Public Abstract

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Title:Following the Money: How Salient is Media Ownership Information to U.S. Citizens?

This qualitative study seeks to assess how significant media ownership information is to citizens' lives and to understand on what bases this information is salient for some citizens and not others. Ten respondents were recruited from the cities of St. Louis and Columbia, Missouri. In-depth interviews were conducted along with a short, written quiz to evaluate individuals' bases for salience (expectancy, frequency/recency, emotional valence, and involvement) and levels of knowledge regarding media ownership. For the respondents of this study, results show higher levels of media ownership salience and knowledge correspond to those who perceive objectivity in news as a process while lower levels of salience correspond to respondents who perceive objectivity in news as an end-product.