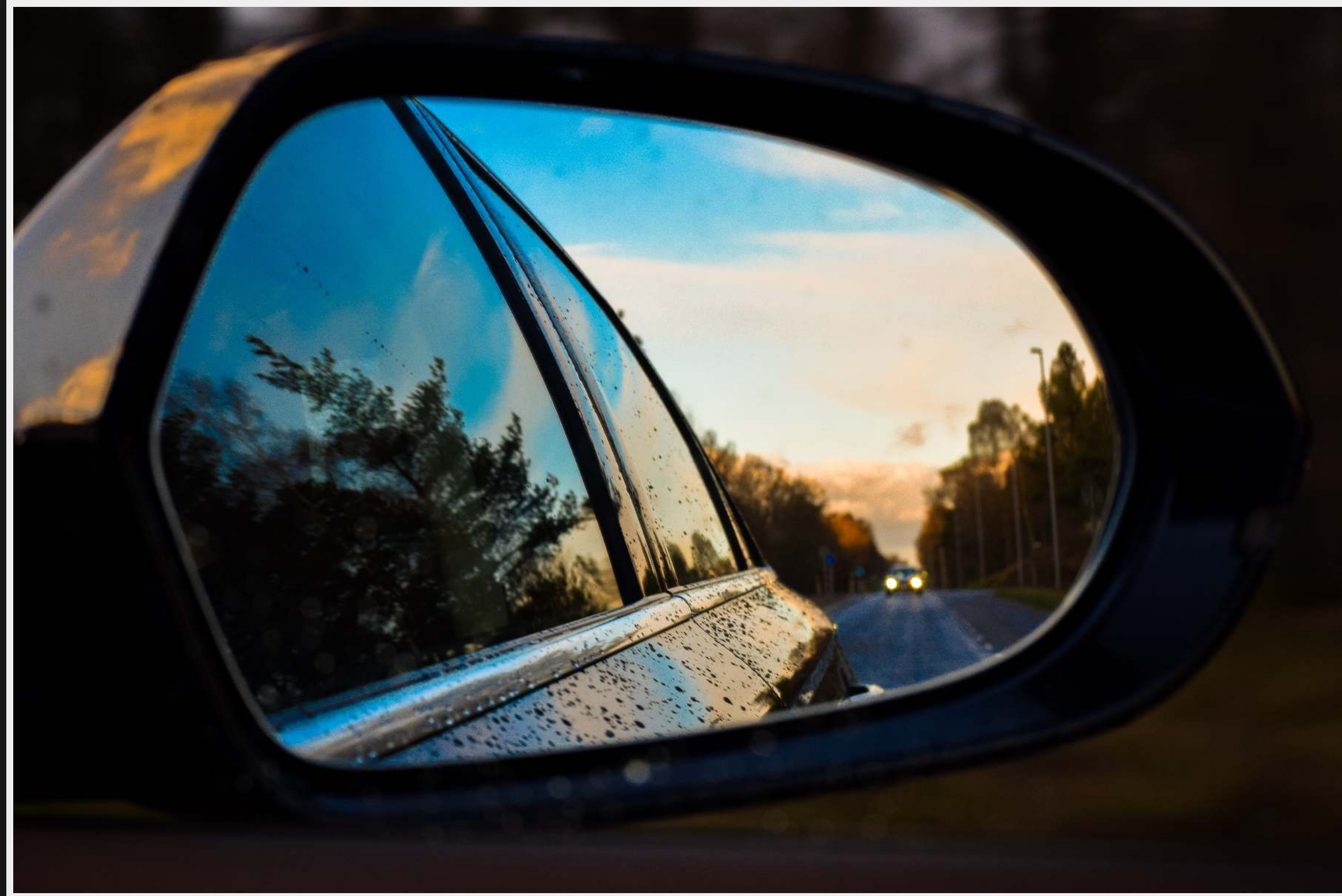
# Social Construction of Reality

- Theoretical proposition formalized by Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann in 1966
- Proposition: An individual's view of reality not entirely, or even mainly, objective
  - Rather, it is a human/social construction based on our habituation and developed via everyday interaction
  - Thus, reality is socially constructed

# Multiple Perceived Realities

- Presumption: Individuals **think and act** based on the reality they have **constructed**
  - However, the reality that one person experiences may be different from the reality another person experiences
  - **The world thus consists of multiple perceived realities**
    - Shaped from the individual level to the social systems level

# Journalism as a Mirror



Source



# Example: Protests



Source

Media framing is the process by which an individual **selects some aspects** of a perceived reality and **makes them more salient** in a communicating text



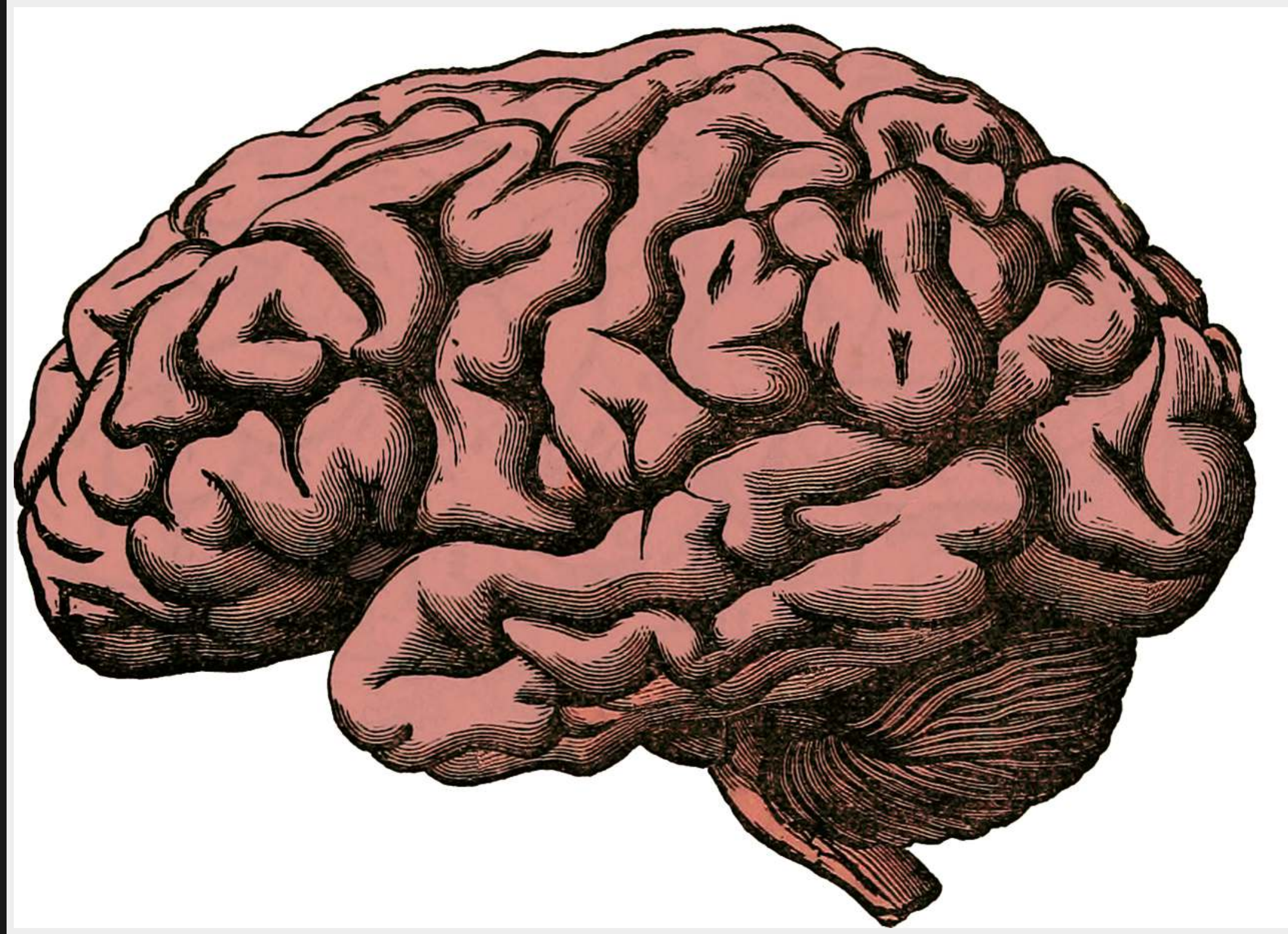
# Acts of Framing

- Diagnosing problems
  - What are the 'problems' associated with the topic?
- Diagnosing causes
  - What/who are the forces creating the problem?
- Making moral judgments
  - Is the causal agent(s) or the effect(s) good or bad?
- Recommending treatments
  - What are the 'solutions' to the 'problem'? What are the implications of those 'solutions'?



A media frame is the written, spoken, graphical, or visual message that a communicator uses to contextualize a topic, such as a person, event, episode, or issue

# Conscious and Subconscious Processes



Source



Journalistic frames often  
impact audiences'  
understandings of and  
attitudes toward a topic or  
issue

# Treatment A or Treatment B?

- Gain Frame
  - If Program A is adopted, 200 people will be saved
  - If Program B is adopted, there is a 1/3 chance that all 600 people will be saved and a 2/3 chance that nobody will be saved
- Loss Frame
  - If Program A is adopted, 400 people will die
  - If Program B is adopted, there is a 1/3 chance that nobody will die and a 2/3 chance that all 600 people will die



# Impacts of/on Framing Effects

- The extent of framing impacts is **neither uniform nor universal**
- Repeated exposure to particular frames can develop lasting associations over time
- Impact of journalistic frames are most pronounced in situations where individuals are dependent on journalistic media
- **Journalistic actors are themselves influenced** by the frames they (and their peers) are regularly exposed to

# Key Takeaways

- An individual's view of reality is not entirely (or even mainly) objective; it is constructed by their filters
- The framing process involves both conscious and subconscious processes of selection and salience
- Frames can impact understandings and attitudes, but those impacts not uniform or universal
- Journalistic actors are themselves influenced by frames, and may therefore come to reinforce dominant interpretations