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Acknowledgements

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Chapter One: Introduction

I was a starry-eyed San Diegan who needed a lot of inspiration. I had two Bachelor’s degrees from California State University San Marcos, a college just twenty minutes away from my hometown. I was a poet and an activist, but I always knew I wanted to be a journalist. I watched the CBS Evening News on a regular basis and thought, “that is what I want to do, I want to be the next Katie Couric.”

The story of how I got to the Missouri School of Journalism is actually completely random. I was a grocery clerk; scanning groceries during my undergraduate years. One day, this customer randomly asked me what I wanted to do with my life. I told her, “I want to go to graduate school for broadcast journalism.” She asked me: “have you heard of Missouri’s program?” And the rest is history.

I applied and got into the program in May 2012. I started in fall of 2012, and immediately started working as a graduate research assistant for a project that focused on Google+ and television—particularly how broadcasters could use social media to enhance viewership and create what can be defined as “citizen journalism.” The project was affiliated with both the Reynolds Journalism Institute (RJI) in Columbia, Missouri and the Nine Network of Public Media in St. Louis. I worked with two RJI fellows and Nine Network producers on a weekly basis to launch a show called Staytuned STL. The show was designed solely around social media—it had a Twitter and Facebook team of interns and a Google+ team of graduate students. This was the first time the network had ever used Google+.

The Google+ team researched heavy topics and booked credible guests, like
journalists who had experience with certain topics and experts in the field of that topic (psychologists, professors, doctors, etc). The credibility of those shows relied heavily upon social media—Twitter, Facebook, and Google+. We took viewer input very seriously and strived to make the show credible.

My goal was to integrate the elements from the Nine Network of Public Media project into my master’s project, but move the focus to social media and news credibility. I worked in four different newsrooms during my graduate career at the Missouri School of Journalism—Missouri Digital News (MDN), The Nine Network of Public Media, KOMU-TV, and KBIA-FM. In each newsroom, there were diverse forms of social media—at MDN, we focused on Twitter and blogging. At the Nine Network, we focused on Google+, Twitter, digital news and Facebook. KOMU-TV focused on e-mail, Twitter, and Facebook. KBIA-FM focused on Twitter, Facebook, and digital news. And CBS Evening News: Weekend Edition used Twitter and its website to broadcast breaking news.

Each of these newsrooms had a goal—to make the news credible. KOMU-TV had its share of viewer responses—primarily on its Facebook page. Since most of my time was spent working at KOMU-TV, I would like to use KOMU-TV as my primary comparison for my project. My hypotheses will thus be the following:

1. Using social media gives citizens the voice they want and, in turn, helps television grow (by engaging its viewers at home, at work, and even out at lunch, etc.).
2. Using social media does not give citizens the voice they want and, in turn, does not help television grow (by engaging its viewers at home, at work, and even out at lunch, etc.).
3. Social media has helped news credibility.
4. Social media has not helped news credibility.

From my experience, social media is almost mandatory in modern newsrooms. The
newsrooms I have worked in have become so reliant on social media--to tease viewers/listeners, or to communicate between bureaus. Twitter, Facebook and blogging are all ways of enticing viewers and giving a sense of credibility/building a relationship. I have thus decided my theoretical frameworks will be: the play theory and agenda setting.

Social media’s purpose in a newscast--any newscast--applies to each framework. KOMU-TV’s viewers like to be entertained by social media. It also likes to ask viewers what to think about--on a daily basis--and apply their input in its 5 o’clock newscast (with a required breakout and graphic). These contribute to my overall analysis.
Chapter Two: Field Notes

I. Chronological Timeline of Project Progression:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Progress</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December 4th, 2013</td>
<td>Committee signatures turned in, project approved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 17th, 2014</td>
<td>Started at CBS News, researched contacts for the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 11th, 2014</td>
<td>Conducted interviews via Facebook and email.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 13th, 2014</td>
<td>Contacted University of Maryland, Georgetown, and George Washington University professors to have them send out mass emails for my focus group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 20th - 23rd, 2014</td>
<td>Students contacted me. I set up a Doodle scheduler for the focus group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 27th, 2014</td>
<td>Conducted phone interview.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 28th, 2014</td>
<td>Conducted phone interview.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 28th, 2014</td>
<td>Focus groups conducted near the University of Maryland. Split into two groups: one pair and the other a group of four. All journalism students, besides one.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 29th, 2014</td>
<td>Transcribed interviews + focus groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 31st, 2014</td>
<td>Conducted man on the street interviews near L street in DC. Went into cafes and found four individuals, aged 30-70.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 1st, 2014</td>
<td>Submitted rough draft to chair, revised.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 7th, 2014</td>
<td>Submitted full draft to chair, shared with committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 14th, 2014</td>
<td>Chair and committee approved draft</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

II. Here are the emails I submitted each week to my committee while at CBS:

January 27th, 2014

I experienced what I would call "set-backs" in my first weekend at CBS news. I realized that its network is a little slower in trusting my abilities as not only a Mizzou student, but also as a graduate student. On my first day, my boss had me do some research and phone calls, which I felt were significant enough for my internship and project.
But on my second day, I was not sure what I supposed to be doing (nobody explained to me). So I did what we do at Mizzou – I did everything I was asked, and figured it out before I asked for help. This started with listening in on the Howard County police department's radio (when the mall shooting had happened) and then informing the newsroom of what they were doing/saying. When that was over, they did not give me much else to do. My boss and Mary Walsh asked me to move their cars because they had parked in a structure that closed at 6:00 p.m. and that really upset me (although I did not show my dismay). I did so because I realized they saw me as an "intern" and therefore did not think of me as a professional. But that changed when I spoke with my boss after the evening news was done. I told her I could do so much more in the newsroom, and she assured me that I will be once it is a little less chaotic (since it was breaking news and it was only my second day, she did not know what I was capable of doing).

On my third day, it was still the mall shooting news day, and it was much better. My boss let me transcribe interviews and put in the time-codes. She also let me fact check a few things and put in graphic requests. I also aided with an interview. So it was pretty much the highlight of my weekend.

What do you, as professionals, think I should do to demand respect – without being abrasive?

Moving on, progress has been a bit slow on my project. I went through and edited the key things Stacey wanted me to edit, but I plan on getting some interviews in this afternoon and tomorrow. Key edits I made: changing my research questions to statements and beginning to narrow my focus; i.e. cutting down the broad focus of social media and credibility to cuing in on social media in the newsroom particularly.
Lastly, the weekly seminars were great! I especially enjoyed listening to Jeff Biggs and Jessica Pupovac. I ended up talking with Jeff Biggs prior to the meeting (with Sarah Harkins) because we got to the meeting early. He gave us some great advice – especially for traveling abroad. I told him I have always dreamed of traveling to New Zealand and Australia and he said "you still have lots of time." But aside from our side conversation, his elaborate lecture on the dynamics of Wall Street really gave me perspective.

However, I do think I need a lot more practice with DC politics. And Jessica gave some great pointers on how to really land a job from your internship. Fingers crossed CBS hires me at the end of Spring.

**February 3rd, 2014**

This week went a lot better than my first, though I am looking to advance my work here at CBS.

The good: I am now able to transcribe/time-code a lot of the interviews the producers use in the evening news broadcast. My boss also lets me pick out things for graphics, and lets me highlight the quotes in the interviews that I think work best for the newscast.

The bad: I ask for more work, but I'm unsure if what I am doing is what they want me to be doing. In the network environment, nobody tells you what you should be doing. So I keep myself busy -- by perusing through Twitter and mentioning anything that I think needs to be mentioned. I also finish the work they ask me to do quickly and efficiently.

Another thing is I have been working on research elements for the show – and while I have been working on one investigative topic, I discovered another. I am currently doing background before I pitch the idea to my boss.
Do you think I should get the background on it first, or just tell her a source called me and gave me that information? Or both?

Moving on to my project, I have created a list of interview questions. I was going to head out today, but have not had the chance (due to my over-eagerness on the new topic for CBS and my obsessive need to research). So I plan on heading out tomorrow. I have created a checklist for my project, which is looking like I'll start from the bottom to the top – with retail and residents tomorrow, law offices and the national press the following week, senior center the next, and the schools last:

1. Get people together in person
2. Compare/contrast between age groups
3. Go to Georgetown
4. UDC
5. Senior Center
6. National press
7. Law office
8. Landlord
9. Residents
10. Retail

Lastly, the tour of the Newseum was truly great! I need to go back there. I especially loved the picture of our very own University of Missouri classroom (when it first began)! Goes to show how much the school has evolved. I also loved speaking to John and Anne-Marie because I am still on the fence of doing the producer side of broadcast or going to the dark side of public relations. I also took a LOT of notes on how they ward off the
"aggressive" reporters, so that way if I do end up doing producing, then I'll know what to tell my reporters. And Al Jazeera America was a cool experience – listening to Mark talk about his career was intriguing! He's been everywhere. Another thing is I have been interested in the BBC and CBS London because I have always wanted a reason to travel. He really opened up my mind to that. And I appreciated his perspective on what he looks for in producers/reporters, although I knew how competitive the industry really is because of our experience at Mizzou.

**February 12th, 2014**

Hi all,

Sorry for not responding to you, Stacey. It's been a great start to the week.

My question was not intended to create this perspective of Mike as a "sloppy" reporter. I understood, and had it written down in my notes, that he had mentioned that things at his local newspaper were less "polished" and that it is difficult to start anywhere with little experience. And I understood exactly what he meant there... although I think when he said "less polished" I took that as meaning strictly what he had heard from a source and not what he had received from other resources, like Google or online means.

Now, my interpretation (which I should have clarified) may have been skewed because I began thinking about my project and the "credibility" of social media. And more importantly, how social media could allow zero tolerance for any unpolished pieces, regardless of how many viewers/readers one might have.

So when I asked, 'does this unforgiving nature toward journalists come from social media? what has caused it?' I meant to say... why is perfectionism and accuracy
more important now than ever? And if it wasn't okay before, what were the means of communication? Telephone? In-person complaints? Letters-to-the-editor?

Anyway, sorry for that confusion. I should have put more thought into what I had written. I can assure you Bloomberg was one of my favorite visits thus far. I loved seeing the terminal and the advice Mike had to offer for us as evolving journalists.

Hope you all are having a good week.

**February 17th, 2014**

I want to begin this email by thanking Barbara for encouraging me to push myself in the CBS bureau. I have been very aggressive in what I want to achieve here, and it's working. Last night my boss told me (as I'm sure Barbara is already aware after their phone conversation) that I will be able to pitch three story ideas to her and she'll let me talk to the CBS NY executive producer, Sharon! Sharon will then okay one of the pitches and I'll be able to go out, find the interviewees, shoot the interviews, and write the script.

This is such a great opportunity and I cannot tell you how grateful I am for all the criticism and honesty in the KOMU newsroom.

Moreover, things have been going swimmingly in the bureau. I have been much more authoritative and pitch in for story segments. One thing that has baffled me, while I sat in the edit bay on Saturday, is how well Mizzou prepares its students, and how this leading newsroom team is somewhat "behind" (for lack of a better term) on a lot of basic principles (of course, I would never say that here). For example, one of the producers did not know why we should use "more than" instead of "over" when referring to numbers, and one of the photographers did not know how to shoot cutaways, so the editor consistently had to use the "dissolve" option.
I also had a one on one conversation with our correspondent, Jeff Pegues, and we talked about his favorite and least favorite stories, his time at the NY station, WABC, and what it's like to be a national news correspondent. He told me that being a national correspondent is, in a sense, more detached than being a local reporter. By that, he said he got more viewer interaction/response when he worked the local news stations because he was a local celebrity. I found that very interesting, especially because there are so many people who tune into CBS Evening News on a daily basis.

**February 24th, 2014**

I have been very driven this week (not that I wasn't before) because I spoke with Kia Baskerville, the Sinews recruiter, and she gave me great advice. She asked me what I want to do and where I see myself. I didn't box myself in, but I did say that I hope to turn my internship into a job at CBS. So, she told me about the news associate's program, which is a 16-month program designed to train newly graduated students about how to produce for a network. That program allows us to rotate between shows: Face the Nation, CBS This Morning, Evening News, Weekend News, etc. It is very competitive, which is why I would like some advice from you! Once your resume has been submitted, a panel of CBS representatives interviews you for the program. Now, I would like to know:

- What are some things you think I should highlight about our program, and myself?
- What are some things you think I should not mention (i.e. weaknesses, strengths, etc.)
- What kinds of questions should I watch out for (i.e. if they ask me my opinion, should I give it, or steer away from having any bias?)
There is also a similar opportunity for the NBC network, which I am in the process of applying for as well. Now, Kia has mentioned there is one spot left for CBS DC bureau, but there may be more for CBS NY. I contacted the NY recruiter because I am interested in being there more than DC.

Another thing that's been going on is I'm getting more freedom in the newsroom -- like the producers and Jeff ask me for advice. I realize they all have more experience than me, but the fact that they trust me and find me intelligent makes me feel great. And it still feels good that Sheila told Barbara I am one of her best interns she's ever had. Thank you, Mizzou.

And there are some drawbacks I have noticed to working in a network. As a producer, you don't have the same ambiguity like you would working at a local news station. While you deal with an executive producer or producers in local news, my observations have been that you need to talk with the senior producers, talk with the executive producers, talk with the directors, talk with the video editors, and talk with the correspondent about one piece as opposed to several different pieces for the show. But I do think that putting that one piece together has just as much pressure as putting an entire show together. A lot of associates at the bureau say CBS does not tell you what you are doing wrong, so when the time comes for the renewal of your contract, you never know what is going to happen. If they like you, they'll renew, but if they don't, they will not. So you will not get severance UNLESS they decide to fire you. That's why some of the people I have spoken with are freelancers.

And those freelancers have told me about the pros and cons of freelancing, pros being the ambiguity of your work, cons being the non-consistent job openings. And freelancers
have told me that the first people networks cut when they try to save money is their freelancers.

**March 3rd, 2014**

It's funny because everyone at CBS all of a sudden started giving me a lot more work (which I am excited about)! My boss had me come in early on the weekend and go out and shoot interviews with the cameraman. I got three really great interviews, but working with a network cameraman is not easy. He didn't want to listen to me, he did his own thing, and he didn't get the set-up shots we needed to lead into the SOT. I didn't complain when I got back, but my boss mentioned to me that he had recently got a pay cut so he was really unhappy about doing any extra work (it's like she read my mind). But Jeff Pegues came up to me and thanked me for one of my SOTs because he said it really enhanced his piece, so that made me feel great. My boss also sent me out to get some broll with another cameraman who was much nicer and listened to my suggestions. So that was a lot better. She said it's good that I'm getting out now because if I want to produce for a network, I need to put my foot down with the cameramen -- not abrasively, but just ask them if they got the shots we needed.

A photographer named George (who says he knows you, Barbara) also gave me some great advice. He's worked at CBS for 42 years, and knows the ins and outs of the network. But he told me that it's good I like to do everything because I should not box myself in. Keep the options open. So that's why I am not mentioning anything about whether I want to produce, report, or anchor, because I simply just want to learn. And my boss is fully aware of my capabilities and has said she thinks I am one of the most
talented interns she has had. I told her if she had more Missouri students, she would be impressed with all of them. So maybe we'll see more Missouri students interning at CBS.

**March 10th, 2014**

CBS is starting to feel routine for me. My boss treats me the same way she treats her colleagues, and has started referring to me as her colleague. She took me to a lunch with one of our sources. She let me ask him questions and jot down notes for future stories. She even planned a Capitol Hill date this week for me. She gave me three contacts as well. I will be going there on Wednesday. I have also gotten to know a lot of the newsroom team, and they know my name by now.

We did have a freelance correspondent this weekend because Jeff Pegues was on vacation. It was interesting to see how the producers interact with the new correspondent, and what they talked about after he was no longer in the room. There were some good and bad things they noted about him, one being his quickness and efficiency, and the other being his undying need to be in control of the editing. My boss simply kicked him out of the edit room.

I also had a chance to point out a fact error in his script, which was based off a chart I had developed for Sheila. He had written "a gallon" when it should have been "a 1/2 gallon" and I was pleased that Sheila trusted me over him. I offered to show her where I received that price from, and she said "I trust you." So those made me feel good. And it also made me feel proud of our Missouri team, who helped infiltrate these ethics into me and ultimately have made me stand out among other interns (and a seasoned reporter).

**March 16th, 2014**
This week I went to Capitol Hill and sat in on a John Boehner presser, Conversations with Conservatives, a Pelosi presser, and an Armed Forces hearing! It was a lot of fun, but also very insightful. I spoke with the House producer and assistant producer (who happens to be related to THE Walt Cronkite) beforehand and they were both extremely helpful and encouraging (shout out to Phill Brooks for being so hard on me during my time at the Jefferson City Capitol. Kent I know you're laughing at that one). But really, it was one of the best times I've had in DC (besides when I first met Bob Schieffer and Bob Orr). This week, I am heading to the White House with Kia Baskerville, who is the White House producer. She said she has some "surprises" in store, which I'm extremely excited about. I also had a sit down meeting with her on Friday and we talked about where I see myself and why I want to be a part of CBS' news associate's program. I gave her my honest answer, saying that I have always had a passion for national and international news, as well as murder mysteries (hence why I ultimately want to work for 48 Hours). But I did mention that I didn't want to box myself in. I told her that although I see myself doing more production work, I would do anything CBS asked me to do. And I think that went over well. She did ask me if I have an interest in politics, and I said that I do enjoy politics and that although I feel like politics are something I need to improve on (when it comes to faces, names, and other facets), I know I can get those down with more practice and more experience at CBS. I think she liked my answer because she said she had the same experience when CBS first hired her.

Moreover, I have been focusing on my performance at CBS and helping my boss as much as I can. On Friday she wanted me to fact check some information that the White House had given to NPR for an abandoned housing story. I tried calling and emailing after our
class session with the lobbyists, but I realized I needed someone with a direct line. So I went into the station and asked Kia and another producer for a direct line. They told me to call Major Garrett, which I did. He helped me and it turns out that the NPR fact was incorrect. So Sheila was really pleased with me in making the extra effort to go into the station and call Major. I didn't think much of it because I knew she needed it done and I didn't want to let her down. On Saturday, the facts were so wrong at CBS. We were covering the Malaysia missing airplane story yet again and CNN had a map with red arcs that indicated where the missing plane could be. But our correspondent Jeff Pegues was very displeased because that information had been released on Friday. And we didn't get to tracking and editing at 5:30. So we had to change his script at 6:10. The show starts at 6:30. So it was an extremely stressful day, but I was really impressed with the level of professionalism that I witnessed at CBS that day. And that professionalism followed through Sunday when Bob Orr made sure to clarify the facts for everyone in the newsroom. He really knows what he is talking about and fact checks everything, which inspires me. Jeff Pegues also looked at some of my writing and told me what I should work on if I want to be a producer. He was extremely helpful, too.

**March 23rd, 2014**

I do not want my internship to end! I had the opportunity of a lifetime last week and went to the White House. But I am one lucky girl because I happened to go on Thursday, when President Barack Obama decided to make his Ukraine speech. I saw him make the speech and then fly off on his helicopter. It was interesting because it's routine for him. He just walks out, delivers his speech, ignores the questions, and then waves his hand. But I
loved every bit of it. I'll never forget when he looked at me and said "the diplomacy
between Russia and the United States still exists."

I also spoke with our recruiter and she told me I could work at a CBS affiliate for two
years if I get into the news associate's program, and then the network will hire me on. So
I have been looking into CBS affiliates, including Gannett (who I have not heard back
from, Stacey). But there is still a chance that I could get into the program in New York.
My main competition is this guy from Northwestern, who read the 9/11 archives when he
was 14. And although I would like to think that receiving a master's in journalism will
help me, it really won't. It's all about how good you are at networking and at how many
people know your name -- which is very difficult because I work on the weekends and I
only see a select few of CBS employees, except for on Sundays when the FTN people are
in.

On a lighter note, my boss and co-producer still like me. They give me more work and
tell me I am really helpful. We are losing Jeff Pegues on the weekend because he's being
cut down to 5 days a week. So we've had a freelance reporter, Mark Albert, come in. We
both help each other out because we are both learning.

My boss and I have been talking more about what I could improve on, and she really has
nothing for me. She tells me I'm the best intern she's had, but I still feel like I have a lot
of improvements to make. I blame that on Greeley and Kent's consistent critiques. I admit
I miss being critiqued now.

March 31st, 2014

I will be heading to New York in just two weeks for my news associate interview. I
decided to be aggressive and network with a Mizzou alumni. I saw Suvro Banerji was a
Mizzou graduate and contacted him. He told me I should contact the weekend EP, Sharon Hoffman, and the Senior Producer, John Mondello. So I did and they both welcomed me with open arms. They said I could join them and help them out with their evening newscast. So I hope to nail the interview and impress the NY people. I asked Barbara and my boss what to expect and they told me that they will give me a story idea and ask me to tell them what I would do with it. My boss says she doesn't worry about me at all because she thinks I'll get into the program. So we'll see.

April 7th, 2014

I worked with the freelance correspondent, Mark Albert, Sheila, and Scott. Scott said once I get back from New York, I can go with him to line produce at WUSA, but then the station un-booked him (he's a freelancer), so it's not looking good anymore. The interesting thing this week, however, was seeing the dynamics between producers and freelance correspondents. Mark is trying really hard to get a stable job on the weekend evening news team, but it's tough because CBS is looking to save money. That's why it cut back on Jeff Pegues on the weekend. So it's interesting. But I will say Mark is a real professional, I've learned a lot from him. He worked in Minnesota for 12 years before coming over to DC to freelance, so he told me about how he started, and what it's like out there in the real world (not that I don't know, but he just gave me tips & pointers). I also spoke with one of the CBS This Morning editors, who gave me some insights into how he started his career as a preschool teacher and ended up working in TV -- starting off at a number 36 market then ending up straight in a network soon after. He said this business is all about taking the opportunity and rolling with it. So he said it's good that I'm taking advantage of my opportunities and heading to New York. I have my interview tomorrow
at 1:30, and I'm feeling confident. Everyone at the DC bureau said they think I'll be fine and to just be myself. So that's reassuring. I also am speaking with Steve from Raycom today about potential CBS affiliates.

April 14th, 2014

Hi all,

As you know, I spent my week hanging with the CBS NY team, which was the nicest, most helpful group. I worked with our own Suvro Banerji (now an associate producer) and producer Sean Herbert, who has worked on several 60 Minutes and Evening News segments. The senior producer, John Mondello, said it was okay for me to physically shoot with them for our Guastavino piece. So Suvro and I both shot it, and it was an entirely Mizzou shot piece! Thought you'd be proud. Jim Axelrod told us it was a great piece.

I met the executive producer, the hiring manager, and the recruiter and went over what I want to do in the news associate's program. I think they liked me because the hiring manager, Crystal Johns, said she was impressed by my persistence. So it looks like I'll get into the program -- I may just have to wait until fall because they move through rotations.

I also met with some editors and watched them put together headlines, teases, and pieces for the evening newscast, which was very rewarding.

The main difference between the Washington bureau and the NY bureau is the size of the newsroom and the atmosphere. I notice at the DC bureau, I needed to introduce myself to everyone, but at the NY bureau, everyone introduced themselves to me. Not sure why that is -- perhaps the perception of interns or the content of their stories. I theorize it's
because the NY bureau is disconnected from the other bureaus. By that, the bureaus talk to one another, but operate diversely.

Another thing is DC uses Final Cut and a "Fork" system while NY uses avid and interplay access. Not sure why they do different things, but I think that's interesting.

I did NOT attend our class since I was in NY, but my roomie took some notes for me.

And Stacey has approved my project, so I'm going to revise his format suggestions and then send that over to the format checker.

Here is the email I sent out to the participants in my study:

Hi Everyone,

Some important things for tomorrow's focus group.

(1) Location:

College Park Diner
9206 Baltimore Ave
College Park, MD 20740

Note** I tried to schedule it at the UMD library, but could not since I'm not a student.

But I think it'd be nice to have coffee and relax anyway.

(2) If, for whatever reason, you cannot make the focus group, please let me know before 4:45 PM. I don’t want to make everyone wait around if you are not going to show. I am responsive to texts and no, I don’t hold grudges, so just shoot me a text at (858) 722-9972 if you are cancelling or you are running late.
(3) You will be paid $20 and I’ll provide you with some appetizers. I cannot buy any alcoholic beverages because of the stipulations of my IRB certificate (would be a conflict of interest).

(4) This should only take 45 minutes to an hour. I need to be back in DC by 7:30, so you can all go off and do your thing. Also, I’m available if you have any questions about CBS (would love to give some tips and pointers). I am excited to hear your stories about UMD, too. So we can talk about that after the study if you want.

I look forward to seeing you all there.

And here is the Doodle scheduler:
Chapter Three: Evaluation

The CBS Experience: from intern to professional

When I first applied to the Washington program, I thought “I want to study social media and news credibility.” I dealt with it so much all across different broadcast stations in Missouri – at Missouri Digital News, at the Nine Network of Public Media, at KOMU-TV, and at KBIA-FM radio. I was a budding journalist trying to figure out where to go, and where to fit in. Should I be a reporter? Should I be a producer? I honestly did not know. But then something incredibly fortunate happened to me: CBS News (New York and DC) called me. I thought: maybe I do not know my role yet, but, for now, I’ll be an intern. I also could not imagine what being a CBS News intern would be like, but I thought about it over winter break, and studied the shows religiously. If anyone was going to know what time the shows were on and what content the producers chose for each show was, it was going to be me.

But January came much faster than I anticipated. Was I ready for this? I had never been to Washington before, and I had never stepped foot in a big bureau before. But I thought, ‘it is now or never.’ I stepped into the bureau and braced myself. Were there big personalities here like the ones I had experienced at the other stations? I was intimidated. Then something crazy happened—there was a shooting in a Columbia, Maryland mall. My producer made some phone calls to some seasoned producers. One producer dropped his kid’s basketball game; the other dropped her hair coloring appointment. They were there faster than lightning.
“Could you listen to the police radio?” one producer shouted to me. “Jamie, could you go with Jeff to the scene?” another producer shouted. I calmly turned on the Columbia police radio, and then walked over to the correspondent, Jeff Pegues. “Jeff, I can go with you. I know what to do for live shots,” I calmly articulated. I was aware of my title as an intern, but I knew I had more experience than other interns there. To me, I was a professional. “I don’t know if we can do that,” Jeff started, “the shooter may still be shooting.” And just like that, the opportunity left.

So I sat down and listened to the police radio. I pulled up Twitter and followed news stations in Columbia. I followed the police public relations team. But nobody took me seriously. I told them what was happening. They just ignored me. So I sent an email to my boss with the updates. I sat for the next two hours, listening to everyone else make the phone calls I knew I could make. Then 5:45 pm rolled around. A producer asked me, “Can you move my car?” And then another. I felt so used, but I knew my place then. I was not a professional; I was an intern. So I moved their cars, came back, and watched them do the work. Later, my boss sent an email out, thanking everyone for their work. I was mentioned in the email, and I will never forget what it said. It read, “And our intern, Jamie Ries, got to see firsthand what it was like in a professional newsroom.” There was no ‘thank you for your police radar notes,’ just a ‘you saw what we did, and you should be lucky to be in this newsroom.’

And I did feel lucky to be there, but I felt like nobody understood the work I had done over the past year and a half. All the stories I had owned and the videos I had shot meant nothing to them. I had to prove myself.

So I started sitting in on the video edits. I asked questions. I gave answers. I
helped my boss make phone calls during the week. I spoke up in conversations about particular stories. I made sure they knew I followed the news, I knew what the difference between a VO/SOT and a package was, I knew what a jump cut was, I knew how a newscast operates, and that I was there to get some experience.

Two weeks after that Columbia shooting, my boss said I was ready to go out on video shoots. So I went out on my first one. It was a Delta airlines story. So I went out with the cameraman. This was different for me. I always shot everything myself, but here I was, telling someone what I wanted. He did not listen to me. He did his own thing. I asked him to shoot an interview. He did not roll on it. Thankfully, I had two other interviews to go with. I asked him to shoot close-ups, he did not. He did not even shoot set-up shots with my interviewees. So when I got back to my producer, she asked “where is the set-up shot?” I told her I tried. She pulled me aside and said “I know that particular camera guy can be grumpy, but if you want to do this [be a field producer], you need to just put your foot down and tell him. Don’t let him intimidate you.” So I listened to her.

The next day I went out with another camera guy, but he was much nicer. We drove to Virginia to get some video of salt trucks for a snow preparation story. We got to the lot and I started telling him what shots I wanted and where. He said, “I’ve never had an intern be so confident and have so much experience.” So that day was the first day I felt like CBS accepted me.

As the weeks went on, I pitched story ideas and set up contacts for my boss and our correspondent. I fact checked and put those facts into tables for my boss so it would make it easier for her when putting the story together. I remember one day she said “you are amazing.” It made me feel good to know that I had gone from the hopeless car mover
to the promising intern.

In March, the recruiter came back from her leave. She had been gone on medical leave since I got there. “Hey Jamie, have you heard of the news associate’s program?” she asked. I had not. She told me about it and said it is a year and a half program designed to turn an intern into a producer. She said I should apply for it. So I did. And then I realized how truly competitive it was.

I started talking to people who had already been through the program, and they all loved it. They all said they got into the program because they knew somebody, and I did not know anyone at CBS, besides my program director, Barbara Cochran, who was once the bureau chief.

But then I remembered there was a Mizzou alumnus in New York who was an associate producer. I looked up his email and number on CBS News’ Microsoft Outlook list, and immediately contacted him. He said: “what you have to do is come to New York, meet with Alison Pepper, Crystal Johns, and Katie Curcio. Then you have to work with the weekend team here and introduce yourself to the senior producer, the executive producer, and others inside the bureau.” So I sent emails to all of those people, who all said I could come join them, and then booked my hotel.

I headed to New York in April. I was not nervous this time, partly because I had been working at the Washington bureau for the semester and I knew what they liked and did not like by then. So I stepped into CBS New York and was there to work. I met with a producer and he and the Mizzou alumnus told me I could go out and shoot with them. It was a story about the Guastavino family – a family from Spain that were architects—who came to America to build ceilings and walls inside of popular buildings. The story was
about how there were hundreds of the architectures still hidden in America and how one architect in New York was working to unravel them before the buildings that housed them were destroyed. So we went to several locations and shot video. I was able to shoot my own video, and it aired on the evening news. The producer there asked me why I came there and I told him “I came here because I want to work for CBS News. I want to get into the news associate’s program and eventually be a producer for longer-form journalism.” And he said, “So you came here on your own volition? I’m impressed.”

And that statement made me feel so good about the effort I had made. I wanted to feel valued, and I did. When I left New York, I was sad to say good bye to the new friends and connections I made, but I felt like a different person.

When I came back to the Washington bureau, I thought about how much I had accomplished. I went from being the intern moving cars to the first intern to ever move from one bureau to another – something that many people in New York respected. And then it hit me – I impressed people at CBS New York. Somebody, pinch me.

And that changed the whole dynamic at the Washington bureau, too. During my last week, the recruiter took me in her office and said “I think you’d be a fantastic candidate for our news associate’s program. Everyone here and in New York loves you. We just don’t have any openings.” And we talked for about two hours. She said it was hard for her to say good bye to me because I had worked so hard and proved myself the entire semester. She said that a lot of people had approached her inside the bureau and told her to recruit me. And that made me feel like my hard work paid off.

My last day was also exciting. The Smithsonian Natural History Museum was closing its dinosaur exhibit for five years to remodel it, so my boss sent the
correspondent, cameraman, and me out to shoot video and interviews. By that time, the correspondent trusted me enough to get things situated, find interviewees, and tweet out photos. So I helped him with everything, and helped get things organized. When I got back, I transcribed the bites he wanted and helped pick out some, too. The story turned out well and the New York team was pleased.

When time came for me to leave the bureau, everyone came up to me and gave me a hug. They told me they would miss me, and that they would see me again in the future. One editor told me “you have such a strong passion for this news and I can tell you are a hard worker. I know you will be back. I will keep pushing for you.”

Post CBS: how I changed during the process

Looking back at all my experiences at both CBS Washington and CBS New York, I think about how much I grew since the first day. And I think about how much I grew since entering the Missouri School of Journalism’s master’s program.

I came to Washington to see if I still wanted to do journalism and whether or not I wanted to be a producer or a reporter. But I ended up finding out a lot more about myself than expected. I learned about how strong I was, how driven I was, and how competitive I was. I often thought about Will Smith’s popular quote in his movie, *The Pursuit of Happiness*. The quote is recited as follows: “Don’t ever let someone tell you that you can’t do something. Not even me. You got a dream, you gotta protect it.” And I protected my dream through my work. I protected it by not letting my title define me. I protected it by using my resources. I protected it by showing that I cared. And most of all, I protected
it by listening to those who were there to help me.

The answer to my original goal—to find out if I want to be a reporter or a producer—came easily for me. I now know that I want to be a field producer and a content producer. Line producing is just not for me. I like to be more in depth and have time to piece things together, and I cannot always do that with line producing. So CBS helped me clearly see what I wanted to do with my career.

The people I met there also helped me see that I can do anything if I just hide my insecurities and do what I am asked. One of its correspondents told me: “Don’t think about the market. Fake it until you make it.” And that statement really stood out to me during my entire time there, and will stick with me with my next jobs to come.

Social media and CBS

Prior to DC, I knew CBS was a place I looked up to and respected, but more specifically, I knew it used various social media databases. However, that was a big misconception.

While my study itself did not focus on observation, I observed CBS News’ digital platforms; what they call the “dot-com” sections. It is a huge and growing area within its bureaus – mostly in New York. The people who work for CBS.com tweet, Facebook, and update the website. They are constantly interacting with viewers and keeping up with the competition.

But from this observation, I started thinking about how I, as a journalist, need to tweet more, and how I need to interact more on Facebook. I already had a Twitter and
Facebook page, but I started using them a lot more. I started following more people.

Within a few weeks, I went from following a little more than three hundred people to following nearly two thousand. And when I synced my Twitter page to my Facebook page, people started viewing my posts a lot more.

I realized mid-semester I had become an active digital journalist through my tweets. I played with CBS Evening News’ viewers through those tweets (when CBS Evening News re-tweeted me) and this whole “play theory,—the need for journalists to entertain and citizens’ need to be entertained—suddenly became this bigger thing: I was facilitating news to a larger audience, and they liked what I posted.

And then I thought about how all these elements—the growing social media market and the growing list of CBS social media experts—could contribute to my project. I thought “if social media is such a big entity for CBS bureaus across the nation and world, then it is my job, as a master’s candidate, to find out how citizens’ perceive it, and what plans budding journalists have for their work with social media in the future.” So while I did not ask questions directed toward CBS News, I did ask the journalists what they thought we could do to make news more credible and how we could do that without hurting citizen voice.
Chapter Four: Physical Evidence of Work

As part of my internship at CBS News Washington, I was asked to provide suggestions and facts for story pieces that aired for the CBS Evening News pieces. I also spent time at CBS New York.

In New York, I helped put together the following piece with producer Sean Herbert, associate producer Suvro Banerji, and intern Jaime Woods. Suvro and I shot the video (with a Sony XD-CAM and a Canon DSLR) for the piece and helped frame the interviews:


** Note, I also underscored the SOT where John talks about his dream for Sean.

For this next piece, CBS Washington's weekend producer, Sheila Jaskot, asked me to go with a camera-man to Reagan National Airport and find people who were angry about the upcoming changes to Delta's Frequent Flyer program. I found a lady who felt like she would benefit from the changes, a man who had given up on Delta years before but had an opinion about the changes, and this lady, Rana Boone, who was very upset about the changes. She worked out great for the piece and we used her bite at the beginning:


Moreover, here is the transcript for my interview with Rana, as well as my interview with Jim Kerr, who did not make it on air:
Interview One: Rana Boone

10:09:38 how often do you fly?
10:09:39 I fly about once a week

10:09:40 business or leisure?
10:09:41 I'm flying almost always for business.

10:09:44 and you are a Delta passenger?
10:09:45 I am a Delta flyer.

10:09:52 what do you make of the upcoming changes?
10:09:55 I actually switched to Delta after being so disturbed by the airline monopolies and the other airlines that I had been loyal to. So in the last year I earned silver status fairly quickly with Delta because I am a frequent business traveler. And at first I was happy with it until I heard about these recent changes. I feel like the idea that you have to spend "x" number of dollars and it's not based on miles anymore is ridiculous. 10:10:19 it's just another example of how the airline industry is really taking advantage of the customer now that there are just these three big airlines.. We're really at the mercy of whatever these airlines want to do. I feel like this is not the American way. We are all about competition and keeping things affordable for the consumer and I feel like 10:10:34 this is just another example of how the airlines are actually taking advantage of the customer .. Not to mention they're posting profits and they're estimating that the profits this year are going to be 50 percent larger than they expected them to be. So the airlines are not really hurting in the ways that they were 10 years ago after 9/11. I think that 10:10:54 we the consumers have just been conditioned to think that we need to pay for luggage.. We need to pay for every small amenity now that used to be included.
10:11:02 these increases on how to earn mileage, or how to earn your frequent flier status are just another example of the airlines taking advantage of us, being at the mercy of just three big airlines now.

10:11:12 **What do you think the American way should be?**

10:11:21 Before these big mergers started to happen, I was also a frequent traveler, and that was about half time for business and half time for pleasure, and 10:11:28 I counted on my frequent flier miles to get me home and get my daughter home to Hawaii every Christmas based on miles. I cannot make that happen anymore. It's a nightmare. 10:11:37 so what I felt is the American way would be being loyal to an airline consistently so that I can earn the miles and get home once a year for free and save the money. I feel like if we know that we spend our money wisely, we support our economy, and then we benefit from it as the consumers. 10:11:55 right now I don't see the major benefit of spending my money with any particular airline. I just feel like I'm getting nickel and dimed along with everyone else. And the airlines are full of all these other people complaining about how the industry has gone down. 10:12:07 this current situation with the airline monopolies does not at all reflect what I think a competitive industry looks like in this country. Not a thriving competitive industry. Perhaps thriving for the people thriving up the profit margins for the airlines. But it doesn't feel like a good experience for the consumer.

10:12:26 **How old is your daughter?**

10:12:25 16 years old... So we’ve been making this trek from the mainland back home to Hawaii every year since I was in college here in Washington DC. So 15 years. And 10:12:35 this year it was almost impossible to find a way to get home for Christmas even
though I had tons of miles. 10:12:40 there were many, many limitations that hadn't existed before on how I could use those miles.

10:12:46 so where do you live?

10:12:47 my entire family lives in Hawaii and I now live here on the east coast. But it's still a priority to get home with the family every single Christmas. We all convene there no matter where we live on the Mainland, but it was almost impossible to get there this year.

10:13:12 so your daughter lives with you in New York?

We live in New York City. I'm just often here for work. New York City. Houston. Kansas City. All around the country for work

10:13:26 Would be more interested in free checked bags. Priority boarding. access to sky clubs. or all of the above?

10:13:30 I would say all of the above. But right now, having been a frequent flier for a long time, I rarely paid for my first bag. But knowing how expensive that is for the average traveler, I would say the free checked luggage is probably the most important.

10:13:45 People can live without sky club. I can live without sky club. I can do my work in an airport restaurant. But the luggage fees are just outrageous to me.

10:14:04 what positive changes do you think could be made?

10:14:06 I will say the only thing I'm happy to hear about may be the ability to book one-way award travel now. In the past, I've been told that you can book one-way award travel, but you still have to pay for a round-trip ticket. You have to use that many miles. I don't know the details of that yet. That, to me, is the only positive change I can see right now.
10:14:24 This base-line minimum that has to be spent in order to qualify is outrageous to me. It completely undermines the purpose of trying to find a low cost ticket because now you have to make sure that you're spending x.. Y... or z.. So that it adds up to qualify.

10:14:42 I don't know that there's really a benefit to qualify... honestly . It's rare to get and upgrade now on the airlines. It's rare to see any benefit before your first bag is being checked free. I don't really know what else consumers can hope to get out of these new changes.

**Interview two: Jim Kerr**

*09:58:01 why haven't you flown with Delta in the past?*

09:58:09 I'm an occasional passenger.. somebody who doesn't fly a lot. And it doesn't seem to me that they are as interested in me as a passenger as they are to people who fly very often or who are paying more for their tickets. 09:58:25 that doesn't win my business as a consumer.

*09:58:31 how often do you fly?*

8 or 10 times a year.

*09:58:36 business or leisure?*

Both.

*09:58:46 would you be more interested if they gave you an upgrade or if they gave you a lower price ticket?*

09:58:48 I think probably price is a consideration for me, but not so much as upgrades.

09:59:01 there are a lot of us, like me, people who don't fly often, but who do fly.
09:59:10 We're going to take those things into consideration when they make changes that exclude us as customers. We'll use our consumer strengths to make the choices that are best for us.

09:59:25 *What does it mean to you, as a passenger, to get a free checked bag or something similar from an airline?*

09:59:30 It's significant, and you only have to look at the size of the bags people are bringing onto the planes now that they're charging. I mean the overhead racks are full before a lot of the passengers get onto the plane. And that's not the case with the airlines that allow free baggage check.

09:59:51 *How does it make you feel as a passenger and customer if these airlines made you pay a higher price to earn rewards?*

10:00:10 I feel like they're nickel and diming the people who are not flying often and that doesn't make me good as a customer.

In this next piece, I helped pick out video and do some background research. I compared the grocery store prices and created this grid to help break it up:

**GROCERY PRICE COMPARISON**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Original Price</th>
<th>Peapod Price</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ground Beef (no hormones)</strong></td>
<td>$5.85/lb</td>
<td>$5.99/lb - $7.29/lb (for 4 count fresh)</td>
<td>$+0.14 - +$1.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item</td>
<td>Original Price</td>
<td>Peapod Price</td>
<td>Savings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TP Charmin 12 Double Rolls</td>
<td>$10.29</td>
<td>$9.75</td>
<td>-$0.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TP Quilted Northern (12 Double)</td>
<td>$5.79</td>
<td>$5.99</td>
<td>+$0.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musinex</td>
<td>$5.29</td>
<td>$11.99 - $23.99</td>
<td>+$6.70 -+$18.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glutino Breakfast Bars</td>
<td>$3.85</td>
<td>$4.99</td>
<td>$1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glutino Chocolate Chip Cookies</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$4.79</td>
<td>Need original price</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ronzoni Gluten Free Penne</td>
<td>$1.70</td>
<td>$2.79</td>
<td>+$1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schar spaghetti</td>
<td>$3.19</td>
<td>Not listed on Giant or Peapod, but from online grocery sites: $4.39 - $4.99</td>
<td>+$1.20 -+$1.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schar classic white rolls</td>
<td>$4.29</td>
<td>$6.99 (for schar baguettes)</td>
<td>+$2.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sara Lee Bread whole wheat</td>
<td>$1.50</td>
<td>Price not listed on Giant or Peapod (can call tomorrow), but online sites show $2.59</td>
<td>+$1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natures Own honey</td>
<td>$2.18</td>
<td>$3.49</td>
<td>+$1.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item</td>
<td>Original Price</td>
<td>Discounted Price</td>
<td>Additional Cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Udi's gluten free bread</td>
<td>$3.59</td>
<td>$6.19</td>
<td>+$2.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bananas</td>
<td>$0.65</td>
<td>$1.99</td>
<td>+$1.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purex Oxi</td>
<td>$4.75</td>
<td>$4.29</td>
<td>-$0.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Similac Sensitive</td>
<td>$25.63</td>
<td>$17.69 (12.6 oz can) - $24.99 (23.2 oz powder</td>
<td>-$7.94 – (-)$0.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2% Milk</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$3.69</td>
<td>Need original price</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole Milk</td>
<td>$3.20</td>
<td>$3.69</td>
<td>+0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanilla Almond Milk</td>
<td>$1.99</td>
<td>$4.19</td>
<td>+$2.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silk Almond Milk (1.2 Gallon)</td>
<td>$2.99</td>
<td>Only carry 64 oz $4.19</td>
<td>+$1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lactaid 2% Milk (1/2 gallon)</td>
<td>$3.39</td>
<td>$5.99</td>
<td>+$2.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lactaid Fat Free Milk (1.2 gallon)</td>
<td>$3.39</td>
<td>Do not carry 1.2 gallons 1.2=153.6 oz 64 oz = $4.49 96 oz = $5.99 *** Would be 150 oz = 1.17 gallons</td>
<td>If 64oz+96oz, then +$7.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Eggland’s Best</td>
<td>$2.89</td>
<td>Do not carry 18 1 dozen =$3.89</td>
<td>+$1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As you can see from the following piece, it was a good reference for my boss and for Mark:


Here’s a document I put together for an Amber Alert story we worked on:

**MISSING CHILDREN UNITED STATES 2013-2014**

*Note: some of these cases have been ongoing from previous years, but alerts are still out.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th># of cases in 2014</th>
<th>Amber Alert Issued (Y/N)</th>
<th>Name(s)</th>
<th>Age(s)</th>
<th>Circumstance of Abduction</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaska</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Aleyna Garcia</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Unknown. She may be in the company of a juvenile female. Aleyna’s nose is pierced. She may wear glasses.</td>
<td>Missing since March 31st, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Nalita Prasad</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Unknown. She is of Polynesian descent. Nalita has pierced ears. Her nickname is Sweetz.</td>
<td>Missing since September 5th, 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Leena Rubio</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Unknown. Leena my be in</td>
<td>Missing since</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 12 Eggs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>12 Eggs</th>
<th>$2.09</th>
<th>$2.19</th>
<th>+$0.10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Last Seen</td>
<td>Conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leena</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Unknown. Leena's nose and navel are pierced. She may go by the last name Rubio-Stewart.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miranda Rose</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Unknown. Miranda was last seen she had purple highlights in her hair. She has gauges in her ears. Miranda may wear glasses.</td>
<td>February 28th, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yareli Barajas</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Unknown. She was last seen on August 11, 2009. Yareli may be in the company of relatives. They may travel to Canada or Mexico. Yareli has scars on her right hand.</td>
<td>Missing since August 11th, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lashaunda Washington</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Unknown.</td>
<td>Missing since August 17, 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yesenia Manzo</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Unknown.</td>
<td>Missing since November 28th, 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shayla Biehl</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Unknown. She may still be in the local area or she may travel to</td>
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<td>Arkansas</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>Lucia Gonzalez</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>March 22, 2014</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>Celeste Acosta</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>March 17th, 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>Lucia Gonzalez</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>March 22, 2014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
by bus to El Centro, California or southern Mexico. When Lucia was last seen, she had blonde and green streaks in her hair.”

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<td>Relisha Rudd</td>
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Idaho

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Illinois

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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>area or he</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>may travel to</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>times. His</td>
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<td>is pierced. Ian</td>
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<td>may wear</td>
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Indiana

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Iowa

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Kansas

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<td>2</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Amani Duncan</td>
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<td>Louisiana</td>
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<td>Francis Jones</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td></td>
<td>Simaliah Simpson</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
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<td>Lacey Dewent</td>
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</table>
New Jersey or Ocoee, Florida in a blue Subaru Cross Trek, similar to the one shown. A felony warrant is on file for Robert.

<table>
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<td>New York</td>
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<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>Nigel Samuels</td>
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<td>He may travel to Rochester, New York.</td>
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<td>North Dakota</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oklahoma</td>
<td>Daniel Batten</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Unknown. Daniel may be in the company of a juvenile female. They may still be in the local area. Daniel has a scar on one thumb.</td>
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<td>Texas</td>
<td>Shacory Brooks</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>“Shacory may be in the company of an adult male. When she was last seen, her hair was dyed bronze. Shacory may go by the nickname Coco.”</td>
<td>Missing since March 22, 2014</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Cesar Izaguirre</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Unknown. He may still be in the local</td>
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area. Cesar has "Justina" and "Felix" tattooed on his chest. Unknown Missing since April 3rd, 2014

Nicholas Taylor 16

Nicholas Taylor

Utah

Vermont

Virginia

Washington

Y Damaris Perez & Rosey Ruiz 16, 1 Unknown “May be in the company of Juan Ruiz-Castaneda, age 17” Missing since March 9th, 2014

Damaris Perez & Rosey Ruiz

Y Bernnie Jack 23 Endangered Person “Bernnie is a mentally disabled and diabetic adult male. He requires medication and does not have any medication with him” Missing since March 26th, 2014

Bernnie Jack

CBS' freelance producer, Scott McCrary, and correspondent, Jeff Pegues, did this piece. I found the graphic, illustrating how potholes are formed and how they worsen, which I suggested to McCrary. I also suggested the sound bites with both Minor and Scotland:

On this piece, producer Sheila Jaskot asked me to review the interviews and video clips and pick out the most withstanding portions. I selected the close-ups and helped brainstorm which clips to use and not use:


Here is my practice script I wrote while applying to the news associate’s program:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My Version</th>
<th>CBS Version</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>((ANCHOR INTRO)) THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE ANNOUNCED THIS WEEK IT WANTS TO CUT ONE BILLION DOLLARS FROM BASE COMMISSARIES -- A MOVE THAT WILL RAISE THE COST OF GROCERIES FOR MILLIONS OF ACTIVE DUTY AND RETIRED TROOPS.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARK ALBERT REPORTS ON HOW ONE MILITARY MOTHER MAY HAVE TO RESHAPE THE WAY SHE BALANCES HER BUDGET -- AND WHY IT MAY COST HER MORE THAN MONEY OUT OF POCKET.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>((PKG)) ((BROLL OF RHEANNA SHOWING MEAL PLAN, TALKING)) MILITARY MOTHER RHEANNA BERNARD WORKS HARD TO SAVE MONEY FOR HER FAMILY...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I clip coupons. I don’t clip as many as I could, but meal planning really saves the money.” ((TAKE VO OF COMMISSARIES)) BERNARD SAYS SHE ALSO RELIES ON COMMISSARIES TO SAVE MONEY...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“It’s cheaper. It’s just cheaper for us to shop there.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUT THOSE CHEAP COMMISARY TRIPS WILL SOON BE LIMITED...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEFENSE SECRETARY – CHUCK HAGEL – TOLD CONGRESS HE NEEDS TO CUT SUBSIDIES FOR THE CURRENT SUBSIDY STANDS AT ONE-POINT-FOUR BILLION DOLLARS. THE NEW</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>((ANCHOR INTRO)) THIS WEEK, MILITARY FAMILIES LEARNED THEY MAY SOON HAVE TO SHARE MORE OF THE BURDEN OF BALANCING THE MILITARY’S SHRINKING BUDGET.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT WANTS TO SLASH SUPPORT TO BASE COMMISSARIES... WHICH WOULD RAISE THE COST OF GROCERIES FOR MILLIONS OF ACTIVE DUTY AND RETIRED TROOPS.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS MARK ALBERT REPORTS, ITS REAL PAIN IN THE POCKETBOOK THAT WOULD HIT THOSE WHO CAN LEAST AFFORD IT.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>((PKG)) ((INAT/COMMISSARY-SCANNING, ETC)) MILITARY FAMILIES STOCK UP ON MUCH-NEEDED SAVINGS AT BASE COMMISSARIES AROUND THE WORLD... AS MUCH AS 30 PERCENT OFF NAME-BRAND, SUPERMARKET PRICES.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>((VO 030614 HEARING/COMMISSARIES)) BUT THIS WEEK, DEFENSE SECRETARY CHUCK HAGEL TOLD CONGRESS THAT TO MAINTAIN &quot;FORCE READINESS,&quot; SUBSIDIES FOR NEARLY ALL 178 U-S COMMISSARIES and other military benefits MUST BE CUT.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;It's a plan that allows our military to meet America's future challenges and threats. It matches our resources to our strategy, and it's a product of collaboration.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>THE CURRENT SUBSIDY STANDS AT ONE-POINT-FOUR BILLION DOLLARS. THE NEW</td>
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NEARLY ONE HUNDRED AND 80 U-S COMMISSARIES TO MAINTAIN FORCE READINESS.

((SOT))

“It’s a plan that allows our military to meet America’s future challenges and threats.”

((GFX))

THE CURRENT SUBSIDY STANDS AT ONE-POINT-FOUR BILLION DOLLARS. THE NEW BUDGET WOULD SLICE THAT FIGURE BY TWO-THIRDS... DOWN TO 400 MILLION.

((NAT POP BERNARD AND KIDS/ROLL VO))

THE SLICE WOULD HIT MILITARY FAMILIES, LIKE THE BERNARDS, HARD.

((SOT))

“It would directly affect my household budget. It would cause stress because then you're trying to figure out where else you can cut.”

((NAT/ WALKING OUT OF COMMISSARY WITH CART AND KIDS IN TOW))

AT THE FORT BELVOIR BASE COMMISSARY, BERNARD COUNTS UP THE SAVINGS.

(NAT/LOOKING AT RECEIPT 16:55:29)


((GFX))

[Notes:GRAPHIC IN][Notes:LACTAID 2% MILK (1/2 GAL.): COMMISSARY: $3.39; GIANT SUPERMARKET: $5.99]

A HALF GALLON OF LACTAID TWO-PERCENT MILK AT THE COMMISSARY COSTS $3.39... AT GIANT STORES IT’S 76 PERCENT MORE EXPENSIVE.

[Notes:18 Eggland’s Best Eggs: COMMISSARY: $2.89; GIANT SUPERMARKET: $3.89]

18 EGGLAND EGGS GO FOR TWO-89... JUST 12 AT THE SUPERMARKET COST A DOLLAR MORE.

((SOT/RHEANNA 16:35:37))

"You can’t cut out what you live, you can’t cut out food, you can’t cut out your heat, so the niceties, the fun things in life would have to be cut out.

BUDGET WOULD SLICE THAT FIGURE BY TWO-THIRDS... DOWN TO 400 MILLION.

((IVO TROOPS))

THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT SAYS THAT ONE-BILLION SAVINGS COULD PAY FOR up to 15-thousand SOLDIERS.

((SOT / RHEANNA 16:26:00))

I just don’t think it’s responsible to do that. To make that cut.

MILITARY FAMILIES LIKE THE BERNARDS COULD BE HIT HARD. THEY HAVE THREE YOUNG KIDS TO FEED.

((SOT/RHEANNA 16:31:11))

"It would directly affect my household budget. It would cause stress because then you're trying to figure out where else you can cut. //((10;45:23)) Q: You'd have to make some choices? (16:28:19) A: Yes. Q: Some tough choices? A: Yeah, probably. (nods) Probably.

((NAT/MARK AND RHEANNA AT FRIDGE 16:41:03))

"Q: So you plan every meal? A: I plan every meal."

((IVO/ FAMILY PHOTOS-UNIFORM))

BEING FRUGAL BALANCES THE BUDGET FOR RHEANNA BERNARD AND HER AIRMAN HUSBAND, CHRIS, a tech sergeant... They are A SINGLE-INCOME FAMILY LIVING IN NORTHERN VIRGINIA ON ABOUT 40-THOUSAND DOLLARS A YEAR.

((SOT/RHEANNA 16:31:11))

"The overall savings of a commissary, it's almost - I can't put it into words."

((NAT/ WALKING OUT OF COMMISSARY WITH CART AND KIDS IN TOW))

AT THE FORT BELVOIR BASE COMMISSARY, BERNARD COUNTS UP THE SAVINGS.

((NAT/LOOKING AT RECEIPT 16:55:29))


((GFX))

[Notes:GRAPHIC IN][Notes:LACTAID 2% MILK (1/2 GAL.): COMMISSARY: $3.39; GIANT
A CUT BERNARD SAYS COULD AFFECT THE MORAL AND WELFARE OF U-S TROOPS.
MARK ALBERT, CBS NEWS, WASHINGTON.

SUPERMARKET: $5.99
A HALF GALLON OF LACTAID TWO-PERCENT MILK AT THE COMMISSARY COSTS $3.39... AT GIANT STORES IT'S 76 PERCENT MORE EXPENSIVE.

[Notes:18 Eggland's Best Eggs: COMMISSARY: $2.89; GIANT SUPERMARKET: $3.89]
18 EGGLAND EGGS GO FOR TWO-89... JUST 12 AT THE SUPERMARKET COST A DOLLAR MORE.

"You can't cut out where you live, you can’t cut out food, you can’t cut out your heat, so the niceties, the fun things in life would have to be cut out and I think that directly affects the moral and welfare of our troops."

((VO WITH KIDS))
A TREASURED BENEFIT THAT COULD SOON CARRY A PAINFUL EXPIRATION DATE.
MARK ALBERT, CBS NEWS, WASHINGTON.
Chapter Five: Analysis

A Pew Research study taken in September 2011 says Americans have a very different view of the news sources they rely on--when asked to rate the accuracy of stories from the sources where they get most of their news, the percentage saying these outlets get the facts straight more than doubles; 62 percent say their main news sources get the facts straight, while just 30 percent say stories are often inaccurate (Pew, 2011). So, this research centers on learning about whether or not citizens and journalists think social media has anything to do with differing views of the news. More specifically, whether social media help or hurt news credibility and whether consumers think social media help spread the citizen’s voice. My hypotheses are:

1. Using social media gives citizens the voice they want and, in turn, helps television grow by engaging its viewers at home, at work, and elsewhere.
2. Social media has helped news credibility.

The research kept in mind several factors –like the use of comments to engage with viewers and apps that people use to gather their news—but more specifically, looked into the “play theory” and “agenda setting.”

Play theory defined

William Stephenson studied what he called “subjective play.” He observed: “People read newspapers, magazines, and paperbacks in vast numbers, and there are ever increasing audiences for movies, radio, records, and television. All of this, it seems obvious, is enjoyable” (Stephenson, 1987, p. 1). The “play theory” thus explains the
interaction between journalists and citizens – specifically, the citizens’ need to be entertained, and the journalists’ need to entertain.

Stephenson stated there are two distinguishing principles of great importance in play theory: (1) social control and (2) convergent selectivity. Social control is the formation of a public opinion; for instance, the object in a democratic system of government is to reach a consensus after due debate of the pros and cons of a public issue (Stephenson, 1987, p. 2). Convergent selectivity, in contrast, lets each person choose something different for himself; primarily characterized by individuality, wishes, and wants (Stephenson, 1987, p. 2).

Stephenson also mentions Ruesch and Bateson, who were among the first to adopt the language of theory to communication problems (Stephenson, 1987, p. 5). The pair says a “social matrix” refers to a larger, scientific system--of which both the psychiatrist and the patient are integral parts (Ruesch and Bateson, 2008, p. 4). They say that larger system is of no immediate concern to the psychiatrist or the patient at the time of interaction. But they say the smaller system is part of the larger system-- and conclusions drawn in this smaller system may become inaccurate or invalid when seen in the framework of the wider overall system (Ruesch and Bateson, 2008, p.4). To put this into perspective, the larger system is larger media corporations, like NBC, and the smaller system is those corporations’ affiliates. But to move forward, Ruesch and Bateson also clarify the role of the “psychiatrists” and “social scientists.” They say:

As psychiatrists and social scientists we are, by definition, interested to inquire into the ways an observer perceives the world rather than how this world really is, because the only method we possess to infer the existence of the real world is to compare one observer’s views with the views of other observers (Ruesch and Bateson, 2008, p. 273).
News followers have the option to observe their news by reading, listening, or watching--based on their interest. These news outlets all play roles in keeping audiences entertained. Ruesch and Bateson refer to a “communication matrix” with four different levels of systems: intrapersonal (p.199), interpersonal, group, and cultural. They break these into concepts: (1) the “little black box” concept, (2) interpersonal networks (p. 90), (3) the group network (p. 38), and (4) the cultural network (p. 40). Here’s a grid to explain the differences between the four:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The “Little Black Box”</td>
<td>The self-observer; the individual can observe what goes on in his own mind, but no one can step into the black box to see what’s in it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal Networks</td>
<td>Equivalent parts in closed circuits; X &amp; Y enter a conversation, but have no directional flow. When X is talking, Y has to listen and understand, so there is “information loss “in such networks. X can never fully grasp what Y does, and vice versa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Group Network</td>
<td>Specialization of function, and unequal division of receiving and transmission. One television viewer may communicate to vast audiences, to millions of people simultaneously across the world.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Cultural Network</td>
<td>Innumerable influences communicate to innumerable people. Each person living in a culture is conceived of as bombarded by countless messages, the sources of which he/she is unable to recognize.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ruesch and Bateson also say human beings are pleasure seekers. They say they are self-corrective and avoid the unpleasantly painful situations (p. 234).
Moreover, Jay Blumler et al. say the study of mass media suffers from the absence of a relevant theory of social and psychological needs. “It is not so much a catalogue of needs that is missing as a clustering of groups of needs,” Blumer et al say. “It’s a sorting out of different levels of need, a specification of hypotheses linking particular needs with particular media gratifications” (513).

Blumler et al. also say people may lean toward broadcast news as opposed to other media because each medium offers a unique combination of three things: (1) characteristic contents, (2) typical attributes, and (3) typical exposure situations (Blumler, p. 514). Broadcast news is more desirable because it has several uses and gratifications, including the social and psychological origins of needs, those needs, expectations, which are generated from needs, the mass media, differential patterns of media exposure generated by the mass media, need gratifications, and other consequences (p. 510).

Blumler also says the media compete with other sources of need satisfaction, and that the needs served by mass communication constitute but a segment of the wider range of human needs--to the degree to which they can be adequately met through mass media consumption certainly varies (Blumler, p. 511). He says methodologically speaking; many of the goals of mass media use can be derived from data supplied by individual audience members themselves (Blumler, p. 511).

There are many news outlets to which people can go--print, digital, magazine and more. But Blumler said they go to radio and television broadcasts for one major thing: to be entertained. Broadcast television and radio networks know this--which is why they tease. Those teases can occur via Twitter, Facebook, and during newscasts. And there is also such thing as mobile news.
Sylvia Chan-Olmsted et al say the development of mobile news has significant implications for consumers’ news consumption patterns, especially those who are still forming their adulthood news habit (Chan-Olmsted et al, p. 126). This applies to the “play theory” because people want news all the time; as fast as possible. Journalists can fulfill viewer wants by engaging with their viewers on a daily, or hourly, basis and thus participate in the “play theory.” Viewers can also have a say in what goes or does not go into the newscast via these mobile news apps. Chan-Olmsted et al also says mobile news consumers are more likely to:

- follow news frequently (Chan-Olmsted et al, p. 127)
- use multiple news platforms/sources (Chan-Olmsted et al, p. 127)
- seek practical utilities from news information (Chan-Olmsted et al, p. 127)
- value portal news sites (Chan-Olmsted et al, p. 127)
- share content with others (Chan-Olmsted et al, p. 127)
- be receptive to advertising campaigns, especially those via social media (Chan-Olmsted et al, p. 127)

Agenda setting defined

Along with viewers needing to be entertained, the newscast has this inherent need to set the agenda of the stories. Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw refer to Lang and Lang’s definition of agenda setting in their analysis of the topic. Lang and Lang define agenda setting as such: the mass media force attention to certain issues. They build up public images of political figures. They are constantly presenting objects suggesting what
individuals in the mass should think about, know about, having feelings about (p. 468).

Moreover, McCombs and Shaw say the “mass media set the agenda for each political campaign, influencing the salience of attitudes toward the political issues” (p. 177). Lei Guo says television and retrieval has many aspects-- there are two aspects to be considered: (1) consider later retrieval, or memory, for that memory content. If the content of a television message has been selected from sensory store, encoded into working memory, and thoroughly stored, then it should be retrievable for use at a later date (Guo, p. 54), and (2) in the television-viewing situation, the viewer must keep up with the message. If you don’t encode some aspect of a scene and the scene changes, that’s it, you didn’t encode it (Guo, p. 54).

To clarify this process of “encoding,” Guo discusses television messages and storage--describing the viewer “storage” essentially as the content they read. That storage is affected by two things: individual differences and resource limitations (Guo, p. 53). This means however frequent the viewer responses, however frequent the calls will be.

Play theory and agenda setting: then and now

The play theory has been around for a while, from the traditional days of newspapers and books to the modern days of television and social media. To put it into context, let’s look at how some celebrities have evolved from both traditional methods and modern evolvements.

To start, there is such a phenomenon as the “Oprah Effect.” Oprah Winfrey’s fame outside her television show grew from her book club. She launched her campaign
“get the country reading again” on September 17th, 1996—which has generated 38 consecutive best-selling novels (Peck, p. 2). Oprah’s rise to fame as a reading agenda setter can also be attributed to literacy’s importance—which Janice Peck divides into four matters of importance:

1. The reading is an inherently beneficial, liberating activity
2. It liberates by unleashing the free play of subjective imagination
3. The reading combined with “literature” takes on the liberatory qualities of both
4. By enriching the individual and nourishing her autonomy, reading has inevitable benefits for society.

Peck also illustrates two key literacies: (1) literacy as enabling and (2) literacy as dangerous. While both attribute great power to reading and the written word, there are distinct differences. In “literacy as enabling,” literacy, reading, and literature are assumed to naturally produce enlightenment; but in “literacy as dangerous,” these are potential outcomes that can be minimized and redirected (p. 5).

These two concepts structure this project—looking at how the content of news stories can either be enlightened through the literacy of web stories, or how they could potentially be minimized and redirected through web stories.

Moving forward, another example of this “play theory” developing with social media is Taylor Swift. One of the main reasons she rose to fame was because of her use of the early social network Myspace. She shot videos, edited, posted, and blogged on her Myspace account. She personalized herself and engaged with her fans. The same effect may work in newscasts—as Susan Jacobson indicates in her article, “Does Audience Participation on Facebook Influence the News Agenda?” Jacobson analyzes the show,
The *Rachel Maddow Show*, and considers agenda-setting as giving the public greater influence over which stories are covered in the news.

From Rachel Maddow’s Facebook page, Jacobson discovers there is a positive correlation between stories discussed on Facebook and the subsequent airing of similar stories on TV. She also says the evidence suggests social media may enable many factors that influence both.

Jacobsen references Bernard Cohen, who defines agenda-setting as: “the notion that the press may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about” (Cohen, 1963, p. 20).

Facebook as agenda setting

Jacobsen also says Facebook and the news agenda play a key role in democratic societies—primarily with citizen participation and the potential for social change. She says, “The agenda building perspective serves to broaden the range of recognized influences on the public policy-making process.” If Facebook does play a key role in democratic societies—what are its roles in other societies?

In Thamaraiselvan Natarajan’s article, social media advertising has increased focus in newscasts—and Natarajan compares the US to Asia. Natarajan claims “Advertising through social media has overtaken the traditional channel of advertising in various dimensions,” Natarajan said. “Social media as an integral part of Internet has elicited significant interest both among academicians and industrial professionals.”

In a 2012 Nielsen report, Asian consumers are influenced by social media
advertisements to a greater degree than their Asian counterparts (Natarajan, p. 697). And according to a recent report by the Internet and Mobile Association of India, India currently has 106 million internet users out of which 62 million users actively engage in social media websites (Natarajan, IMAI, 2013, p. 697). This not only illustrates human dependency on social media, but the need for engaging with viewers. This study is strictly geared toward strategic communication, but can easily be applied to broadcast networks.

Alfred Hermida et al. look at social networking as a “global phenomenon.” According to a 2010 Pew result, almost half of adults say they use social networking sites in countries like the United States, Poland, the United Kingdom, and South Korea (Hermida, p. 815). That Pew research focuses on two Pew Internet Project surveys--between teens and adults. The surveys reveal a decline in blogging among teens and young adults and a modest rise among adults 30 and older; it also says 28 percent of teens, ages 12-17, and young adults, 18-29, were bloggers (Lenhart, et al.). It also says during that same period, the percentage of online adults over thirty who were bloggers rose from 7 percent blogging in 2006 to 11 percent in 2009 (Lenhart, et al.).

Methods

Focus Groups

To find out if social media has helped or hurt news credibility and if it does or does not give citizens’ voice, I turned to University of Maryland journalism students. I
conducted two focus groups, one with two people, and the other with a group of four. The group of four had one student who was not a journalist.

Moreover, to start the focus groups, I came up with the following list of questions:

1. Where do you get your news?
2. What kinds of apps do you have?
3. What are your thoughts on Twitter?
4. What about Facebook?
5. So do you essentially like the fact that Twitter allows you to follow all these different news organizations and journalists individually?
6. Should we keep these comments open on stories that we post and that people are posting? People consistently complain on those sites and have some kind of potentially offensive comments that they make. Do you think we should do away with them?
7. Do you think that in a sense the social media platforms should start letting us pick and choose which parts we want to enable and which ones we want to disable (in regard to comments on stories)?
8. Do you think that it’s essential to allow people to give their voice and express their opinions? Do you think that’s essential for journalism?
9. Do you think it’s good for journalists to use their Facebook pages? Let’s put aside the fact that you’re budding journalists. Just as citizens and viewers and readers just trying to engage with your favorite journalists. Do you think that’s really exciting that you can now engage with them?
10. Do you think that using social media is essential – for both national and local stations – to get the agenda out?
11. Flipboard? Have you heard of it?
12. Do you think it’s a good thing or a bad thing to have this app that can let people be more selective with their news?

I modeled these questions from a variety of scholars and studies. I focused mostly on Gabi Schaap’s 2009 study, “Measuring the Complexity of Viewers’ Television News Interpretation: Integration.” Schaap states that in order to study how television news affects its viewers, it is relevant to study how viewers interpret the news (p. 61). And there are thus two dimensions of credibility: viewer interpretation and journalist intent. Schaap deems these as “interpretive complexity.” Schaap says:

The viewer brings to the meeting his or her individual and social characteristics: a personal life history, experiences, interests, goals, attitudes, and membership of various social groups, all stored in knowledge. The news also brings to the
meeting its characteristics; not only the topics on which it reports--its ‘content’--
but also formal features such as sounds and images, the structure of an item, or its
length (Schaap, p. 63).

From that segment, I posed the following question to both my focus groups and my
phone interviews: “do you think we [journalists] should enable or disable comments?” I
asked that question because, to me, enabling/disabling comments is something that
demonstrates journalist intent, but that viewers interpret differently, as Schaap explained.

My first phone interviewee (who was supposed to be part of my focus group, but
could not make it), 23-year-old Sung-Min Kim –originally from Korea—said there are a
lot of petty things that people take out of context when they comment on a social media
page. “In terms of news, Facebook people post too many radical opinions,” Kim said.
“For example, with gay marriage, those comments are homophobic – I’m not homosexual
but I feel offended by what I read. On Twitter, I can easily ignore them. But it’s a
different game on Facebook because of the access to comments.” Kim also added
enabling or disabling comments depends on the degree of the offensiveness, but he said
that offensive comments hurt news credibility and damaged citizen voice.

Since Kim was my first interview, I decided to add the example of “homosexual”
as a potentially offensive topic. In my first focus group, 23-year-old journalist Nicole
(who did not disclose her last name) of Virginia said she thought those kinds of negative
comments could hurt credibility. “In that sense maybe if you know you’re going to post a
story about a controversial topic, maybe you shouldn’t have the comments,” Nicole said.
““But for a regular story I think you should [disable comments]. Like I know for one of
my stories I posted for my capstone course, people left comments and said ‘you know
this is a great story. I’m so glad that you touched on this subject.’ And that kind of reassured me. I felt like I was doing a good job as a journalist.”

So from Nicole’s perspective as a journalist, she saw social media as something that could enhance voice, but also hurt credibility at the same time. And it was interesting to me that she thought it was okay to disable comments when they were offensive because she thought doing so could save the face of the news organization and protect others’ voices.

In my second focus group, 19-year-old non-journalist, Charlie Bulman, of Maryland said he saw negative social media comments directed toward journalists, and thus saw it as a potential way to hurt credibility because it attacked the character of the journalists. “I think it’s really problematic with female writers,” Bulman said. “People write, especially with females; they’ll write if they don’t agree with someone. It’s some kind of issue about gender.” When I asked him for specific examples, he said: “I mean, I’ve read a couple of articles that addressed comments and also emails that female journalists get.”

In the same focus group and directly after Bulman’s response, 21-year-old journalist Kelsey Nelson of Maryland said she agreed with Charlie, but thought a lot of journalists received a lot of comments from citizens, and that some could be dangerous to the story. “When you write a story, you get people to think a certain way, but at the same time I think they should monitor them because people write some really outrageous – and I mean outrageous – things that are offensive to people,” Nelson said. “So you don’t want them to feel like you’re embracing that. But it could be dangerous.”
The question of whether or not news is credible thus turned into a question of whether or not journalists should enable or disable comments. 22-year-old journalist, Emily (who did not disclose her last name) said as long as comments are not endangering the individual or group of individuals and are not threatening in any way, journalists should not delete them. “Commenting is a platform for informing people, whether or not you agree with them,” Emily said. “And I’m friends with some speakers, [who said] a huge controversy came out about a woman who resigned on air – and people were saying some pretty horrible things not just about her journalism but about her appearance and the way they speak. But it’s just a part of life.”

A part of life that 19-year-old journalist, Josh Needelman, said is essential. He said before the Internet, there was no real platform for readers to get back to the journalists, except for letter to the editors. “So now you have this whole new platform for people to communicate,” Needelman said. “I mean, what’s the point of journalism? It’s the point to stimulate conversation so if they can add to that conversation then that’s what they should do.” Needelman also said that revoking the comments could be advantageous and thus hurt both news credibility and citizen voice.

Moreover, I wanted to look deeper into the play theory with my focus groups, and see how enthusiastic or unenthusiastic people were about journalists engaging with them via social media. To reiterate the play theory, it is the theory that citizens like to be entertained by journalists or celebrities through different mediums. I thus asked the journalists to put aside the fact that they were journalists and instead just go into this question with a citizen perspective.
19-year-old Brittany Cheng of Maryland said she thinks it is an interesting change from what we had in the past, when we would just have fan mail. “They [journalists and celebrities] would probably never ever read it,” Cheng said. “But now they – people, especially celebrities, like to hear what their fans have to say when they see something that’s worth responding to.” Cheng also said this engagement helps journalists with their stories. “Kevin from the Baltimore Sun spoke to us one day and was basically talking about how there was like a train crash or some kind of accident and he had to report on it but he didn’t have any sources,” Cheng said. “So he took to Twitter and was like ‘was anybody on this site?’ and the response was overwhelming. People responded with photos and stuff from the accident. Twitter is useful for providing sources.”

23-year-old Nicole (who did not disclose her last name) said she agreed with Brittany, and thought social media is a way to respond to the community, especially if the journalists are not in local news. “In local news, they always say we work for the community,” Nicole said. “We want to know what’s going on, and I think it works. And also they’ve got – I mean, in my capstone course, we get a lot of story ideas from Twitter so I’m sure they get a lot of story ideas from their pages.”

To look deeper into my other theoretical framework, agenda setting, I asked my focus group this question: do you think we, as journalists, need to set political agendas for the week? I also followed up this question by asking if they thought using social media is essential for both national and local stations to get the agenda out. I underscored the Sunday shows (Face the Nation, Meet the Press, This Week) because in my Washington program, we discussed the Sunday shows’ impact on news organizations and how they structure the news for the week. This angle came from Lang and Lang,
whom I mentioned earlier. They iterate that the mass media force attention to certain 
issues and thus build up public images of political figures.

23-year-old Nicole said it is a hard question because she said things change so 
often throughout the week. “To start an agenda on a Sunday,” Nicole said, “how would 
you keep that agenda? I don’t know.” Brittany Cheng agreed and said she thinks it could 
be useful. “It has its place. But I think, like she [Nicole] said, it is constricting.”

I then followed up and asked what kinds of things they would like to see tweeted 
out from news organizations who wish to put out an agenda for the week. I modeled this 
question after Lang and Lang again because they also said the mass media are constantly 
presenting objects, suggesting what individuals in the mass should think about, know 
about, have feelings about” (p. 468).

Nicole said the Associated Press sets the agenda at the end of the day, not at the 
start of the week, which she thinks makes a difference. “They don’t do it on Sundays, but 
every day. Some things you need to know for today,” Nicole said. “And I like that. 
Sometimes I don’t know all the things so it’s good to know, oh I got this going on for 
today. So I can see it more so for daily agendas.”

Brittany Cheng, on the other hand, said she is unsure if she has an opinion on the 
matter. “I personally like a separation – like an organization from its political agenda,” 
Cheng said. “But that’s just kind of the way things have been trending towards. I would 
say it’s good to have the daily kind of round up, but they can cause – it can be dangerous 
if there’s too much attention on just these ideas.” Cheng also said journalists could miss 
out on a lot of other stories by having too much focus on one agenda. She cited the 
missing Malaysia flight as an example, saying that although she did understand the
importance of that story, there are other stories that news organizations could cover. So she perceived ambiguity as something that could help credibility and a narrow focus as something that could hurt it.

Nicole then added that the Associated Press tries to do the biggest stories, but also brings undiscovered stories to the tables, which are the stories people need to know about. “I understand what you were saying, too,” Nicole said. “They might put too much focus. But they only do that in the story. And of course they don’t just report on those 10 things throughout the day.” Brittany and Nicole then agreed that people would ultimately lose interest and thus lose sight of the value of the story. Brittany then said political agenda caters to a different crowd. “For example, if there’s this convergence theory about how people nowadays, they seek to find news sources that kind of confirm their pre-existing beliefs rather than seek out sources that don’t,” Cheng said.

**Interviews**

My in-person interviews ran much shorter than my focus groups because the questions were general. This was because I conducted these as man on the street interviews, and I was also looking to go into these interviews with a narrow focus—specifically, if different age demographics and non-journalists thought social media hurt credibility, and whether or not it helped organizations set the agenda. I also wanted to find out if older adults age 30 and up think social media gives voice. These are the questions I asked:

1. Where do you get your news?
2. Do you read that in print or online?
3. Do you use Facebook to get your news?
4. Do you think using social media hurts credibility?
5. Do you think that news organizations set the agenda?
These are standard questions, but I knew that if I could get a response off one question, I could add the questions from both the play theory models and agenda setting models after. I also went into these interviews thinking people aged 30 and up would not use social media as much as those age 18 to 25. So I hoped to either prove myself right or prove myself wrong.

With my first interviewee, 37-year-old Emily (who did not disclose her last name) of Washington, District of Columbia, I found my original hypothesis to be neither right nor wrong. She said she does not think social media hurts credibility, but added that she hates Facebook. “I prefer Twitter because it is easier,” Emily said. So at that point, I could not disclose whether social media, as a whole, was something those 30 and up avoided. And, at that point, I could not say it did not give voice to those aged 30 and up.

51-year-old Jane (who did not disclose her last name) said she did not think social media is a credible source to get the news. She said she gets her news from newspapers and websites because she likes to have more details in the story – thus changing my belief that those 30 and up did not to those age 50 and up did not use social media and thus found it insignificant to both their voice and news credibility.

49-year-old Grazilla of France said although she lives in France, she still gets her news from CNN’s website, but said she does not always believe what she reads. “I like reading the news, but I also think some of its news is biased,” Grazilla said. I then asked her if she thought CNN set an agenda because she thought it was biased. “Yes, I feel like I just read it, but it’s open for interpretation,” Grazilla said. “It always has a bias.” Since Grazilla’s response was directed toward CNN’s website only, I deemed her statement as invalid to conclude or not conclude that those age 50 and up find social media as credible
or not credible and whether it gives voice (I still used her statement in my results, however, because I found that she underlined a significant factor for news credibility, and that was news bias).

After weeding through these in-person interviews, I wondered: will age and title be enough to support my hypotheses? I also thought about how to define social media. So I decided to take to social media, and post on Facebook. After doing so, I received three responses: two from those aged 24, and one from a man age 41.

41-year-old Hugo Sanchez said he does not like to look at the news too often, but when he does, he watches television and uses social media. “If I watch any, CBS is the source of news (TV) and Facebook & Twitter; because of my career I usually stay in contact via Facebook and Twitter.” And my project did look deep into Facebook and Twitter, but, like I said earlier, I preferred to look at social media as a whole because I wanted to know if there was a difference between mediums.

One social media element I did not look into was popular apps. However, from my social media responses, I found they do have an impact on social media credibility and on citizen voice. 24-year-old Nick Perrella said he gets his news from Huffington Post, but also from an app called Flipboard. Flipboard is an app that allows its users to pick and choose which news they want to follow. It is essentially a magazine app that allows them to flip through their Facebook and Twitter feed, as well as news sites, like the Huffington Post and Washington Post. “It is easier for me to pick and choose what I want to read,” Perrella said. After he mentioned where he got his news from, I downloaded the app. I played around with it (prior to my focus groups) and decided to
implement it in my list of questions for my focus groups. I wanted to know: do these apps help give citizens’ more voice and do they help credibility?

Charlie Bulman, the government and history student, said he uses them because a lot of politics aggregate toward them. “I happen to say I like them,” Bulman said. “And that’s, that’s nice because they pick the best stories.” So from this statement, Flipboard could, in fact, help citizen voice by allowing a more narrowed selection for the citizen.

Journalist Josh Needelman said he also likes the selectiveness of the app, Flipboard, but could see it hurting other news’ organizations. “It’s cool that you can pick and choose your outlets, but it could also—say this Flipboard thing becomes huge – will newer publications get noticed? How’s that going to allow for anything else to grow and expand?” Needelman said. So as it helps citizen voice, it also hurts journalist expansion.

For Emily, she does not think journalist expansion should be a concern from the app just yet. Flipboard is something she sees as good for busy people, which she said is the majority of America, but she thinks people who want to stay informed will continue to go to their resources. “People are bugged in and connected all the time,” Emily said. “So they’re going to see headlines from other sources.” So while I cannot disclose whether apps, like Flipboard, hurt credibility, I could say they help citizen voice by allowing them to select the news they want.

24-year-old Matt Soave of Washington wrote to me in an email, and said both he and his girlfriend use the website, Reddit, because the stories do not update too often. “But it usually has every 'big' story for the day,” Soave said. “However, it's definitely got a bias, so I don't rely on it alone or look into the stories too deeply. It's mostly just to see if anything big has happened and maybe [I] look at some reactions (via the
comments).” From his comment, I can underscore that although Reddit – like Flipboard – does allow citizens’ voice; it still has a limited amount of credibility. And when I looked into Reddit, it allows citizens to write their own stories, thus making it a citizen journalism website. I therefore decided to not attribute my Reddit find into my results section, but still think it is significant enough for citizen voice.

Results

While conducting this project, I had two hypotheses: (1) using social media gives citizens the voice they want and, in turn, helps television grow by engaging its viewers at home, at work, and elsewhere, and (2) social media has helped news credibility. I did not focus on one social media over the other (i.e. no Facebook versus Twitter comparison) because I wanted to see how journalists and non-journalists perceived social media as a whole. I also wanted to know which factors contributed to the notion of ‘credibility,’ and thus look into how we, as journalists, could use those factors to help our own credibility.

With that said, the two major factors that hurt news credibility – based on my project— were (1) offensive comments posted to both websites and Facebook, and (2) news organizations’ focusing too much on one agenda with their social media. When citizens posted offensive comments about either the journalist or topic, the news organizations’ credibility suffered and the voice, in turn, suffered. Journalists thus have to make the tough decision to either enable or disable comments – something that journalists said could help credibility, but hurt voice at the same time (by eliminating comments, we end up offending those who posted them and ultimately sending the
message ‘your voice does not matter’). And when there was a sense of news bias, my interviewees and focus groups both said they shifted to other news outlets and other social media. So social media still is a credible source of news, but only when the citizens and journalists perceive the organizations’ posts as credible – either from the comments they read or from the topics the news organization chooses to cover.

I had two subjects – journalist Brittany Cheng and non-journalist Grazilla— who both pointed fingers at national news coverage. They both said when there is too much coverage on one topic, it makes them lose interest. For Brittany, that was the missing Malaysia plane coverage (even though she understood the importance of the coverage). They said they lose interest and thus do not see the news organization as something that gives constant updates. Grazilla told me: “I read it, but I don’t always believe what I read because there is bias.” So while they did think it was essential to put the agenda out via social media, they did not think it is essential to send out only one agenda, but multiple agendas.

Moreover, Flipboard is something that could enhance citizen voice and help credibility. My focus groups agreed that the app does make things more accessible for busy people and thus helps new organizations get their agenda out. But does it help credibility and does it give voice? The journalists I interviewed did not think it ultimately helped credibility, but it also did not hurt it. So it can be ruled out as null because the app allows citizens to pick and choose where they want to get their news from – so they could be picking and choosing the organizations they already deem as credible or not. But Flipboard is something that gives citizens’ voice because now, more than ever, they could select which news organizations they like based on their Facebook likes and Twitter feed.
Before I move to the discussion, I would like to revisit and summarize my two hypotheses and synthesize my interviews.

**Hypothesis one:** social media gives citizens’ voice and, in turn, helps television grow by engaging its viewers at home, at work, and elsewhere

To reiterate, this hypothesis focused on whether or not social media gives citizens the voice they want, and, from my interviews and focus groups, I found that answer is not so simple. In fact, my responses showed conflict—especially when it came to the idea of enabling or disabling comments to help credibility. While 23-year-old Sung-Min Kim said disabling comments is something that journalists should consider because there are too many radical opinions, 19-year-old journalist Brittany Cheng said she was anti-regulation when it comes to commenting because—she said—journalism is more interactive. She also underscored that the commenting section is an integral part of journalism and is thus a checkup on what we, as citizens, are reading.

21-year-old journalist Kelsey (who did not disclose her last name) said comments can be good because they allow citizens to voice their opinions, but she also said we need to monitor them because they can become extremely outrageous and—as a news organization—you do not want people to think you’re embracing those comments because it could hurt your credibility.

22-year-old journalist Emily (who did not disclose her last name) saw comments as a platform for informing people. She said she did not think disabling comments was absolutely necessary because they help citizen voice, but she said it was necessary to remove the comments if they endanger others. However, 19-year-old journalist, Josh Needelman, said revoking comments could be advantageous because the point of
journalism is to stimulate conversation – so if we can, we should do it. 19-year-old non-journalist, Charlie Bulman, said it is hypocritical to take away commenting altogether on a post because news organizations need consistent policies. He said they can take away certain offensive comments, but taking away the ability to comment will ultimately take away citizen voice.

_Hypothesis two: social media has helped news credibility_

Again, this hypothesis tested whether or not social media has actually helped news organizations maintain their credibility – by interacting with viewers and taking responsibility for their mistakes through that medium. From my interviews, those aged 18-40 found social media to be both credible and non-credible, while those age 50 and up did not think it was credible.

19-year-old Brittany Cheng said journalists could miss out on a lot of other stories by having too much focus on one agenda, citing the missing Malaysia flight as an example -- saying that although she did understand the importance of that story, there are other stories that news organizations could cover.

23-year-old journalist Nicole (who did not disclose her last name) said journalists may put too much focus on one agenda and thus hurt their credibility. And both Nicole and Brittany agreed, during their focus group, that people would ultimately lose interest and thus lose sight of the value of the story if there is too much emphasis on one story.
37-year-old Emily (who did not disclose her last name) of Washington, District of Columbia, said she does not think social media hurts credibility, but, at the same time, said she hates Facebook.

51-year-old Jane (who did not disclose her last name), on the other hand, said she did not think social media is a credible source to get the news and gets her news from newspapers and websites. And 41-year-old Hugo Sanchez said he does not like to look at the news too often, but when he does, he watches television and uses social media because he thinks they are credible.

65-year-old Greg Gibson of Los Angeles said he did not look on Facebook, did not read or wrote Facebook comments on news posts, and saw television as something that was a more credible way of getting news – despite news bias and reporter mistakes.

Discussion

The results of my interviews show a certain consensus when it comes to the factors that both help and hurt news organization’s credibility: setting the agenda, playing with the viewers, bias, and social media. But what is interesting is that none of my interviewees perceived social media as being the sole factor that hurts news credibility. There were other factors – offensive comments and a narrowed focus—that my interviewees and focus groups centered their attention on. But they also said that social media is a gateway to giving citizens the voice they want, and also giving journalists more ideas and topics to discuss.
Furthermore, this study also indicates that if journalists pick and choose which stories should or should not have comments, they will cut off citizen voices through those actions.

As discussed in my original proposal, William Stephenson says there are two distinguishing principles of great importance (when it comes to the play theory): (1) social control and (2) convergent selectivity. To clarify again, social control is the formation of a public opinion; the object in a democratic system of government is to reach a consensus after due debate of the pros and cons of a public issue (Stephenson, 1987, p. 2), and convergent selectivity let’s each person choose something different for themselves; primarily characterized by individuality, wishes, and wants (Stephenson, 1987, p. 2). I am reiterating this because my focus groups and interviewees liked to partake in convergent selectivity – they liked to choose something different for themselves and therefore liked having their individuality, wishes, and wants. Very few, if any, liked to be told what was happening.

A Pew Research study in 2011 also suggested that according to most Americans, mistakes are okay – as long as the news organization points it out (Pew, 2011). Another relative statistic is that the press’s perceived lack of fairness, its unwillingness to admit mistakes, inaccurate reporting, and political bias matched highs reached in 2009 (Pew, 2011). Here’s a look at those Pew Research statistics from 2011:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceived Lack of Fairness</th>
<th>77%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unwillingness to Admit Mistakes</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inaccurate Reporting</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Like my project results, this Pew Research study indicates that perceived lack of fairness is at the highest percentage of viewer complaints, while political bias is at the lowest. So, should the press be more willing to integrate citizen voice in its stories? Should journalists admit their mistakes? Should they apologize for inaccurate reports? And should journalists have a political agenda?

According to this study, and to my focus groups, citizens hold journalists to a higher standard of excellence, and would like them to fess up to their mistakes and listen to them more than anything else. A possible solution could be to Tweet out the mistake, post on Facebook, put in an editor’s note on a website, or simply air it on a newscast.

Conclusion

This project and research was meant to look qualitatively at the ways in which journalists and non-journalists perceive social media use in the news. Based off my findings, one could assume that the option to enable comments on a news organization’s Facebook page does give voice and does help television grow. But one can also assume, based off my interviews, that certain comments could also hurt news credibility if they are offensive.

So what could someone looking into social media and news credibility do in the future? Here are some suggestions I have for them, based off of what I found in my study:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Bias</th>
<th>63%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
• Look into how news organizations’ apologize for their mistakes via social media, and how often they do.
• Look into how networks and local television affiliates set the agenda via social media.
• Find a news organization that disables comments on its website or Facebook page, and see why they do, and what kind of feedback they get from doing so. Then compare them with another organization that does enable comments.
• Interview a reporter who tweets out or interacts actively on Facebook or Twitter. See what problems they run into, and then seek feedback from the people who comment on their posts.

These are just some of the future research options, but obviously those who read my study will be able to pull out more ideas. My study implicates those four bullet points, and thus could lead to further research.
References


Lei, G. (2012). The Application of Social Network Analysis in Agenda Setting Research:


Press Widely Criticized, but Trusted More Than Other Information Sources. *Pew Research Center for the People and the Press*. [Link](#)


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Appendix A

Proposal

I started my graduate career in fall 2012 at the Missouri School of Journalism. I decided to work on broadcast media—since I had always dreamed of working in the field. I had prior work in Communication and English studies, but had never worked in a newsroom before. At California State University San Marcos (CSUSM), I worked with social media on a regular basis—for presentations, outreach programs, social events, news, and group work. It was clear to me social media was not only necessary for organization and structure, but also for brainstorming ideas.

At the Missouri School of Journalism, I was a graduate research assistant for a project that focused on Google+ and television—particularly how broadcasters could use social media to enhance viewership and create what can be defined as “citizen journalism.” The project was affiliated with both the Reynolds Journalism Institute (RJI) in Columbia, Missouri and the Nine Network of Public Media in St. Louis. I worked with two RJI fellows and Nine Network producers on a weekly basis to launch a show called Staytuned STL. The show was designed solely around social media—it had a Twitter and Facebook team of interns and a Google+ team of graduate students. This was the first time the network had ever used Google+.

The Google+ team sliced up the show’s topic by each participant’s title—meaning a given show focused on “the heroin epidemic” or “minority health disparities.” Each topic needed credible sources—journalists who had experience with these topics, experts
in a given field (psychologists, professors, doctors, etc.). The credibility of those shows relied heavily upon social media—Twitter, Facebook, and Google+. We took viewer input very seriously and strived to make the show credible.

Now, I would like to integrate the elements of this project into my master’s project, and move the focus to social media credibility. I have worked in four different newsrooms during my graduate career at the Missouri School of Journalism—Missouri Digital News (MDN), The Nine Network of Public Media, KOMU-TV, and KBIA-FM. In each newsroom, there were diverse forms of social media—at MDN, we focused on Twitter and blogging. At the Nine Network, we focused on Google+, Twitter, digital news and Facebook. KOMU-TV focused on e-mail, Twitter, and Facebook. KBIA-FM focused on Twitter, Facebook, and digital news. And CBS Evening News: Weekend Edition used Twitter and its website to broadcast breaking news. It also used Microsoft Outlook to communicate with all of its members in every bureau; including New York, DC, London, and Los Angeles.

Each of these newsrooms had a goal—to make the news credible. KOMU-TV had its share of viewer responses—primarily on its Facebook page. Since most of my time was spent working at KOMU-TV, I would like to use KOMU-TV as my primary comparison for my project. My hypotheses will thus be the following:

1. Using social media gives citizens the voice they want and, in turn, helps television grow (by engaging its viewers at home, at work, and even out at lunch, etc.).
2. Using social media does not give citizens the voice they want and, in turn, does not help television grow (by engaging its viewers at home, at work, and even out at lunch, etc.).
3. Social media has helped news credibility.
4. Social media has not helped news credibility.

From my experience, social media is almost mandatory in modern newsrooms. The
newsrooms I have worked in have become so reliant on social media-- to tease
viewers/listeners, or to communicate between bureaus. Twitter, Facebook and blogging
are all ways of enticing viewers and giving a sense of credibility/building a relationship. I
have thus decided my theoretical frameworks will be: the play theory and agenda setting.

Social media’s purpose in a newscast--any newscast--applies to each framework.
KOMU-TV’s viewers like to be entertained by social media. It also likes to ask viewers
what to think about--on a daily basis--and apply their input in its 5 o’clock newscast
(with a required breakout and graphic). These contribute to my overall analysis. Let’s
first take a look at how “the play theory” and “agenda setting” can be defined.

Professional Skills

My experiences at the Missouri School of Journalism translated to my
experiences in DC because of my social media background. I was able to work with
newer technology -- Google+ -- at the Nine Network of Public Media. I was also able to
direct that media toward hard news topics that did not tell viewers what to think, but what
to think about. I did similar work at CBS News Washington, and compared/contrasted
the differences between social mediums.

Moreover, I worked with various blogs -- WordPress and Tumblr in particular -- as well as Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, and YouTube. In DC, I wanted to know how
important these mediums are, and if they were not as necessary at CBS News
Washington as the Nine Network, KOMU, MDN, and KBIA, then what mediums were
necessary?
One element I added -- to both my focus groups and to my social media comparison -- is whether the use of comments on social mediums is helpful or hurtful. Are they enabled at the news organization I will work at? Or did that organization decide to disable the use of comments? In this world of user engagement and the need to be entertained, comments are something that cannot be overlooked. They are what give citizens voice, but they are also what hurt news credibility. So it was essential I added this to my experience at CBS News Washington. At KOMU, we implemented these comments into our five o’clock newscast -- as well as in other newscasts. There are people who complained -- via Facebook -- about the use of their name in the newscasts -- but there are also those who like the attention we give them. The conflict over the use of these comments therefore gave me reason to study them during my internship with CBS Evening News: Weekend Edition.

Theoretical Frameworks

The question of whether or not social media helps or hurts news credibility is something I have wondered frequently. Day in and day out, viewers, listeners, and readers can access the breaking stories-- as they are happening. They can access these stories via Twitter or Facebook. But what is concerning is not the timeliness of the tweets or posts, but the accuracy of them.

Oftentimes, the reporter has to communicate with the digital producer while they are still working on the story. This communication line may have some faults-- as the story really starts breaking and the reporter’s hands get full. This could lead to the
ultimate wrong--unverified information. The reporter may tweet something he or she thinks is accurate, but later find it is wrong. By that time, the station’s audience has already read the post and most likely shared it with their friends, family, colleagues, etc. The station then finds an ongoing tug-of-war between gaining audience through breaking news, but also losing them through mistakes.

a) Play theory

William Stephenson defines the play theory as “subjective play.” He says: “People read newspapers, magazines, and paperbacks in vast numbers, and there are ever increasing audiences for movies, radio, records, and television. All of this, it seems obvious, is enjoyable” (Stephenson, 1987, p. 1).

Stephenson also says there are two distinguishing principles of great importance: (1) social control and (2) convergent selectivity. Social control is the formation of a public opinion; the object in a democratic system of government is to reach a consensus after due debate of the pros and cons of a public issue (Stephenson, 1987, p. 2). Convergent selectivity, in contrast, let’s each person choose something different for themselves; primarily characterized by individuality, wishes, and wants (Stephenson, 1987, p. 2).

Stephenson also mentions Ruesch and Bateson, who were among the first to adopt the language of theory to communication problems (Stephenson, 1987, p. 5). The pair say a “social matrix” refers to a larger, scientific system--of which both the psychiatrist and the patient are integral parts (Ruesch and Bateson, 2008, p. 4). They say that larger system is of no immediate concern to the psychiatrist or the patient at the time of interaction. But they say the smaller system is part of the larger system--and conclusions
drawn in this smaller system may become inaccurate or invalid when seen in the
framework of the wider overall system (Ruesch and Bateson, 2008, p.4). To put this into
perspective, the larger system is larger media corporations, like NBC, and the smaller
system is those corporations’ affiliates. But to move forward, Ruesch and Bateson also
clarify the role of the “psychiatrists” and “social scientists.” They say:

As psychiatrists and social scientists we are, by definition, interested to inquire
into the ways an observer perceives the world rather than how this world really is,
because the only method we possess to infer the existence of the real world is to
compare one observer’s views with the views of other observers (Ruesch and

News followers have the option to observe their news by reading, listening, or
watching--based on their interest. These news outlets all play roles in keeping audiences
entertained. Ruesch and Bateson refer to a “communication matrix” with four different
levels of systems: intrapersonal (p.199), interpersonal, group, and cultural. They break
these into concepts: (1) the “little black box” concept, (2) interpersonal networks (p. 90),
(3) the group network (p. 38), and (4) the cultural network (p. 40). Here’s a grid to
explain the differences between the four:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>The “Little Black Box”</em></td>
<td>The self-observer; the individual can observe what goes on in his own mind, but no one can step into the black box to see what’s in it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Interpersonal Networks</em></td>
<td>Equivalent parts in closed circuits; X &amp; Y enter a conversation, but have no <em>directional flow</em>. When X is talking, Y has to listen and understand, so there is “information loss “in such networks. X can never fully grasp what Y does, and vice versa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Group Network</em></td>
<td>Specialization of function, and unequal division of receiving and transmission. One television viewer may communicate to vast...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
audiences, to millions of people simultaneously across the world.

**The Cultural Network**

| Innumerable influences communicate to innumerable people. Each person living in a culture is conceived of as bombarded by countless messages, the sources of which he/she is unable to recognize. |

Ruesch and Bateson also say human beings are pleasure seeking. They say they are self-corrective and avoid the unpleasantly painful situations (p. 234).

Moreover, Jay Blumler et al say the study of mass media suffers from the absence of a relevant theory of social and psychological needs. “It is not so much a catalogue of needs that is missing as a clustering of groups of needs,” Blumer et al say. “It’s a sorting out of different levels of need, a specification of hypotheses linking particular needs with particular media gratifications” (513).

Blumler et al also say people may lean toward broadcast news because each medium offers a unique combination of three things: (1) characteristic contents, (2) typical attributes, and (3) typical exposure situations (Blumler, p. 514). Here’s a list of audience uses and gratifications:

- the social and psychological origins of needs
- those needs
- expectations, which are generated from needs
- the mass media, or other sources
- differential patterns of media exposure (or engagement in other activities), generated by the mass media
- need gratifications
• other consequences (p. 510)

Blumler also says the media compete with other sources of need satisfaction, and that the needs served by mass communication constitute but a segment of the wider range of human needs—to the degree to which they can be adequately met through mass media consumption certainly varies (Blumler, p. 511). He says methodologically speaking; many of the goals of mass media use can be derived from data supplied by individual audience members themselves (Blumler, p. 511).

There are many news outlets people can go to—print, digital, and magazine. But they go to radio and television broadcasts for one major thing: to be entertained. Broadcast television and radio networks know this—which is why they tease. Those teases can occur via Twitter, Facebook, and during newscasts. And there is also such thing as mobile news.

Sylvia Chan-Olmsted et al say the development of mobile news has significant implications for consumers’ news consumption patterns, especially those who are still forming their adulthood news habit (Chan-Olmsted et al, p. 126). This applies to the “play theory” because people want news all the time; as fast as possible. Viewers can also have a say in what goes or does not go into the newscast via these mobile news apps. Chan-Olmsted et al also says mobiles news consumers are more likely to:

• follows news frequently (Chan-Olmsted et al, p. 127)
• use multiple news platforms/sources (Chan-Olmsted et al, p. 127)
• seek practical utilities from news information (Chan-Olmsted et al, p. 127)
• value portal news sites (Chan-Olmsted et al, p. 127)
• share content with others (Chan-Olmsted et al, p. 127)
• be receptive to advertising campaigns, especially those via social media (Chan-
  Olmsted et al, p. 127)

b) Agenda setting defined

Along with viewers needing to be entertained, the newscast has this inherent need
to set the agenda of the stories. Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw refer to Lang and
Lang’s definition of agenda setting in their analysis of the topic. Lang and Lang define
agenda setting as such: the mass media force attention to certain issues. They build up
public images of political figures. They are constantly presenting objects suggesting what
individuals in the mass should think about, know about, having feelings about (p. 468).

Moreover, McCombs and Shaw say the “mass media set the agenda for each
political campaign, influencing the salience of attitudes toward the political issues” (p.
177). Lei Guo says television and retrieval has many aspects-- there are two aspects to
be considered: (1) consider later retrieval, or memory, for that memory content. If the
content of a television message has been selected from sensory store, encoded into
working memory, and thoroughly stored, then it should be retrievable for use at a later
date (Guo, p. 54), and (2) in the television-viewing situation, the viewer must keep up
with the message. If you don’t encode some aspect of a scene and the scene changes,
that’s it, you didn’t encode it (Guo, p. 54).

To clarify this process of “encoding,” Guo discusses television messages and
storage--describing the viewer “storage” essentially as the content they read. That storage
is affected by two things: individual differences and resource limitations (Guo, p. 53).
This means however frequent the viewer responses, however frequent the calls will be.

c) Play theory and agenda setting: then and now
The play theory has been around for a while, from the traditional days of newspapers and books to the modern days of television and social media. To put it into context, let’s look at how some celebrities have evolved from both traditional methods and modern evolvements.

To start, there is such a phenomenon as the “Oprah Effect.” Interestingly enough, Oprah’s fame grew from her book club. She launched her campaign “get the country reading again” on September 17th, 1996—which has generated 38 consecutive best-selling novels (Peck, p. 2). Oprah’s rise to fame can also be attributed to literacy’s importance—which Janice Peck divides into four matters of importance:

5. The reading is an inherently beneficial, liberating activity
6. It liberates by unleashing the free play of subjective imagination
7. The reading combined with “literature” takes on the liberatory qualities of both
8. By enriching the individual and nourishing her autonomy, reading has inevitable benefits for society.

Peck also illustrates two key literacies: (1) literacy as enabling and (2) literacy as dangerous. While both attribute great power to reading and the written word, there are distinct differences. In “literacy as enabling,” literacy, reading, and literature are assumed to naturally produce enlightenment; but in “literacy as dangerous,” these are potential outcomes that can be minimized and redirected (p. 5).

These two concepts will structure my project—I will look at how the content of news stories can either be enlightened through the literacy of web stories, or how they could potentially be minimized and redirected through web stories.

Moving forward, another example of this “play theory” developing with social
media is Taylor Swift. One of the main reasons why she rose to fame was because of her use of Myspace. She shot videos, edited, posted, and blogged on her Myspace account. She personalized herself and engaged with her fans. The same effect may work in newscasts-- as Susan Jacobson indicates in her article, “Does Audience Participation on Facebook Influence the News Agenda?” Jacobson analyzes the show, The Rachel Maddow Show, and considers agenda-setting as giving the public greater influence over which stories are covered in the news.

From Rachel Maddow’s Facebook page, Jacobson discovers there is a positive correlation between stories discussed on Facebook and the subsequent airing of similar stories on TV. She also says the evidence suggests social media may enable many factors that influence both.

Jacobsen references Bernard Cohen, who defines agenda-setting as: “the notion that the press “may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about” (Cohen, 1963, p. 20).

d) Facebook as agenda setting

Jacobsen also says Facebook and the news agenda play a key role in democratic societies--primarily with citizen participation and the potential for social change. She says, “The agenda building perspective serves to broaden the range of recognized influences on the public policy-making process.” If Facebook does play a key role in democratic societies--what are its roles in other societies?

In Thamaraiselvan Natarajan’s article, social media advertising has increased focus in newscasts--and Natarajan compares the US to Asia. Natarajan claims advertising through social media has overtaken the traditional channel of advertising in
various dimensions. “Advertising through social media has overtaken the traditional channel of advertising in various dimensions,” Natarajan said. “Social media as an integral part of Internet has elicited significant interest both among academicians and industrial professionals.”

In a 2012 Nielsen report, Asian consumers are influenced by social media advertisements to a greater degree than their Asian counterparts--Asian consumers are influenced by social media advertisements to a greater degree than their western counterparts (Natarajan, p. 697). And according to a recent report by the Internet and mobile Association of India, India currently has 106 million internet users out of which 62 million users actively engage in social media websites (Natarajan, IMAI, 2013, p.697). This not only illustrates human dependency on social media, but the need for engaging with viewers. This study is strictly geared toward strategic communication, but can easily be applied to broadcast networks.

Alfred Hermida et al look at social networking as a “global phenomenon.” According to a 2010 Pew result, almost half of adults say they use social networking sites in countries like the United States, Poland, the United Kingdom, and South Korea (Hermida, p. 815). That Pew research focuses on two Pew Internet Project surveys--between teens and adults. When scrolling through the results, the surveys reveal a decline in blogging among teens and young adults and a modest rise among adults 30 and older; it also says 28% of teens, ages 12-17, and young adults, 18-29, were bloggers (Lenhart, et al). It also says during that same period, the percentage of online adults over thirty who were bloggers rose from 7% blogging in 2006 to 11% in 2009 (Lenhart, et al).
Literature Review

While KOMU-TV does not throw any political agendas at viewers, it does report on them. For example, there have been numerous reports about politicians--particularly Governor Jay Nixon. Reporters are taught to dig into the stories and move beyond the press releases. At the Capitol, Missouri Digital News focuses on just that element-- but it uses Twitter and blogging to get those points across. There is no Facebook page for it.

But KOMU-TV makes a valiant effort to get all sides of the stories. If there is no balanced viewpoint, the story will simply not air. For example, I encountered this problem in my Boy Scouts of America story--I got the side of the LGBT, the viewpoint of a poly-gender (transgender) Eagle Scout, but I could not get the conservative side. I inputted statistics of how many people disagreed with the vote, but still received negative feedback (via Facebook) about how I didn’t have the other side of the story. So, agenda-setting could be tricky in that sense-- everyone wants to be represented in big stories (based on their opinions). And viewers remember the material they see/hear.

\textit{a) What is credibility?}

Bianca-Marina Mitu relies on Gabi Schapp’s study to define “credibility.” Schapp defines credibility as the “representation” of a news item as constructed and reported by a news viewer (p. 61). Additionally, Schapp says in order to study how television news affects its viewers, it is relevant to study how viewers interpret the news (p. 61). There are thus two dimensions of credibility: viewer interpretation and journalist intent. Schapp deems these as “interpretive complexity.” Schapp says:

The viewer brings to the meeting his or her individual and social characteristics: a personal life history, experiences, interests, goals, attitudes, and membership of
various social groups, all stored in knowledge. The news also brings to the
meeting its characteristics; not only the topics on which it reports—its ‘content’—
but also formal features such as sounds and images, the structure of an item, or its
length (Schapp, p. 63).

When viewers see these images; when they hear voices and the story, they can then grasp
the credibility of the story. But social media could also be detrimental to the newscast
because of the comments it receives. Kjerstin Thorstín et al reference several scholars,
but define credibility based on dimensions they find in each study. They say the
following are the most important dimensions for news credibility: trustworthiness and
expertise, fairness, bias, incompleteness, concern for community, separation of opinion
and fact and accuracy. Of course, their research was pooled from three different research

b) What is citizen journalism?

Saqib Riaz and Saadia Anwar Pasha define citizen journalism through Steven
Lang:

It is journalism produced by non-professionals. It can take various forms
including text, images, video and audio. It can make use of a wide range of tools
such as cell phones, computers, audio recorders or even just a pen and paper
(Lang, 2010).

Riaz and Pasha also say citizen journalism is a new sort of news creation, and that
creation has been discussed by various scholars. The pair also says citizen journalism has
been associated with the development, dissemination, and usability of web publishing
software (Riaz & Pasha, 2011, p. 90).

Luke Goode breaks up two “boundaries” of citizen journalism: (1) citizen
journalism is generally associated with the Internet and yet does not begin and end online
or even with digital-interactive media, and (2) citizen journalism is seen to present a
challenge to mainstream corporate media—and thus can be conceived as a “movement” with intrinsically oppositional characteristics (Goode, 2009, p.1289). Goode also says broadcast news sometimes feeds off and incorporates elements of citizen journalism because it uses eyewitness footage from cell phones, web-based chats, or even guest reporter slots in which citizens front and participate in packaging an item for a television or radio newscast (Goode, 2009, p. 1289). He also claims there may be little to gain in restricting analysis of citizen journalism to sites set up explicitly as alternatives to “mainstream” or “traditional” journalism (Goode, 2009, p. 1289).

c) Is news credible?

Studies have considered whether or not source labeling gives news credibility. But what is “source labeling,” and is it attributed to social media? In David Tewksbury’s et al study, the team experiments with onscreen labels—identifying externally supplied video news release content (VNR) in television news. This means viewers are able to see where these stories come from—potentially hurting newsroom credibility. KOMU-TV gets its content from press releases—primarily from news bureaus or the associated press. It also gets video content from NBC News Source and CNN News Source. But Tewksbury et al say news audiences are concerned about the use of VNR content streaming from broadcasts.

A Pew Research study taken in September 2011 says Americans have a very different view of the news sources they rely on—when asked to rate the accuracy of stories from the sources where they get most of their news, the percentage saying these outlets get the facts straight more than doubles; 62% say their main news sources get the facts straight, while just 30% say stories are often inaccurate (Pew, 2011). Here’s a look
at some other statistics from the Pew study:

![Chart showing most named sources and categories of news organizations.]

Nearly seven-in-ten (69%) say they have a lot or some trust in information they get from local news organizations, while 59% say they trust information from national news organizations (Pew, 2011).
• About half say they have a lot or some trust in information provided by their state government (51%) and the Obama administration (50%) (Pew, 2011).

• Smaller percentages trust information from federal agencies (44%), business corporations (41%), Congress (37%), or candidates running for office (29%) (Pew, 2011).

• 66% say they get the most of their news from television, while 43% cite the Internet as their main news source (Pew, 2011).

Outside these statistics, television continues to be the public’s main source for national and international news (Pew, 2011).

In the same Pew Research study taken in September 2011, researchers evaluated press performance from 1985 through 2011. Those researchers say that when viewers rated news organizations, they rated the news organizations they rely on much more positively than others. The research also says the public’s impressions of the national
media may be influenced more by its opinions of cable news outlets than its views of other news sources, such as network of local TV news, newspapers, or internet news outlets (Pew, 2011). Moreover, the study says most raters named CNN and FOX news more than any other cable news outlet (Pew, 2011). Take a look at the graph from the research:

Further, people rate the performance of the news organizations they rely on much more positively than they rate the performance of news organizations generally.
And the public’s impressions of the national media may be influenced more by their opinions of cable news outlets than their views of other news sources, such as network or local TV news, newspapers or internet news outlets. When asked what first comes to mind when they think of “news organizations,” most name a cable news outlet, with CNN and Fox News receiving the most mentions by far.

This study also yields another interesting statistic: since 1985, fully 66% of Americans say news stories often are inaccurate, 77% think news organizations tend to favor one side, and 80% say news organizations are often influenced by powerful people and organizations (Pew, 2011).
In 2007, 39% said news organizations mostly get the facts straight and 53% said stories are often inaccurate (Pew, 2011). The study also indicates Democrats and independents to have contributed to the growth in negative attitudes. That same year, 43% of Democrats and 56% of independents said stories were often inaccurate (Pew, 2011).
One other interesting element to note is the comparison of the Bush administration to the Obama administration:

According to the research, however, some viewers prefer minimal to no politics in their news. The survey indicates the following:

- 74% of online news consumers say they prefer internet sources without a political
point of view.

- 19% prefer sources that have a political point of view
- 27% of adults say they regularly or sometimes get news or news headlines through Facebook, Twitter, or other social networking sites.
- That regularity rises to 38% of people younger than 30
- Now, spans a notable share of older Americans--12% of those 65 and older
- 72% say they mostly just get the same news and information they would get elsewhere
- Just 27% say the news they get over social networking sites is different than the news they get elsewhere.
For that final statistic, Pew asked viewers to describe what they like about getting news over social networks and Twitter. Those answer range from features of technology such as speed, portability and brevity to ways in which the content is more customized, personal, and topical (Pew, 2011).

According to most Americans, mistakes are okay--as long as the news organization points it out (Pew, 2011). Another relative statistic is that the press’s perceived lack of fairness, its unwillingness to admit mistakes, inaccurate reporting, and political bias matched highs reached in 2009 (Pew, 2011). Here’s a look at those Pew Research statistics from 2011:

| Perceived Lack of Fairness | 77% |
| Unwillingness to Admit Mistakes | 72% |
| Inaccurate Reporting | 66% |
| Political Bias | 63% |

Research also indicates the public questions the morality of the news--those statistics are almost evenly divided; with 42% saying it is immoral (an all time high), and 38% saying it is moral (Pew, 2011). Another crucial problem is viewers see news as inaccurate because it favors one side. Here’s a Pew Research graphic with statistics backing that notion up:
So, what does this all mean? What has contributed to this “news bias” perception?

That 2011 Pew Research study says Republicans have been more critical of the press’s performance than have independents or Democrats (Pew 2011). But views of media accuracy and independence have become much more uniform as Democrats and independents express increasingly critical views (Pew, 2011).
In fact, the study says Democrats saying news organizations are often influenced by powerful people and organizations has grown 12 points, while Republican’s views have shown less change (Pew, 2011). Here’s some more quick statistics:

- 76% of Republicans say news organizations are politically biased (Pew, 2011)
- 54% of Democrats say news organizations are politically biased (Pew, 2011)
- In 2007, 70% of Republicans, 39% of Democrats say the press is politically biased (Pew, 2011)
- 64% Democrats and 66% independents now are about as likely as 69% Republicans to say news media produce inaccurate stories (Pew, 2011).

So, what does this mean? Where do people go for their news? According to Pew Research, Americans say they trust information they get from news organizations more than other places, including government and business sources (Pew, 2011).
69% say they trust information from local news organizations a lot, 59% say the same about national news (Pew, 2011). Pew Research also say Americans are about evenly divided over whether they trust information from the Obama administration--50% say they trust it a lot or some, while 48% have not much or no trust in administration information (Pew, 2011). Here’s a breakdown of partisan differences in how much those partisan groups trust national or local news organizations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National News</th>
<th>62% Republicans say they trust it</th>
<th>60% Independents say they trust a lot or some of the information</th>
<th>58% Democrats say they trust a lot or some of the information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local News</td>
<td>75% Republicans</td>
<td>69% Independents</td>
<td>68% Democrats</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Among Republicans and Republican-leaning independents, those who agree with the Tea Party movement express more skepticism about national media trustworthiness than do those who disagree or have no opinion of the Tea party (Pew, 2011). 47% of Tea Party supporters say they do not trust information from national news organizations,
compared with only 31% who do not agree with the Tea Party (Pew, 2011).

Moreover, the public has two sources of news: (1) television and (2) the internet (Pew, 2011). 66% of Americans say television is where they get most of their news about national and international events, while 43% say they turn to the internet (Pew, 2011):

Pew Research also indicates there continue to be large age differences in the main sources for national news:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Those 30 or younger</th>
<th>Those 30-49</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Television</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press also found the number of Americans who believed NBC News “all or most of the time” dropped from 32% in 1989 to 23% in 2008; related drops in trust were seen for other network and local television news outlets (Tewksbury et al, 2008). But an August 2013 pew research study indicates younger users are leaving local TV news. The number of Americans who say they regularly watch local television news dropped modestly from 54% in 2006 to 48% in 2012, according to that pew research study. Of those aged 18-29, the number who said they regularly watched local news last year plunged by one-third compared with those who watched regularly in 2006 (from 28% to 42%). Here are some graphics that illustrate those trends:

![Local TV News Viewing Declines, Particularly Among Young People](image)
Local television also took a hit in 2012-- its news lost audience in every key timeslot, according to another Pew Research result. Viewership at ABC, CBS, NBC, and FOX affiliates in 2012 was down for the following:

- 5% for the morning newscast
- 7% in the early evening
- 7% for the late night news

All of these were during the election year. The Pew Research Center began tracking those numbers in 2007, and has been tracking them through 2012.
Pew Research also indicates young viewers are leaving local TV news, despite the increased mobile apps. It says the number of Americans who say they regularly watch local television news dropped modestly from 54% in 2006 to 48% in 2012. Digital revenue is also lagging, with online and mobile ads bringing in only about 3% of the total revenue per television station group in 2012, and digital ad revenue growth slowed to 10%, half of what it had the previous year. Another strong fact: according to a 2012 study from Borrell Associates, television stations accounted for 12% of all digital advertising dollars spent on local media outlets--local newspapers got 47%.

So, why the vulnerability? Pew Research says emphasis on few topics could account for these drops. An analysis of local television news in 2012 shows 40% of the newscast was devoted to sports, traffic, and weather.

The downside to these once popular topics could be that this information is now readily available on demand across multiple platforms, according to the Pew Research Center. This goes back to mobile news apps and accessibility to news--the more people frequent the news, the less hard-hitting stories news stations have. So, what does this mean for news credibility? Does this mean news stations need to play more with people’s
wants? Does this mean news stations need to set stronger agendas?

\textit{d) Media Criticism & Trust}

Ann Williams says there are three distinct types of media trust: (1) trust of news information, (2) trust of those who deliver the news, and (3) trust of media corporations (Williams, 2012, p. 117). Here is a quick explanation of the three types:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media Trust Type</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trust of News Information</td>
<td>Applies to content (Williams, 2012, p. 117)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust of Those who Deliver the News</td>
<td>Interpersonally-based media trust of the individual actors working within the media industry (Williams, 2012, p. 117)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust of Media Corporations</td>
<td>Institutionally-based media trust in the organizational structure of media establishments (Williams, 2012, p. 117)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gronke and Cook give two rationales for media criticism and trust: (1) if the news media are nowadays a political institution, it makes sense to ask the same questions of legitimacy that we would ask of the three constitutionally endowed branches of the federal government (Gronke & Cook, 2007, p. 262), and (2) the rapidly growing interest in faith, trust, and confidence in government raises the question whether recent declines in civic engagement, confidence in institutions, and requisite accumulations of social capital constitute a crisis in American democracy (Gronke & Cook, 2007, p. 262).

Raymond Pingree et al say the primary motivation for our interest in gatekeeping
trust is the possibility that it may have implications for agenda setting--both in cognitive mechanisms and normative implications (Pingree et al, 2013, p. 351). They then look at how agenda-setting helps gatekeeping trust, by breaking up the effects of agenda-setting into three mechanisms: frequency of news viewing (Gross & Aday, 2003), issue interest (Ebring et al, 1980), and need for orientation (Weaver, 1980).

e) Methodologies

To address my research questions, my study should consist of focus groups, with a variation of ages. Some questions to ask will be:

- How often do you use the internet to access news?
- What kinds of social media do you use to access news?
- If you do not use social media, then where do you go for news?
- Do you trust your local news? Do you trust your national news?

The questions may expand--depending on what I get from the group. But I plan on recording the session, as well as transcribing parts of it for my research. The focus groups will most likely be an investment for me--from an institution in DC that is willing to give me class time with its students. The first focus group will hopefully deal with a group of 10-15 people. I would also like to conduct a focus group with viewers of my internship’s station--that group would hopefully consist of about 5-7 people.
I wanted to interview people in person primarily, but secondarily I wanted to interview people online. So I did conduct interviews on Facebook – from my professional page – to get a varied level of feedback. Here are the responses I received:

Hugo Sanchez (41), California

**Where do you get your news from and why?**

Hugo: I usually try not to look at the news often. If I watch any CBS is the source of news (TV) and Facebook & Twitter, because of my career I usually stay in contact via Facebook and Twitter.

Nick Perrella (24), California

**Where do you get your news from and why?**

Nick: I get my news from the Huffington Post and from the Flipboard app primarily because it is easier for me to pick and choose what I want to read.

Matt Soave (24), Washington:

**Where do you get your news from and why?**

I have a shortcut that I made that links to a Reddit page with four combined subreddits (if you're not familiar with Reddit, these are like categories or sub-sites). My link is http://www.reddit.com/r/news+worldnews+politics+technology and as you can probably tell, it combines /r/news (US news), /r/worldnews (international news), /r/politics (I think just US politics), and /r/technology (general tech news) in a single page. I like it because the amount of votes that a story has is usually related to its importance, so I look for the high numbers to see what is really noteworthy. I like to go here about once or twice a day because the stories don't update too often, but it usually has every 'big' story for the day. However, it's definitely got a bias, so I don't rely on it alone or look into the stories too deeply. It's mostly just to see if anything big has happened and maybe look at some
reactions (via the comments). I go to Google News a lot throughout the day. I've configured it with the topics I'm interested in (for example, getting rid of entertainment and sports, adding science, etc.) and added the places I am interested in (San Diego, Seattle) so that I get local news as well. I have also removed several sources that I don't trust so that they don't appear in this aggregated view. My girlfriend [24] subscribes to The Economist, so I read that occasionally when I have time. It's not really "news," but I like reading its perspective on current issues. Other than that, we sometimes have local news on. We don't have cable so it's one of the few channels we get.
Appendix C: Reddit and Flipboard

Reddit: what is it?

Reddit is a site that has different categories, just like any news site. The screenshot to the below shows those categories – ranging from “hot,” “new,” “rising,” “controversial,” “top,” “gilded,” “wiki,” and “promoted.” Reddit is essentially citizen journalism. People can post their opinions, or write an article, and share them/it with whoever uses the site.
Flipboard

What is Flipboard, and how can journalists -- and news organizations - learn from it?

I had never used Flipboard, so I Googled it. Like most popular apps, you can’t have access unless you sign up for it. So I went to the sign-up page, and it said I could login from Facebook. This is what it looked like:
Appendix D: Focus Group Transcripts

University of Maryland Students -- Focus Group One Transcript

Participants: Nicole (23, Richmond Virginia, broadcast student) and Brittany (19, Silver Spring, MD, convergence journalism student).

Where do you get your news from?

Nicole: For me, since I’m broadcast, TV, bust mostly social media. I have different news apps on my phone. I have an iPhone.

What kinds of apps do you have?

Nicole: I have the Washington Post and Associated Press. Those are the two that I rely on the most.

Brittany: For me, I used to watch TV more often in high school, like when I’d come home from school. But now, in college, I normally get my stuff from apps on my phone, social media, and also whenever I just feel like opening up the sites on my browser. I also get my news from email alerts. I have the Washington Post app and ESPN.

Are you a sports journalist?

I’m doing a little bit of everything, but I would like to go into sports.

What are your thoughts on Twitter?

Brittany: I think it’s definitely a good vehicle for sending out news immediately. That’s what a lot of people, like consumers, are looking at nowadays. But unfortunately because sometimes people will get the facts wrong and it reflects poorly on the organization. But I
feel like it should really only reflect poorly on the reporter. But I feel like most people
don’t see it that way.

Nicole: I agree. I think that it’s really important as well, especially because mostly
everybody has a Twitter, so I feel like people rely on Twitter a lot. Just for a quick news
hit, like a lot of younger people, if they’re not in journalism, they don’t sit and read the
newspaper or sit and watch a newscast. They’re looking for quick hits on Twitter. So
that’s why I feel like it’s important. And it’s important for you to be able to write on
Twitter, like organizations.

Brittany: one thing I like about Twitter or social media is that sometimes like, for
example, sports teams, they’ll—reporters for sports teams will tweet out like rumors or
trade rumors or this is the skating lineup today or something like that.

*What about Facebook?*

Brittany: well, definitely on Twitter you’re limited to 140 characters so your thoughts
have to be quick and they have to be witty, something to catch somebody’s attention
because what if.. you know, I heard the average Twitter user has like hundreds of
followers, hundreds of users, so when you scroll down on your feed, there’s so much.
And it’s not filtered whereas on Facebook you usually have top stories where it filters the
most important things. And then also without the character count, reporters are more able
and capable to fully flush out their ideas before posting. I also read somewhere that even
though Twitter is becoming known for putting out news, Facebook still generates the
most, the largest percentage of like people finding their news on Facebook as opposed to
Twitter.
Nicole: I agree. You can say more on Facebook and you’re limited on Twitter. And also in a lot of newscasts, they, like at the end of their newscasts, they’ll drive the viewer to their Facebook page and say “visit our website” for more information. So Facebook is still very important.

So do you essentially like the fact that Twitter allows you to follow all these different news organizations and journalists individually?

Brittany: I think it’s good to build a brand on Twitter because people stay loyal to writers, they stay loyal to personalities, or organizations as opposed to… like I know for me, I like the Washington Post so I’m not going to go to CNN or something or something for my news or like ABC.

I have a question about Washington Post, actually, because I know for me, I do follow their Twitter page a lot. But like for me, I notice on their websites, they have different stories on their website than they do print. So do you actually look at their print newspapers anymore or do you just focus on Twitter or on their websites?

Nicole: I do a little bit of both. I follow them on Twitter and I have their news app on my phone and actually this morning I was going through the news app on my ipad and I was reading some of the stories so yeah, I go through and read it the stories they post

The print?

Nicole: yeah

Brittany: well, growing up, we [my family] used to subscribe to the Washington Post so it was always available to me. Now though I don’t usually look at the print section. I’m taking a class where our news quizzes are based off of the front page and the metro section. So our professor just recommended to us that we look at the print pages on e-
Replica as opposed to looking at the front page of the website which can change a couple times every day. But if not for the class, then I probably wouldn’t be looking at the digital version as compared to the print.

_So do you think Twitter is good because you can go on there and get to the point of the story? Like it’ll just say ‘this is what’s happening’ and you can click and go through all the tweets and see what’s going on for the day?_

Nicole: Yeah, I like that because I feel like if I’m not interested in the story, I don’t have to read through it. But if I am interested – I can tell if I’m interested just from those little eight facts and the 140 characters, and then I’ll read them. So that’s what I like about Twitter.

Brittany: I actually don’t follow the Washington Post on Twitter, I follow them on Facebook. I’m not exactly sure why. But I like to de-clutter a lot on Twitter, and I use it mostly for sports news. But for Facebook I like to see what other people are sharing and what other people care about whereas on Twitter you, you just see everything. So you won’t know what’s popular or whatever story is most popular at the time without clicking through every single column.

_Moving on now, I’m very curious – especially for budding journalists – if you think that we should keep these comments open on stories that we post and that people are posting; like something that’s really controversial, like gay rights. People consistently complain on those sites and have some kind of potentially offensive comments that they make. Do you think we should do away with them?_

Nicole: you kind of hit on it, I think a little bit. It depends on the topic, like if it’s a controversial topic, you can already expect there to be nasty comments. And in that sense
maybe if you know you’re going to post a story about a controversial topic, maybe you shouldn’t have the comments. But for a regular story I think you should. Like I know for one of my stories I posted for my capstone course, people left comments and said ‘you know this is a great story. I’m so glad that you touched on this subject.’ And that kind of reassured me. I felt like I was doing a good job as a journalist.

*Right now, there’s no way we can really pick and choose – I don’t think there is a way we can pick and choose which comments go on which post. Do you think that in a sense the social media platforms should start letting us do that? Like, start letting us pick and choose which parts we want to enable and which ones we want to disable?*

Brittany: I actually disagree. I think that you should – I’m very like anti-regulation when it comes to commenting. I feel like journalism nowadays is not just on a one-way channel where we’re like preaching to the choir. Journalism nowadays is more interactive; about readers participating and readers sending in tips, things like that. So I think the commenting section is a really integral part of. It brings – it’s kind of a checkup on what we’re reading.

Nicole: I agree too. But I guess, I don’t know. I don’t know because you say something about transgender and I remember reading a story recently about that topic and the comments were really nasty. I guess I just felt bad for the transgender people who were probably reading those comments.

Brittany: I would say it’s an opportunity for them to defend themselves

*And there are arguments about not telling people what to think, but what to think about, and as journalists we should do that. But I know you touched upon that, but do*
you think that it’s essential to allow people to give their voice and express their opinions? Do you think that’s essential for journalism?

Both: yes.

Do you think it can enhance journalism then?

Brittany: I think we can definitely follow up on and comment if we missed a story.

Okay, celebrity engagement. Do you think it’s good for journalists to use their Facebook pages? Let’s put aside the fact that you’re budding journalists. Just as citizens and viewers and readers just trying to engage with your favorite journalists. Do you think that’s really exciting that you can now engage with them?

Brittany: I think it’s an interesting change from what we had in the past, when we would just have fan mail. And they would probably never ever read it. But now they – people, especially celebrities like to hear what their fans have to say when they see something that’s worth responding to.

Nicole: I agree. It’s a way to respond to the community, especially if they weren’t in local news. In local news, they always say we work for the community. We want to know what’s going on, and I think it works. And also they’ve got – I mean, in my capstone course, we get a lot of story ideas from Twitter so I’m sure they get a lot of story ideas from their pages.

Brittany: and also Kevin from the Baltimore Sun spoke to us one day and was basically talking about how there was like a train crash or some kind of accident and he had to report on it but he didn’t have any sources, so he took to Twitter and was like ‘was anybody on this site?’ and the response was more overwhelming. People responded with photos and stuff from the accident. Twitter is useful for providing sources.
Political agenda. Do you think we as journalists need to set political agendas for the week? We’ve talked at the Missouri School of Journalism about how the Sunday shows, like Face the Nation and Meet the Press, really start the news off with ‘this is what’s going on this week’ and ‘this is what’s going on next week.’ So then local news pick up on it and start distributing their news based off the Sunday shows. Do you think that using social media is essential – for both national and local stations – to get the agenda out?

Nicole: I guess that’s a hard question…

That’s why I’m asking it – because it is a hard question to answer.

Nicole: It’s just that things change so often throughout the week that in general to start an agenda on a Sunday, how would you keep that agenda? I don’t know.

Brittany: I think it’s useful and it has its place. But I think, like she said, it is constricting. What kinds of things would you like to see tweeted out from news networks that are trying to put an agenda out for the week?

Nicole: well I know AP, the Associated Press, they always tweet at the end of the day. They don’t do it on Sundays, but every day. Some things you need to know for today. And I like that. Sometimes I don’t know all the things so it’s good to know, oh I got this going on for today. So I can see it more so for daily agendas.

Brittany: I’m not really sure I have an opinion on it. I personally like a separation – like an organization from its political agenda. But that’s just kind of the way things have been trending towards. I would say it’s good to have the daily kind of round up, but they can cause – it can be dangerous if there’s too much attention on just these ideas. We could miss out on all the other stories. Like for example, like how all the news organizations
were covering the Malaysian flight. While that’s a really important story, there’s other stories that could be covered but aren’t.

Nicole: I guess for the Associated Press, like the one I have, they try to do like the biggest stories, but then sometimes with that it’s the stories that you don’t even know about that they think of daily. But I understand what you were saying, too. They might put too much focus. But they only do that in the story. And of course they don’t just report on those 10 things throughout the day.

**So do you ultimately think people would lose interest?**

Both: Yeah

**And they lose sight?**

Both: Yeah.

Brittany: also with political agenda, it definitely serves… caters to a different crowd.

Like, for example if there’s this convergence theory about how people nowadays, they seek to find news sources that kind of confirm their pre-existing beliefs rather than seek out sources that don’t.

My last question is this – Flipboard? Have you heard of it?

Brittany: I actually have it on my phone.

Nicole: no.

[explain it]. **Do you think it’s a good thing or a bad thing to have this app that can let people be more selective with their news?**

Nicole: I think it’s good because you’re seeing things that you’re interested in and that stuff that you don’t care about, but at the same time, the stuff that you might not care about could be very important and you’re missing that.
**What do you think since you like using it?**

Brittany: I like it. It’s very convenient. It’s kind of like a daily roundup where you can get the top stories of the day. For me, it’s oftentimes, I guess like news aggregators, if you ever use Google news. Sometimes, stories will often slip through that you may not be interested in, but I will click on it anyway. And also it definitely helps broaden your kind of pallet of what kinds of news organizations that you’re getting your news from because there will be articles from Business Insider or from TV that I never would have clicked on if not for Flipboard.

*University of Maryland Students –Focus Group Two Transcript*

Participants: Emily (22, New Jersey, broadcast student), Kelsey (21, MD, broadcast student), Josh (19, Long Island, convergence student), Charlie, 19, MD, history and government student)

**Where do you get your news from?**

Josh: Twitter primarily. I follow a bunch of journalists, who I like and then they’ll either post their articles or articles that they like, which I’ll like because I follow them. And it’s all the same style. And I’ll follow my editors. I work for the Diamondback, the school paper, so they’ll post articles, articles that they like.


Kelsey: Email and Twitter. Especially Twitter. I like sports, whatever is trending.

Emily: I used to be an exclusively Twitter news person. I follow lots and lots of journalists and news outlets. Now, well I’m in CNS, so I would say that’s why I changed my news habits. But I try to chase the local news broadcasting when I can. I read the
Washington Post, not all regularly, but I click the headlines most days. The Washington Post, Capitol Gazette, Annapolis.

What are your thoughts on Twitter?

Emily: I think journalists should hold themselves to a certain standard because they are the professionals and I think it’s different for ordinary citizens who are tweeting. If they are at the scene of some sort of accident or a breaking news event, then it’s fine for them to just tweet what they see, even if they may make the assumptions that aren’t true. But I think for journalists, they need to wait until they get their facts checked.

Kelsey: I agree with that because I think everything is so fast paced since it’s what’s trending and we want people to see what’s happening. I think it’s hard. People want to see what’s happening. So I can imagine not having everything right.

Charlie: I think it’s good that they have a presence there and I follow some journalists and I just see stories that I wouldn’t otherwise see. But honestly the networks – they do the same thing. They’ll post things that are inaccurate sometimes.

Any examples?

Charlie: Obamacare.

Josh: I think it’s a problem with journalism in general. I mean social media, now that everyone’s on social media; everyone’s competing to get everything out as fast as possible. So I think it’s a problem that can happen on any media.

What about Facebook?

Josh: I think it’s a lot less credible. I’m friends with 600 people on Facebook and I talk to 20 of them. Most the things I see on Facebook are just kind of ridiculous, random stuff that people post that have nothing to do with journalism.
What about actual news organizations or journalists?

Josh: I don’t know. I think it’s kind of the same deal as Twitter.

Charlie: It seems like people have more personal relationships on Facebook in the sense that it makes it less advantageous, but at the same time, I think it’s more based on a conversation because we don’t need to limit your tweets.

Kelsey: I agree with that. I think on Facebook once you post a story, the comments are more extensive. You can’t say as much on Twitter because of the limited character count. And some of the comments are usually interesting. You can have a conversation on there. But at the same time I think Twitter is more personal because journalists could tweet you back.

Emily: I would say the nature of Facebook, since it’s not – it’s not in real time so to speak, so people aren’t responding as much as they do on Facebook. It’s more reliable in terms of what is posted there on these organization’s profiles.

Do you think the organization re-tweeting a journalist’s tweets could be detrimental to the organization if it re-tweets something the journalist tweets incorrectly?

Charlie: if they’re re-tweeting a bad fact, that’s bad.

Do you think they should take responsibility?

Charlie: yeah but the show should always issue a correction.

Josh: I think it’s akin to a publication publishing a story that has a mistake. Because by re-tweeting it, it’ll show up on your newsfeed. And by not correcting it, it’s kind of the same thing as publishing it.

Use of comments on websites and Facebook. Do you think we should disable, limit, or enable comments?
Charlie: I think it’s really problematic with female writers. People write, especially with females, they’ll write if they don’t agree with someone. It’s some kind of issue about gender

_Do you have any specific examples with that?_

Charlie: I mean, I’ve read a couple of articles that addressed comments and also emails that female journalists get.

Kelsey: I think there have been a lot of journalists who have received a lot of comments from citizens and those comments can be good. When you write a story, you get people to think a certain way, but at the same time I think they should monitor them because people write some really outrageous – and I mean outrageous – things that are offensive to people. So you don’t want them to feel like you’re embracing that. But it could be dangerous.

Emily: As long as the comments aren’t endangering the individual or a group of individual, if they’re not threatening in any way, they should be left alone. Commenting is a platform for informing people, whether or not you agree with them. And I’m friends with some speakers where a huge controversy came out about a woman who resigned on air – and people were saying some pretty horrible things not just about her journalism but about her appearance and the way they speak. But it’s just a part of life.

Josh: I agree, there can be some; there are some awful comments out there. But I feel like revoking comments could be really advantageous. Before the Internet, there was no real platform for readers to get back to the journalists, except for letters to the editors. So now you have this whole new platform for people to communicate. I mean, what’s the point of
journalism? It’s the point to stimulate conversation so if they can add to that conversation then that’s what they should do.

So I talked to my other focus group about having the option to pick and choose which stories can have comments and which ones cannot. Do you think that would be something good or bad?

Charlie: I don’t know. It seems hypocritical. You should have a consistent policy of what you’re going to do. I’m not in favor of not having comments, but I think that sometimes certain comments can be deleted or certain users can be blocked if they write something that is offensive.

Emily: Well, Facebook is a public forum. So I think if you post something, you’re inviting people to respond. So I think I would oppose an option that would turn off comments.

Charlie: do you mean just for Facebook?

No, for any social media platform. For Facebook, websites, etc.

Charlie: yeah, I guess it doesn’t make any sense to do that.

Emily: I’m curious as to how often journalists write or post stories read through the comments… because I think while it’s great for us to regulate what opinions are going to be given about our story, what difference does it make if no one is listening?

Kelsey: I don’t see a journalist reading their comments. And I’m sure a Harvard graduate is not sitting there, commenting on the posts. I don’t think journalists really read through them.

Do you think comments can enhance your story, or you can enhance a journalist’s story through comments?
Charlie: I kind of like the New York Times feature where they like certain comments and those comments are decent, and even if I don’t agree with them, they’ll be logical, articulated well. And I have seen certain writers address, like sometimes I’ll see them in the comments sometimes and other times I’ll see them respond to emails and comments that they’ve got future articles that come from that dialogue.

Josh: I agree.

Kelsey: I think more journalists will respond to those than on any other platform. It’s just a place where they would respond.

Celebrity engagement. Do you like the fact we can now interact with journalists on their Facebook and Twitter pages? Just think like a citizen right now.

Josh: I don’t know if it’s important or if it’s integral for journalists to be able to communicate, but I think it’s a cool feature. It’s fun and there are definitely some benefits to it. And it’d be cool to have some type of dialogue. But I think it’s an essential necessity type thing.

Kelsey: I agree, I think it’s cool. It’s good to be able to respond to someone and potentially get some responses. It makes you feel included.

Emily: well I think ordinary citizens are more likely to be able to watch a newscast if they feel connected to the talent. So if they’ve been having a Twitter conversation with you name who, I think they’ll keep watching.

Charlie: I don’t think that’s great business strategy. If you are really like big time, and you have a million viewers, you’re not going to bother re-tweeting all of your fans.
Kelsey: It’s just kind of the biggest TV personalities. I follow all my favorites. Personalities based off TV broadcasting. I feel like it’s good to be more engaged and involved with each other.

Josh: Actually, now that I think about it more, it may be important because social media is incredibly important now. It wasn’t even like five years ago, that wasn’t even around and I don’t know, I think it definitely boosts your image as a journalist if you are interactive. This Sports Illustrated columnist is really interactive with his followers and I think it keeps them entertained because he’s constantly having conversations with a lot of his followers and stuff. So I think it actually is something important that can be beneficial.

Political agenda. Do you think we should set the agenda through social media?

Emily: I think that issuing agendas is both beneficial and harmful. I would say the pro is that it forces the less knowledgeable citizens to think; it says here’s what you should look at. But who are we, as journalists, to say this is what’s important? So it’s downfall is that everything kind of falls through the cracks and if you look at, and say ‘oh these are the 5 stories that you should really pay attention to,’ they may not direct their attention elsewhere.

Charlie: in terms of planning, from a practice standpoint, I think that whenever anyone chooses to cover any story, that’s a decision that somebody’s making and it’s going to influence the way that somebody sees something. The fact that somebody is covering something is important.

From your government perspective, what do you think we should be covering?
Charlie: certain things we don’t cover, like free trade agreements. I think journalists are a little too cozy with the state department.

Flipboard. What do you make of these apps? Do you think it’s a good step forward?

Josh: I downloaded it a couple years ago.

Charlie: I happen to say I like them. A lot of politics aggregate toward those apps. And that’s, that’s nice because they pick the best stories.

Josh: It’s cool that you can pick and choose your outlets, but it could also--say this Flipboard thing becomes huge – will newer publications get noticed? How’s that going to allow for anything else to grow and expand?

Emily: I think Flipboard and similar applications are nice for busy people, which is the majority of America. However, I think the people who want to stay informed will continue to go to their resources. And people are bugged in and connected all the time. So they’re going to see headlines from other sources.
Appendix E: Phone Interviews

Sung-Min Kim, 23, Korea, Broadcast (Rough)

Where do you get your news from?

I look on Twitter… I listen to the radio sometimes – mainly to the quality tech and I keep up with local news… I used to live near Baltimore area… WTAL is pretty good – its news had crime associated to it, which made things more interesting… WDAL also does occasional Orioles stories, which I like because I’m a sports person.

What are your thoughts on Twitter? What are your thoughts on Facebook?

I’m just more active on Facebook.. I feel like it’s just getting Facebook likes on Facebook… feels like I’m doing a good impression of that person.. And journalists just tweet & tweet and they tweet.

Do you think we should enable/disable comments?

There are a lot of petty things, people don’t like sports things that I like, so that could get offensive. In terms of news, Facebook people post too many radical opinions. For example, with gay marriage, those comments are homophobic – I’m not homosexual but I feel offended by what I read. On Twitter, I can easily ignore them. But it’s a different game in Facebook because of the access to comments. But I think enabling or disabling depends on the degree of offensiveness.

Have you travelled internationally? Did you take note of another country’s social media use?

Yes, I lived in Korea. It’s a country where a lot of things are controlled by media and company. One of the bigger stations, a company that owns the KPOP industry (music) in
Asia gets no coverage because media companies and the government have control. The Korean image depends on how successful KPOP is. Media does not want to report on how big the company screwed up because of the KPOP culture. And Twitter is huge there. But people are rude and offensive there, too. Even worse. I’ve been to websites that they dedicate to bullying.

*What do you make of all this celebrity engagement via social media? Do you like engaging with journalists?*

I look up to a lot of figures, but mainly for the recreation.

Brianna, age 25, MD, Broadcast (Rough)

*Where do you get your news from?*

It’s a combination of things. I get it from Twitter, Facebook, CNN and television, Huffington Post, ABC local.

*What are your thoughts on Twitter?*

I follow CNN, ABC, and specific journalists, like Anderson, Wolf, and Erin because I think they’re more credible than others.

*What about Facebook?*

I think time is a factor. You have more time to put together a post there and edit the post now.

*Do you think we should enable or disable comments?*

I personally don’t look at the comments, but if they aren’t appropriate then I say delete them. But journalists should put some comments into consideration for stories.

*Have you travelled internationally? Did you see any differences in social media use?*
Yes, to France, the Netherlands, and Amsterdam. In Amsterdam, its news was much more direct and did not have as many ethics as here. But I didn’t get a chance to see the differences in Netherland and France.

**What do you make of all this celebrity engagement via social media? Do you like engaging with journalists?**

Yes, I like it. I personally like to engage with Anderson Cooper, but also like to get my facts straight by tweeting at them.

**Do you think it’s integral to use social media to set the agenda?**

Social media is not unbiased. There is definitely an agenda. But I think that it shows one or more aspects that is/are integral for the week.

**What do you make of Flipboard and like apps?**

I would have to do more extensive research on those.

Greg Gibson (65), L.A. (Exact Transcript)

**Where do you get your news from?**

All of it is on television, but I do admit I read the newspaper.

**What do you watch?**

I sometimes watch Fox, sports, stuff like 60 Minutes, stuff like that.

**Do you have any news apps on your phone?**

No I do not.

**Do you use Twitter?**

No, I don’t Twitter. Can you believe that? 65 year old people don’t Twitter too much.

**Do you use Facebook at all?**

Once in a while.
Do you ever look at news on Facebook at all?  
Sometimes I do, yeah.

Do you look at what’s trending or news sites?  
Sites.

Do you ever read the comments?  
No, no I don’t do that. I don’t do the comment stuff. Once in a while I do look at them, but very rarely.

Do you think those comments should be enabled?  
I don’t mind it, but I’d like to watch more TV than go on that.

Do you think certain news organizations set an agenda or are more biased in their news based on social media?  
MSNBC.

Do you go on their Facebook page?  
Mainly TV. It’s just more biased with some of the controversies. Some of the reporters aren’t the best, but it is what it is. Nobody’s perfect.

Do you think that hurts journalism?  
Yes.

Why?  
Because I like the other end better, and MSNBC is way biased if you want my honest opinion.
Appendix F: In-Person Interviews

I conducted a series of man on the street interviews to find older individuals and get varied responses. The interviews were therefore brief – I just asked where the individuals got their news, if they used social media to get it, and if they think using social media is credible.

Emily (37), DC

*Where do you get your news?*

I get it from the New York Times, the Economist, & Twitter.

*Do you read the NYT in print or online?*

Online.

*Do you use Facebook to get your news?*

No.

*Do you think using social media hurts credibility?*

No, but I hate Facebook. I prefer Twitter because it’s easier.

Jane (51), DC

*Where do you get your news?*

I work at the World Bank, so we have someone who gathers all the news for us and sets up email alerts. So I get my news from email the majority of the time. But I also look at websites sometimes.

*Do you like using social media to get your news?*

No.

*Do you think social media is a credible source to get the news?*
Can you elaborate?
I don’t really know why. I just don’t find it credible.

Grazilla (49), France

Where do you get your news from?
CNN.com

But you live in France?
Yes.

Do you ever look at the news in France?
No.

Have you noticed if they use social media when delivering the news?
I would assume so, but I’m not sure.

Why do you get your news from CNN?
I like reading the news. But I also think some of its news is biased.

So you think it sets an agenda?
Yes. I feel like I just read it, but it’s open for interpretation. It always has a bias.

Julie (63), MD

Where do you get your news from?
The Washington Post.

Print or online?
Print.

Do you get your news from anywhere else?
Yes. I look at the New York Times website and get email alerts.
Do you use Twitter?

No.

Facebook?

Yes. I prefer that over Twitter because it is more detailed. And I like scrolling through and reading more details before I click on the stories.