

Agenda-Setting

Communications & Media

Media rarely say what to think; they shape what you think about.

Agenda-setting is the transfer of issue salience from media coverage to public priorities.

ORIGINAL STUDY

Chapel Hill, 1968

EVIDENCE BASE

Broad and replicated

- First level: which issues seem important at all.
- Second level: which attributes of an issue stand out.
- Effect is strongest for issues we cannot see directly.
- Weakest where people have direct personal experience.
- Need for orientation predicts who is most affected.

LOOK FOR IT

Crime coverage can rise while recorded crime falls, and public concern tracks the coverage.

One of the better-evidenced media effects. It concerns priority and salience, not persuasion to a position.