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Journal Entry 5

In recent years a controversy has arisen over the legitimacy of various social media as “journalism.” It has also been recently examined that if said social media is not journalism, does it bring the craft of journalism into question. Dan Kennedy, in his article “Political Blogs: Teaching Us Lessons about Community,” references this hullaballoo and provides some important context. He states the persuasion for modern day citizens to “want their news delivered to them in the context of their attitudes and beliefs.” He elaborates, explaining that though this loses the sense of objectivity, it is undeniable “the sense of community and conversation that blogs have fostered around the news.” This concept of networked communities will be evaluated further later-on. Continuing forward, Kennedy concludes his argument that “journalism based on communities of shared interests and beliefs,” as earlier discussed, “can be every bit as valuable as the old model of objectivity, if approached with rigor and respect to the truth.” Twitter has also been discussed as an enemy of journalism–it was even negatively referred to as “micro-journalism.” In John Dickerson’s feature, “Don’t Fear Twitter,” he cautions against this view. He argues that Twitter “adds to the traditions of the journalism craft” because Tweets are often composed as “snippets that are too off topic or too inconsequential to work into a story.” On the other hand, YouTube, being a video-streaming based platform, has been regarded as an agent on behalf of the journalism craft. It is actually frequently seen as a “fact checker” to journalists, according to Steve Grove’s piece, “Youtube: The Flattening of Politics.”

This view of Youtube helping to keep journalists and news-reporters honest leads into the following hot-topic of defining what constitutes a social media source as a valid source of news or information. As Dickerson champions in his claim, “it doesn’t matter what time it is, or where someone is located—as long as they have the means to connect through the web, they can engage in the discussion.” This new “participation style” news broadcasting offers a new avenue for truth and facts to be shed. Conversely, this argument is rebutted by Kennedy when he brings up the valid point that “reporting is difficult and expensive and few bloggers,” or in this case, people posting on all social media sites, “know how to research a story, develop and interview sources, and assemble the pieces into a coherent, factual narrative.” Nevertheless, the information is presented instantaneously as it occurs in real time and simultaneously, as the incidents continue to occur, the information is being analyzed by people all over the world. This immediacy and wide-spread, extensive platform is a game-changer for news broadcasting. Growing upon that, the popular site Twitter is complimented on this very aspect by Dickerson. He claims that “people are exposed to a wider variety of news because of the wide variety of people on twitter.” In summation, there is an overall positive perspective as social media being viewed as a news source; it just can’t be expected to be fully objective or fully comprehensive by any means.

Overwhelmingly, sources have repeatedly referred to social media sites as platforms for fostering new communities in a modern world. As Kennedy puts it, “the best and more popular blogs provide a sense of community.” Commonly addressed is the interactive nature of the platforms and online communities. On Youtube, users can “comment on, reply to, rank, and share videos with one another and form communities around content they like,” (Grove) or dislike. On Twitter, Dickerson explains that “if written the right way, twitter entries build a community of readers who find their way to longer articles because they are lured by these moment-by-moment observations.” These interactive platforms provide a place for people to be heard, even if they are alone and no one in a 100 mile radius is physically present to listen— this is the community of the modern age.

**Political Blogs: Teaching Us Lessons About Community – Dan Kennedy**

Notes:

“No room in the blog-world for straight, neutral journalism”

“Reporting is difficult and expensive and few bloggers know how to research a story, develop and interview sources, and assemble the pieces into a coherent, factual narrative.”

“Mistake [to] look at the opinion-oriented nature of blogs and ask whether bloggers are capable of being objective”

“Best and more popular blogs provide a sense of community”

“Want their news delivered to them in the context of their attitudes and beliefs”

“Journalism based on communities of shared interests and beliefs can be every bit as valuable as the old model of objectivity, if approached with rigor and respect for the truth.”

“While traditionalists disparage bloggers for their indulgence of opinion and hyperbole, they overlook the sense of community and conversation that blogs have fostered around the news.”

“The challenge for journalism is not that well lose our objectivity; its that we won’t find a way to rebuild a sense of community.”

**Don’t fear Twitter – John Dickerson**

Notes:

“micro-journalism”

“twitter adds to the traditions of the journalism craft by allowing the snippets that are too off topic or too inconsequential to work into a story.”

“risk for journalism comes from people spending all day on twitter and reading other peoples entries so they don’t engage with the news in any other way”

“if written the right way, twitter entries build a community of readers who find their way to longer articles because they are lured by these moment-by-moment observations”

“exposed to a wider variety of news because of the wide variety of people on twitter”

**YouTube: The flattening of Politics – Steve Grove**

Notes:

“it doesn’t matter what time it is,, or where someone is located—as long as they have the means to connect through the web, they can engage in the discussion”

“strategy of building audiences on youtube and then trying to drive viewers back to their websites for a deeper dive into the content”

“interactive platform—users comment on, reply to, rank, and share videos with one another and form communities around content that they like (or don’t like)”

“20% of users are over 55—same percentage as under 18. This means the Youtube audience roughly mirrors the national population”

“opportunities for active as well as passive experiences”

“important to have context”

“fact checking”