2005 – International Symposium on Online Journalism

Day 2, Panel 3: Issues in Online Journalism - From High School Coverage to International News

Moderator: Stephen Reese, Professor, School of Journalism, UT Austin

Panelists:
Shayla Thiel, Assistant Professor at DePaul University in Chicago

Thomas Terry, Doctoral Student, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

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STEVE REESE: Welcome to our final panel for the Saturday afternoon program. And my name is Steven Reese; I'm a professor in the School of Journalism here, and am happy to have been asked by my colleague, Rosental, to introduce the papers and, maybe, say a few brief comments at the end, and manage your questions. So we're happy to have this final set of papers. I'd also like to commend Professor Alves for including academic research on the program. We not only get to hear about some of the recent professional developments in the industry, but also to see what people are making of them, in terms of their own empirical research. So I think it's a good combination. We will just start, then. We have quite an eclectic group of papers for our final group, but we will begin with Shayla Thiel, who is an assistant professor at DePaul University. Her paper is "Increased Legitimacy, Fewer Women? Analyzing Editorial Leadership and Gender in Online Journalism."

SHAYLA THIEL: And I guess these are just right in here? [referring to the visual aid] Or not? Oh, too far. I'll leave it there.

Well, I'll try and battle the post-lunch little coma, right? And the fact we've been here all day long, listening to people talk about the same topic. So. Basically.

I'm going to tell you my background, just to let you know where I come from. I do a lot of feminist work, and in feminist work you're supposed to locate yourself within the research. So I'll tell you why I do the research I do. Because, like everybody, it's personal. There's a good reason. I started off working in online journalism in 1995 at the Chronicle of Higher Education, and then moved pretty quickly to the Washington Post, the WashingtonPost.com, for a couple of years. And when I was at both of those publications, in the span of 1995-1996 time, at the Chronicle, two women,

actually, headed up all of the new media operations, back then called "special" ah, what was it? "electronic projects." So, when I went to the Post, it was sort of the same thing. There was a woman who was second-in-charge, and then, very soon after, a woman executive editor.

And this paper that I'm doing today is part of, kind of, a larger bunch of work that I've been trying to get done. One piece I published in Feminist Media Studies last year. I did some research on, just, women online journalists in general. From all different levels. And a lot of their stories, sort of, paralleled my own. I wound up getting out of it for a number of reasons, and one was I never could quite see a way of moving up within the media. I was advised to go back to school and get a master's degree. And I did do that, and I still didn't see any way that I was ever going to be the executive editor. It just didn't make sense. Because, in part, women are not holding these positions any more. The Chronicle, those two women who started it up were gone within the first two years. And those positions have been held by men ever since. Which is a little grim. And it is for a lot of different reasons, which I'll talk about a bit in the paper, and hopefully in our discussion, too. And the same with the Post.

So I'm going to go into this, and just talk about the state of online news today. So, as I said, most major online news organizations in the United States, what I'm looking at, launched between 1994 and 1996 and I'm talking about to the web, I'm not talking about the old kind of services. And today, obviously, we've seen lots of the user statistics. These are the most recent, from [inaudible] 2003. So, a good bulk of our population is visiting online news today.

Now, unfortunately, there hasn't been much research done on actual online journalists. There is no gender breakdown, for example. Weaver and Wilhoit have been doing these studies for years and years. Now, Paul Voakes has gotten in on it, too. The newsroom surveys they've been doing have not reflected online journalists specifically. They've only looked at traditional journalists, or lumped the online right into it. So there isn't any good data on this. It's also part of a future project, hopefully, for me. However, in those newsroom roles, 65.8% of the supervisory roles in newsrooms are held by men. So it's still a pretty good number. Like I said, there's no real data available.

However, right now, if you just look at the mastheads of these sites that people visit, the most visited sites MSNBC.com, CNN.com, NewYorkTimes.com, WashingtonPost.com, and USAToday.com, no women are in the most senior rank of editor-in-chief or executive editor right now. Not one. At all of those. And, again, this is a little bit amazing, because ten years ago, at least there's a feeling, that there were women there. In all, only a few employ women in such positions as managing editor, which is up there a lot of times, that's second-in-charge. Or an editor of special projects. Women, more often, are in section editor positions and assistant editor positions. And there are many, many women working in online journalism right now. It's not that this is a "techie" profession, held by men. That's not the case

any more. So, I want to talk a little bit about that. That was the idea of this paper. OK.

For my paper, I talked to a number of women who have worked in the position of executive editor, editor-in-chief, that sort of thing, and people who left those positions, for whatever reasons. So I looked at interviews with current and former women senior editors, and I looked specifically at national online news publications. For the purpose of this study, I looked at online newspapers, although like I said the most visited sites also are not employing women in these positions. So, my paper is examining the conflicting phenomenon that new media may function as a new paradigm, in a lot of ways, yet it mirrors a lot of the gender disparities from traditional newsroom. And it's right up to the glass ceiling.

All right. So my work is based in feminist inquiry. And there has been a lot of research done in the area of feminist inquiry gender in particular, in regular and traditional newsrooms. So, Ross pointed out that there's a newsroom culture that masquerades as a very neutral profession. Men and women can easily get along in this profession. And because we're all doing the same work. We're all in it together. It's the "professional journalism ethos." Which is, for all practical purposes, organized around "a man as norm and woman as interloper" structure. OK? So women, sort of, need to behave in different ways if they want to be successful, is what she's saying. Some other researchers Higgins, Pierre, and Ross say that women often cope with this masculine newsroom culture by co-opting male norms and values into their own behavior. And, as Elizabeth Van Zoonen said, sort of act like they're "one of the boys." Because that's how, that's how they've been able to cope, and get by, and move up within their newsroom structure.

Past research on women in online journalism. Now, I'm focusing I feel really silly, but I'm focusing mostly on this other study that I've done. Because there isn't anything else out there, so that's why. [laughs.] Just, you know, I'm not being extremely conceited. I'm trying not to, at least. So, in my study of just regular women online journalists, not necessarily editors, women from all levels, I found a number of different themes located within their narratives, located within the stories that they told me. First, a lot of them said they got into online journalism because it was, it allowed them to become pioneers in a new medium. They got to shape a new media, and take it in different places places that weren't available with old media.

Second, many of them said they saw it as a quicker avenue for advancement. A lot of them said, you know, "I could not see myself getting to be the editor of the Washington Post, for example, but I could see myself getting to be the editor of WashingtonPost.com." That made some sense, especially ten years ago. And we'll talk a little bit about these jobs ten years ago.

Finally, a lot of them said, "Hey, this is a great opportunity for me to learn new technical skills, and in doing so, not only do I find this to be an interesting thing to do, to further my own education, but it makes me more valuable. It raises my credibility, because I have technical skills, right, but it may also eventually raise my

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salary. I have technical expertise, that I wouldn't have had if I were just a writer. And hopefully, eventually, promotions."

However. So. Beginning my paper, I decided, well, I really needed to go back and see I did this research in 2001. Where are a lot of these women? Because many of them were, you know, they're in different places; most of them were, sort of, in the middle, within their organization. So, the eleven in the original study grimly, most of them were either in exactly the same position that they held in 2000/2001, or they've left online journalism altogether.

So, my paper this paper, specifically, looks at senior-level editors. And I've already told you what I mean by that. But, you know, in this discussion, we also do need to talk about why do younger women leave. And I will say right now, too this isn't necessarily included in the paper very few of the women in my study had children or families. Younger or older. So, while "mommy track" is a big phenomenon today, in what people talk about culturally, it really wasn't such a factor in this study. And I think that's, kind of, an interesting thing.

One of their quotes Rachel, who's an upper-level editor, said, "There's no place for a talented young person to go up, so they go out." So, this is her theory. Young women don't see any progression, so they leave. And she said, you know, "We're a new media company. We're an online newspaper. We can't afford to pay huge salaries. It has to be commensurate with everyone else." Right? So, they'll go to private industry, where someone does appreciate them, and pay them pretty good money. So if there's not a vertical move within, then it's out. What she said.

All right. Now, the idea of cultural capital is something that I want to look at. A lot of the women were banking on the idea that technical skills and just expertise in general, in online journalism, especially going in a little bit sooner than other people in the world, right? In 1995, 96 would afford them an element of what I'm calling well, not what I call, but what Purdue calls "cultural capital." And gender is one element of cultural capital. It's, unfortunately, often seen as a less legitimate form of cultural capital. Economic capital, for example, is seen as worth a lot more than your gender. OK?

Again, women in online journalism hope new technical skills and experiences would raise their cultural capital within these journalism organizations. Now, did it? Arguably not. They didn't wind up being promoted, by and large. And another interesting thing I found, in my interviews with women who did get that far; very few, if, ah, none of them, started, actually, at lower levels in the online journalism organization. Most of them told stories about being approached. Many of them worked in the traditional counterpart, like, for example, the newspaper, as an editor, and were approached by management of the old, traditional newspaper to move to the web, and take up this upper role. So they were asked. They didn't necessarily apply. And they didn't come from within.

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OK. So, most of my paper is based on the women's stories themselves. So I wanted to make sure that I put some quotations in here from them. One of them said, "I started" this is how she put her being approached. "I'd started conversations with the assistant managing editor for the metro section of a national newspaper about new opportunities, when a former colleague of mine asked whether I'd be interested in working at the website." Right? So she was asked; she didn't approach them. Here's another one. This is another one, from '95. "My bosses noticed I was showing more interest in the world-wide web than my colleagues were, back in '95 when the web was still new. When the newspaper's managing editor decided the newsroom needed a full-time liaison to our fledgling website, he picked me." And her role evolved from there. And how it evolved, were the two original editors were fired, and she was named new editor. So. But, you know, she'd only been there for a number of months before that happened, actually. She was it was several months later, five months later. So.

Other people were overlooked. So, looking at, especially, the women in my original study. Where are they now? What happened? What's going on? The women within. Katherine, who worked at a very well-known national trade publication, had actually worked with those others early on, the late 80's, and said, "We really need some kind of an online news service. We can set it up through email, we can do a gopher, you know." So she was trying to come up with new ways, way back then. "On the very day we launched what the called the news service, we learned from an internal announcement that a guy had been hired as editor of their online news service." So this job, this publication she had launched and created, she was not named to be the editor of it, and had no idea that there was even a search for an editor of it. [laughs.] So. No one even asked her if she was interested. Yet, she'd been working on it forever.

Now, on the other hand so, is it that women editors aren't wanted? I mean, that seems pretty strange, I think. And it doesn't seem to be the case. So, Rachel. "A lot of section editors were grateful they finally had a woman manager," she said. "They were thirsty to have a woman manager, in part because it offers a glimmer of hope of being able to ascend." Another one. "In senior management, you're a role model to many people. They trust you to represent them, and to be their voice in leadership. Many of them turn to me when they need to talk through their own workplace challenges or career decisions." And another one said, "I think of it as, really, more of a feminine thing to do. We don't have that paternalistic, you can't do that' mentality." So, you know, she's saying and a lot of the women, sort of, echoed this this idea that women are willing to try lots of interesting ways to make their organizations better, and journalistically better and more profitable.

But another theme that kept coming up is the idea, this idea of being a mentor. Many of them resisted the, sort of, language of being a "queen bee." But they did say, "I feel that I'm a role model." And spoke in language that suggested they felt they were caretakers, in some ways, of the people who they worked with. Now, in our own culture, this idea of an "ethic of care" it is not valued. It is not valued. And it's the way in which a majority of women and I mean, this is just, you know,

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gender being constructed in a different way attempt to solve problems in a way that cause the least disruption in relationships. So, in a way that doesn't solve conflict. That's what Gilligan said, a million years ago. Role modeling also might be seen as a type of mothering. And mothering is often culturally constructed or construed as "natural" and normalized identity for women, even if it's not. It's constructed. And it's not valued, obviously. While care is valued culturally; while people are happy to say, "Yes, women are good caregivers and mothers," it's not valued politically or economically. It's not figured into the gross national product of any nation.

So my question is, in looking at all this, "Have women editors, maybe, been marked as caregivers? Rather than strong role models, they're placing themselves in the role of mentors, and in a, you know, patriarchal culture of the newsroom, is this seen as valued less?" So it could be a management liability, of this is just one suggestion. A few women in the current study remarked that online newsrooms appear to employ even more, even fewer women top-level women editors than they did ten years ago. And I think this just goes against what we would think, culturally speaking. It makes it more troubling to me. In a field that struggled to find legitimacy. Online journalism is still looked down upon by traditional counterparts, in a lot of places. And their peers in traditional newsrooms. An ethic of care might be seen as a liability to professionalism among managers who embrace more "masculine" or "traditional" ideals.

And so we have to talk about this idea of legitimacy. So, as online journalism becomes more legitimate, and the jobs become a little bit more competitive, are women getting weeded out because of ways that they're seen as being "naturally" feminine? Between 1995 and 1998, women editors headed these publications. Today, all the high level editors are men. These are some quotes from the women, this person, "I was just at the annual ONA convention. I was the only woman at my table of ten, which was really different from when I started attending these conventions."

And I think that this is an excellent quote. "One reason might be that, as the web came of age, it gained more respectability and prestige, which made it more competitive. Men who once turned up their noses at leading a web publication today actually consider some of those jobs to be the plums." And she said, she also mentioned, for a recent job search that they'd had for the top editor position, when she was approached to be the editor, it was sort of assumed no one else wanted the job. This time, twenty-five people applied. A man got it.

So, where are they going? Where are these women, if they're not sticking with it? One of them said there just aren't enough good jobs to go around. So, you know, maybe it's not a gender thing at all. This is what she said. "I've seen lots of male friends lose their jobs, so I wouldn't say it's a male versus female' thing. I think the question is, Is it a viable, sustainable career for anyone?' And that's what we should be asking. I think the top jobs are so few and hard to come by, that I would say there isn't enough pie to share."

Another thing that came up a lot were these exhaustion and management issues within online journalism. One of them, who moved back to print journalism to be a reporter and columnist, from a very, very high-ranking position: "As for why I moved back, I was a tad tired of the management challenges, which were formidable during the Internet's go-go years." So, she was, you know, the early times. And I love this quote: "I feel like I've been fighting a war all these years," said Wendy. And again, at a huge national publication. She said she was so often made to feel inadequate for her lack of management background and not having an MBA. She'd come from the traditional newsroom. So. Unlike other people you know.

So what are the implications? Traditional news editors find new homes in the new media, but they often bring along old habits and notions of how newsrooms work. So we're not necessarily coming up with a new paradigm here. We're replicating an old one. As the women online editors leave to find more rewarding careers, many of them are now in academe like myself and are replaced by the old guard of the newsroom. A new media may be looking very much like an old one. And I think we're seeing this. I think we see it in layout, in business model, in every single way. And I think, until we wish to see more innovative online journalism happening, we need to address these internal organizational and cultural issues. That's the end.

[applause.]

STEVE REESE: Thank you. Our next paper is by Thomas Terry. He's a doctoral student at North Carolina. And it's entitled "Tinkering with Cyberspace, On-campus punishment for off-campus expression: A High School Case Study."

THOMAS TERRY: You will, ah, forgive me if my, my inability to [referring to the visual aid] All I want to do is just get on the web. I want to just get on the web. Because if anyone's at all familiar with the University, right now, at Chapel Hill, you'll know we've been in the news a little bit this week. And so if my place is gone, I have a particular good excuse. I do have to say it is a very glamorous job to be a professor at this school. I commend Professor Alves's cleaning the carpeting. I [laughter] I was very, very impressed.

ROSENTAL CALMON ALVES: Only full professors do it. [laughter]

THOMAS TERRY: Only full professors get to do that. The junior faculty don't get to do that. I may be going to be providing a little labyrinth through law. I think that everyone needs to be spanked with a little media law every so often, just to keep them honest and keep them formulating we'll see what this website comes up There's been a lot of blogging going on in Chapel Hill this week. I have to mention blogging so that you think I'm really "up with it," and I'm not all into fusty, old books and whatever, of the law. But this is what we were really most interested about all week. [referring to the visual aid] Oh, she got rid of it already. I had it all planned out to be very impressive. So, if my family's watching on television there, on the net they were supposed to be doing that... [laughter]

Anyway, the I'm looking at a case study of off-campus behavior and on did that come back up again? Because I was very impressed, because we used you drag that up, and you click on the where did it go? The second one. Just click on this, because this appeared in the Washington Post. If it's coming up. Appeared in the Washington Post, the day after UNC won the national title. Assuming we can get this up. And I was very impressed that they did I don't know, maybe it showed up on the WashingtonPost.com as well. If it comes up, we'll we'll deal with it. In any event, that's a little bit off the topic.

In May of 2000 through May, approximately, of 2002 let's see. The case study I'm looking at, on newspaper and online newspaper in Jim Thorpe, Pennsylvania. It's about ninety miles south of Philadelphia. It used to have ah, two towns were different, but Jim Thorpe, the famous Native American athlete, his wife moved his body there, and they constructed a mausoleum and tourist ah, tourist site there. And Jim Thorpe, Pennsylvania, is where the Carbon County vocational/technical high school is located. And two students in there one was a sophomore and one was a junior created an off-campus online newspaper. They used absolutely no [referring to the visual aid] ah, it's not that important. They used absolutely no school teachers, no school materials, no school anything connected with the school at all. It's called the Babbitt or the Babbitt.com.

And, at the time when the other county newspapers typical print or mimeographed or photocopied newspapers were producing such in-depth journalism as the Homecoming Dance, that Jim Thorpe was on the box of Wheaties, the new cheerleaders were chosen all very standard high school newspaper material Babbitt.com was creating stories about an alleged dump site at Carbon vocational/tech high school, that was that the EPA, then, was interested in, as a result of their investigation, and a clean-up was mandated. They had photographs of in the bathrooms, where the school said this was not a problem, there were not doors on the stalls, so that there was no privacy. They discussed the war situation with a teacher, they discussed the potential firing and removal from employment of a teacher. They discussed one teacher's opposition to the vocational/technical curriculum, called it "watered-down," got into an argument with one of the editors James Curry and Conrad Flynn were the two editors, the creators of this. Doing the sort of journalism that, in the real world the real world, out in the mainstream media, would be winning prizes and accolades. This is the sort of training that we would want our students to do, whether in college this is the sort of newspaper we'd want

Well, the law is so muddy, and the law is such that the principal, a man named Caputo There, there we have it. [referring to the visual aid]. Finally, it finally shows up. I don't know whether we're going to be able to get it, but what it shows is think of the champions that UNC has produced, thirty-eight and it's the Rhodes scholars. I'm very impressed that they took the time, the money, to expend that and discuss the quality of education we get at the University of North Carolina, and just not the fact that we can dribble a basketball well, and put it through to the national title. I

was very there's a nice little note at the bottom, that no state funding was used to produce the ad. Which, given budget tightening, is appropriate, perhaps.

Anyway, back, ah, back to the Babbitt. I'm the parent of a teenager, and it might perhaps set me back a step or two to wonder whether he should have the same rights in the school district and in the school as adults do. And, in a post-Columbine, post-9/11, post ah, the recent situation in Minnesota, it's a very reasonable concern that school administrators and parents would not want their children to be loose on the Internet. Or to be running newspapers. I'm here, however, to contend that the First Amendment, when you read it, says absolutely nothing about minors, non-adults anything about limiting that.

And the case law has been uneven, to begin with. I'll start, first, with the two cases the Supreme Court has ruled on. One was Tinker versus the School Board of Des Moines, and they ruled that it was a 1969 case, that students could wear a black armband to school as an expressive action protesting the Vietnam War. They said that that was acceptable. They did, however in a concurrent opinion, Justice, I believe it was Justice Brennan, indicated that First Amendment rights do not end at the school gate. It came to be the precursor of, ah, good press [type].

However, Hazelwood comes along, and it basically indicates that an in-school this is the only Supreme Court case relating to a newspaper. An in-school publication, produced as part of a class, producing the news... The principal removed an article relating to teen sex practices and contraception, and and a story about the war situation of one of the students as inappropriate. The Supreme Court said that, in a school setting, the school district, the principal has the right to limit certain speech, certain activities of the students, using the basically, the test that substantial disruption and disturbance.

Well, if those of you will cast back to your high school days, what sort of behavior did you perform that a principal might not consider "disturbance?" It's a very wide area that they could deal with. In the interim between Tinker and, there were some lower court decisions. There was a circuit court ah, a circuit court appeals decision on Thomas, relating to an underground newspaper, produced off-campus by students working off-campus, and the circuit court said that the right that newspaper had, they could not be punished at school.

That's part of the crux that the Babbitt was having the difficulty with. Because Principal Caputo would then he didn't like the articles that were appearing in the Babbitt. He particularly didn't like it when the Babbitt went to the mainstream ah, newspapers, the Morning Call in the area, and the television station, and told them about some of the things that were going on there, and some of the things that they they attempted to suspend two of the students, several of the students, for three days. On another occasion, they suspended them threatened to suspend them for nine days, proving that, despite the First Amendment and the courts, the one thing that scares a principal more than any other is an enraged parent. A set of mothers went in and complained, and got the suspension removed. Because it was not for

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behavior that they were doing at school. And that's the whole crux. And that's what Thomas said in the circuit court.

Well, when the Supreme Court ruled in Hazelwood, it did not cite this case. They had appealed the Thomas case to the Supreme Court, and it denied cert. Did not take the case. Which, in and of itself, you realize, means absolutely nothing. I always have discussions with my media law professor that, you know, it may mean nothing, but when the Supreme Court takes it, 70% of the time they overturn the lower court. So, sometimes I think the Supreme Court is being a little disingenuous when they claim it. But, nevertheless, they didn't take it. They didn't accept the precedent at all.

And, so in another, in a district case, Beussink, relating not exactly to a newspaper, perhaps more on the blogging line, since, we discussed that this morning, a personal website was created by a young man named Beussink, and he ripped the hide off school officials, and carried on with all sorts of other actions about things that were going on in the school, things that were happening to him. Well, the district, the federal district court, praised him and said, "That is just the object lesson that our students should be learning. Here is the First Amendment in action. Freedom of speech, freedom of the press, however you want to define it. This young man should be celebrated, rather than punished."

There have been a number of court cases one was Klein, which I like to euphemistically refer to as a "digital case," because the young man gave "the finger" to a teacher at a restaurant off-campus, and they suspended him once he came to school for this sort of off-campus behavior.

The crux of the matter, it seems to me, the underlying argument, is whether or not students should have rights of freedom of speech. Perhaps they shouldn't have some other rights; parents have legitimate, ah, legitimate rights. But whether or not, in an educational setting, we should be teaching our students to be good citizens. Whether we should be teaching them they all have civics classes, and extols the virtues of the First Amendment, and then when they have the opportunity to utilize this, this right, we take it away from them. I think that is at the heart of what we have to decide. And the Supreme Court has not exactly, specifically ruled on that.

So my hope would be, in conclusion, would be that the Supreme Court needs to resolve this matter of course, unless the Supreme Court chooses to resolve it in the way I'm not interested in. But I think that if that the school districts also miss another point. And that is, there are plenty of alternatives, off-campus remedies, if you break the law laws for libel, defamation. Various other, ah, off-campus remedies, in fact, can be more effective. The juvenile justice system, and the adult justice system, can be more of a deterrent than an in-school suspension.

But they've chosen not to, because the job of a newspaper or any other journalist, for that matter; my background is in newspapers is to discomfit the powerful. Well, that is the one thing that principals in the school systems do not want to be. They

want to control every aspect of their school. And having people going around, arguing and disputing them, and drawing attention to their behaviors, is not a good way to win friends. And as long as they have the power that given the number of drug cases, student's rights to illegal there is not illegal search and seizure. You go to school, you attend school, you buy that definition, you have the right to have your person and your locker searched for drugs, or for anything else, as however at the discretion of the school officials.

I guess, an absolute wrapping-it-up In order to defend our constitutional system, which we discussed, related to the frames that we're discussing the first amendment, on blogging... That is the one aspect, I think, of the our civil rights not civil, our Constitutional rights that we can teach our children to demonstrate and participate in, in an environment that can be somewhat controlled, if you want to have it, if you do it and you allow certain in-school and you just decide this is the penalty of living in a free society. When I wrote editorials against my school board, they may not have liked it, but they had to absorb it. And if you want to be a public institution, like a school, you should be able to take it.

Thank you very much for your attention, and for putting up with my somewhat, ah, inept computer skills.

[applause]

STEVE REESE: All right. Our next paper is by Sonia Huang, a doctoral student here in our School of Journalism. "Diffusion Theory in an Internet Environment: Testing Four Key Components."

SONIA HUANG: OK. How are you, everyone?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Awake. [laughter]

SONIA HUANG: OK, good. I'm Sonia Huang, and I'm a doctoral student here at UT Austin. However, originally, I come from Taiwan, and I'm Chinese. So today, I try to convey my research idea as clear as possible in English. So if my statement is not clear, just ask questions afterward. OK.

Here, this is my research topic. [referring to the visual aid] And it's about diffusion theory in an Internet environment. I test four key components in diffusion theory. However, this topic I call it a conceptual topic, because it's not practical at all. So, I do have an operational topic, which is diffusion of online news among college students. And the reason I want to set my barometer to college students is in response to the so-called print and broadcast audience decline.

So this has become a key issue in online news adoption process. Because many industry expect there are more and more people read online news. However, to old people, it's really hard to be familiar with this technology, and reading online news as a habit. However, how about young adults? How about those college students? Do

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they read online news? And what kind of reading behavior do they have, among this young generation? So this is my research topic. OK.

Dr. Rogers, we know, he was born in 1931, and he introduced diffusion of innovations in 1962. For the past four decades, actually, he devotes all or most his life in the diffusion theory. And I have a personal story, one to share with you. Because when I did this study last year, and because I want to apply diffusion theory, so I think every day about the concept he had, and think about how to apply my study apply diffusion theory into my study.

So I think about how about I email him about some concept, and maybe he can clarify, for me, especially for the displacement effect. Because most of us believe time is limited. So people who spends more time online it's possible they spend less time on other media. For example, newspaper, TV watching, or radio listening. So I think, "There should be a displacement effect." However, according to diffusion theory, what Dr. Rogers say is, for certain group of people, actually, the displacement effect doesn't exist. So I do want to clarify with him, and I say "What do you mean by the so-called non-displacement effect?'" And this is what he replied me. He say, "Actually, for more innovative individuals, ought to have greater exposure to newspaper and other news." In other words, among those adopters, only certain individuals has no displacement effect. Those, in his definition, are the innovators and early adopters. So those earlier adopters will use certain media, medium, more; also, they will use other medium more. That is what he said.

And so I sort of, according to his definition And he also identified two difficulties in the Internet environment, because what he defined, the social system in previous time, is people some innovators will, across the border, go out, travel to another social system to look for new idea. However, with the emergence of Internet, actually, the border becomes not that physical. You can access the international sources without going out to anywhere. So the Internet environment does change. And it also change the way to define the social system.

Another thing Dr. Rogers think may also change in Internet environment is the Internet communication, actually, is no longer as mass communication. It sort of combine mass communication and interpersonal communication. For example, Internet communication as a mass communication is like a website. So it's a one-to-many process. However, interpersonal communication easy example is the email. So. These are the concerns.

And then I test four key components in diffusion theory. Actually, there are many, many concepts within Dr. Rogers' diffusion theory. I only pick four of them. The first one is adopter categories serve as my independent variable. And these are I sort of divide my online news adopters into four categories ah, five categories. In the mass communication channels, we do survey our respondents in terms of newspaper, network TV news, local TV news, cable TV, and online news use. So these are the five channels we, sort of, examine.

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The next concept, actually, is very interesting. It's about the "cosmopolitan experience." This is an experience which, in response to Dr. Rogers' mention about the so-called "social system," is hard to define. So the way we define the so-called "cosmopolitan experience" is no longer you need to, just, travel to other countries. We include, also, the access non-U.S. sources, and communicate with people outside the U.S., into this concept serve as indicators of this grand concept.

And the last one is gender. I think ah, Shayla, right? She mentioned many things about the so-called gender divide. And it does exist in online environment. So we do suspect Because our parameter, as college student, actually it's hard to distinguish them in terms of income, or distinguish them in terms of social economic status. So the only one demographic variable we chose is gender. And we highly suspect there is a gender divide in the Internet environment.

And here I think one of the interesting [territorization] is from the adopter categories. I tried to sep I tried to divide our college adopters into the five group. And here is the thing most people ask me about. Are why the presentation are different. Because when we measure when we asked this question, we measure by year. So, for future research, I suggest you to measure by year and month. Then you can get a more closer percentage for each categories.

OK, here are my hypothesis and research questions. I don't really have much time, so I just read it. "Earlier adopters of international news are more likely than later adopters to be regular users of old news channels, and earlier adopters are more cosmopolitan than later adopters. The male are more likely than females to be earlier adopters of Internet news." My research question is, "What is the relationship among gender, Internet news adoption, and Internet news reading?"

Methodology. This is a survey. And actually, it's a UT survey. We sent polls to, I think, 10,000 students, and we got 842 the response rate is low, but I will tell you how I did to solve this problem. And our questionnaire is about media use, lifestyle, and demographics. The survey was conducted in November 2003. For the response rate, if you get my paper, and I did do something to fix this problem. This is you need to match the so-called "student census" with the student sample to make sure, like, whether these sample can, you know, represent the whole population. And we were so lucky, actually, that our sample matched the student census very well. So this is a way to, sort of, fix the problem.

OK. I tell you the answer now. So my first hypothesis are "Earlier adopters read more online news." And the answer is pretty clear. It's "yes." However, there is some inconsistency among the innovators. This is because we think, or we suspect, among those innovators, online news are no longer new to them. So we suspect innovators go to look for another new news media. For example, the blog. We highly suspect that these are the group, they already go to another new medium. But for other group, the trend is very clear. Earlier adopters and early majorities all read more online news than later majorities and laggers.

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OK. Second question would be, "Are early adopters get more news in different channels?" So we do want to know whether there is a displacement effect. OK, here. The answer is, for those people who read more online news, actually, they watch more type of news. And they watch more local TV news, too. However, these relationship doesn't exist in newspaper reading and network TV news watching. We think the reason to explain these phenomena is those college student, actually, they sort of abandon those traditional medium. So these two are not significant at all. And actually, it's sort of anti-Dr. Rogers' prediction. OK.

"Are earlier adopters more cosmopolitan?" How do you think? The answer is "yes." They are more cosmopolitan. In terms of different adopter categories, innovators got the highest cosmopolitan score among the five groups. OK.

My last question is about, "Are early adopters men or women?" Seventy, as men Innovators, earlier adopters, and majorities are all men more than women. So you can see the square bar are higher than the round bar. However, on the other hand, for the later majority and laggers, women are more than men.

OK. Now I would like to, I think, examine the three concept relationship. And I would like to know whether there is a so-called "antecedent variable" between the Internet news adoption and Internet news reading. So, what I found is, between gender and Internet news adoption, the relationship is significant. Between Internet news adoption and Internet news reading, the relationship is significant, too. Also, gender is also a good predictor to Internet news reading.

However, I do want to know, is there a sequential relationship between these three concept? So I control for gender. Then I found: yes, it is. When I control for gender, the two relationship are significant. And when I control for the Internet news adoption, the relationship becomes not significant. In other words, gender must go before the Internet news adoption, and then there is an impact on the Internet news reading. It's I don't think I explained it clearly, but my finding was gender is an antecedent variable between the relationship in a relationship between the Internet news adoption and Internet news reading.

OK. My result, in one sentence, is: "College innovators and earlier adopters of Internet news were cosmopolitan males who read online news and watch cable and local TV news on a regular basis. Then, gender was not only a strong predictor of how long student adopt Internet news, but also an antecedent variable to the relationship between Internet news adoption and Internet news reading.

I think I have three contribution to the research field, I hope. I match Rogers' adopter categories with the college students' Internet news adoption. And, actually, in doing by doing this, I think we can have a clearer picture of which group of college student may adopt Internet news, and how well they adopt it. And also for the industry, or the some company, for their concern, actually they can just focus on those innovator and earlier adopters to stimulate their reading behavior, or stimulate them to adopt a new, like, innovation, actually is enough. So this is my first

contribution. And then the second one is, I construct a scale to measure cosmopolitan-ness. And find earlier adopters were more cosmopolitan. Because I do feel the cosmopolitan-ness should include both physical and mental variable. Not only you need to, like, across the border to get the innovation. You now can go online, access those international sources, and you can become innovative.

So the last one is, actually, I found some digital divide, but it's in new forms. Because now, the digital divide is no longer an access problem, or the access divide. The digital divide, in 2005, is actually an experience divide, or an information or a source divide. And the gender divide Many people claim the gender divide decreasing. However, actually, it condition by the media use.

So, these are my conclusion. Thank you.

[applause]

STEVE REESE: And our final paper, also a doctoral student here in our School of Journalism, Tania Cantrell. And she'll speak on "Who You Are and Where You've Been: Factors Influencing Student Online International News Reading."

TANIA CANTRELL: Where is this, now? [referring to the visual aid] Thank you. And then OK. As Dr. Reese mentioned, the name of my presentation today is "Who You Are and Where You've Been: Factors Influencing Student Online International News Reporting."

And it's actually my privilege today to speak on this topic right after Sonia, because we did this both of these studies are based on the same data, from a research project we did here with Dr. Poindexter, about, I guess, a year and a half ago. While her perspective is more medium-focused, mine's a little bit more content-focused. But there is some overlap, as we'll go through that. And I may take some liberties in skipping over some of my information, because the methodology and some of the other elements and components of our presentations today are very similar.

My presentation overview. I wanted to discuss a little bit about the background for this study, talk about the context and the theory. I focus my study using a uses and gratifications model. My methods it's a web survey. For my results, I'd like to focus on gender and also on online international news reading. For the discussion on medium choice, focusing on surveillance and familiarities to components of a uses and gratifications paradigm. The limitations being the low response rate, as Sonia mentioned. And then give my conclusion and recommendations.

For the background. As we've discussed in a lot of our symposium this morning and also yesterday, there are a number of events that have contributed to a rise in online internat well, online news reading. Some of those include the September 11 attacks, as we see here from this first quote: "The demand for news and information on September 11 also spilled over to the Internet. For the first time, the Internet was viewed as an alternative channel for obtaining in-depth news and information." Now,

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along with these societal influences that have driven particular populations to the Internet, we have to discuss, also, access issues. The second quote pertains to that particular element: "As of September 2003, over half of the people in the United States 150 million went online. Various surveys indicate that half to two-thirds of those who go online use the Internet at least some of the time to get news."

Now, as mentioned particularly during the first session this morning, with Dr. Paula Poindexter we know that the young reader is not particularly interested in reading news. But the interesting thing with this study and it may be because we surveyed college students, many people are reading in fact, the very first thing that they're taking a look at online is national news, and the second item is international news. And I really wanted to examine that phenomenon and see: What is it that what additional factors are influencing young adults to read international news online? Is there something that can explain why a traditionally non-news reading audience is taking a look at international news?

So, going into the context and the theory. One other thing I noticed when I started doing my study was many organizations are having a difficult time explaining exactly what news is, particularly international news. And, in considering our study we'll get into this a little bit when we discuss the sample about 96% of our sample was United States citizens. And so, in that perspective, when we talk about international news as U.S. citizens, I would imagine that we would think about checking news that talks about what's going on in London, with the wedding of Prince Charles and the wedding of Camilla Parker Bowles, or the Pope's funeral in Italy, or various components. But what happens when citizens of those countries hear the term "international news?" Does that mean that they're reading up on the United States? What exactly is that dynamic there? So there is some conceptual considerations, that we need to think about, with the term "international news."

There are also gender and age issues when it comes to who's taking a look at news. As Sonia's study just presented, and also as Shayla's, and some other documentation that we've heard today and yesterday, men are more likely to go online to read. And that was actually one of my hypothesis questions, though I'll take some time briefly going over that, but not addressing it too much. There are also age considerations, and Sonia spoke a little bit about that. Those who are younger tend to do they're more Internet-savvy. They're more technology-savvy than the older population.

Now, with medium and user ability. Particularly college students, they have greater access to these particular elements. And we find that the immediacy of online news is very attractive, the flexibility of it, what they go online to look at and what times; they have complete power over those choices. And the international-ness of the Internet. It's very easy for them to log on to any particular website at any particular time. And that, of course, plays into the uses and gratifications model.

Bringing all these concepts together, I wanted to take a look at gender, defining that slightly as identity meaning if you're male or if you're female and considering them

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to be United States citizens, and then experiences looking at, perhaps, international travel as a reason, if that is if that could possibly explain why people are reading international news.

So. To state that a little bit more academically: hypothesis one, men will read online international news more than women. And as a research question: what is the relationship between international experience and online international news reading? I think, theoretically, that the research question is really it comes down to power. Are we is there a need for orientation because people have not gone to many countries and that is the reason why they're taking a look at international news? Or is it because of their familiarity with having traveled? That they're going online to find out more about these areas? That their curiosity's piqued, and continue in a personal conversation with what's happening in the countries that they've visited?

Taking a look at the methods. Again, Sonia was very good in her explanation. We did a systematic random sample with a random start point, and it was over 10,000 students who we looked at, at a large southwestern university, and that has been identified as here, the University of Texas at Austin. We proposed a 56-item, web-based survey, and we had almost 900 respondents. So our response rate was about 8%. We spent a lot of time, in this particular research class, debating how many people we should send the survey out to, to anticipate a larger response rate. But we weren't able to obtain the goal that we had hoped for.

As Sonia pointed out, this survey was administered in November of 2003. And it posed various questions examining media usage and their habits, opinions on public affairs, lifestyle, demographics, et cetera. Again, just to reiterate, the first hypothesis is that men will read online international news more than women, and the research question is: "What is the relationship between international experience and online international news reading?" And I define international experience being the number of non-U.S. trips. How many times these students had traveled outside the United States.

So the results. The sample most of the students, the average age was 24 years, which was very nice. A majority of our students, 67%, were undergraduate. 56% were female. 75% were Caucasian, 96% were American, and 30% classified themselves as wealthy. And in my paper, I give a little bit more attention to why that could be. I think a lot of students may still be claiming their parents' incomes. But. Yeah. [laughter] At least, we poor graduate students are hoping that. So.

Of the twelve content categories that we asked students for what they were looking at online, international news was the second-most-frequently read. That's above weather; that's above entertainment; that's above sports, fashion. What all the other online studies have said.

So, regarding the first hypothesis. I did find that males are more likely to read online international news: 56% compared with 45%. And Sonia's study really broke that

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down into the early adopters the innovators, the early adopters, the majority, and so forth. With Everett Rogers' diffusion of innovations theory.

This is just a nice little graph to show you that more men are reading than women. I also found, as a component of identity, that U.S. citizens are more likely to read than non-U.S. citizens. And that may be simply because 96 roughly 96% of the survey was U.S. But this is how that graph appears. The majority there being U.S. citizens, taking a look at the online international news.

And then, as far as the research question goes "What is the relationship between international experience and online international news reading?" I found that the more students have traveled abroad, the more likely they are to read international news online. So 67% of high travelers that means those students who visited seven countries or more often read international news. This is a diagram, or a chart, to show how that broke down. If you take a look at the non-travelers, they also are doing a little bit of reading. 40% of them are often reading online international news. But you can see the increase. The more they read or the more that they've traveled outside of the United States, the more likely they are to read. The low travelers, 42% of them often read. Moderate travelers, 50% of them often read online news online international news. And then the high travelers, 67%. And I just thought that was a very interesting dynamic.

So, and the discussion. Coming back to medium choice, surveillance, and familiarity these basic concepts of uses and gratifications. Young adults are choosing the Internet to receive their international news. More men than women but the gender difference may disappear as familiarity differences between genders disappear. That's an interesting notion, that has been presented in a different study. We saw that a little bit in Sonia's fourth stage of her presentation, that in the late majority, men and women are almost even, and the same in the laggers. I think that's something that, over time, we'll just have to take a look at. And then the familiarity with location, and the desire to know more, definitely influenced the selection of international online news.

Again, the limitations. One thing that I'd like to bring up that Sonia didn't in her limitations is that web surveys are a new technology. And the literature out there is very non-specific, as to what a normal response rate is for web surveys. So the variability is still difficult to explain. Hopefully, over time, that will become a little bit more standardized. We a possible suggestion is to use an incentive for the study, to just encourage (excuse me) the students to take part.

So, conclusion and recommendations. This study adds to the uses and gratifications model, and in addressing online international news reading. There really hasn't been much done, as far as that theory or that model goes in analyzing online international news. Online international news readership trends are on the upswing, particularly among male, U.S. citizen, Caucasian, high travelers. And so basically, this reinforces what Sonia presented with this element of the "cosmopolitan" and the diffusion of innovations theory. Which is, kind of, a nice reliability test for the survey.

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More research is needed into the gratifications associated with online international news reading. While this particular study took a look at one component of why they're choosing that, there are probably a lot of other variables in that equation that can be considered. And then, further inquiry into the definition of international news, and other factors, including race and class, affecting online international news, are encouraged.

And that's my presentation. Thank you very much.

[applause]

STEVE REESE: Thank you, Tania. I'd like to say a few comments, if I may, before we turn it over for questions. This has been an eclectic group of papers. We've had perspectives on both producers of online content, women and their roles, and students, and we've also looked at users and readers of online content, with this last couple of papers.

I think I appreciate the difficulty we have in researching these kinds of issues in online media. Recently, I embarked on well, "This camp is so difficult, I should do a study on this area myself." So I enlisted my colleague, Lou Rutigliano, to do a survey, and we spent several weeks just trying to iron out some definitions. Because it's very tough to navigate some of these boundaries and conceptual definitions. So I think I have a renewed appreciation for how difficult it is to conduct empirical research on this area.

We do have some shifting definitions. We have overlapping functions, which is why we call it "multimedia." So it's difficult to pull out a single technology, and say, "They're adopting this new [inaudible]," and very clear when they are using it and when they are not. And we have an overlapping, de-territorialized audience, so it's very difficult to identify precisely where the audience is located when they're using these media.

In this panel and the previous one this panel focused primarily on professional online news media, and the previous one more on so called "citizen-based" media, such as blogging I think it's really the combination of these two zones that we really need to take a look at, because they are very complementary, and they formulate an entire structure of news and information community which people are reacting to. And we need to identify things like the echo chambers, and within that sphere, and some of these cross-border linkings that take place. Because there is quite a lot of blurring going on between the professional, traditional media, and others ah, so. A very good collection of papers.

Shayla's paper looked at professional dimensions, with these women producers, and I think it's clear how online journalism, in a way, simply reproduces these hierarchies of power especially to the extent it becomes more successful, it reproduces previous forms. I think, probably, feminist theory has some insights to offer on this new zone,

because as she pointed out in her paper, traditionally we associate women and female-gendered dimensions as being more relational, open, more collaborative, more expressive, and those are things we associate with the online world versus the traditional, hierarchical, competitive, power-centered, authoritarian, kind of "maleness," male-oriented zones of the traditional media. So I think there are some useful insights there.

Terry's paper on the student media shows that the professional media don't always make common cause with their student colleagues, as they really ought to, because it shows that when there's a vacuum of control, as in the case of these offsite websites the students run, the administration and authorities will rush in to occupy that vacuum, unless they're opposed by some professional initiative, such as, finally, apparently, the Illinois press undertook to belatedly support the students. But again, it shows how difficult it is to control this, over this complete structure of information that's out there. Because it's simply difficult to know where the audience is.

And it reminds me of a case here within the last week or so, I think, where a Canadian judge wanted to restrict the information released to reporters, and yet a juror simply leaked it to the blog Captain's Quarters, which distributed it worldwide on its blog. And so it really mattered little whether or not the judge wanted to keep the information controlled; it was out there anyway.

Sonia's paper and these last two are based on the same data set; they both attempt to apply traditional mass communication theory to a new set of phenomenon, in the case of Sonia, looking at diffusion of innovation. This is a framework that has been around for quite a long time. It's not so much interesting, in and of itself, that things diffuse, because with anything, there are always those people who get it first and those people who get it later. So the fact that there is this kind of normal distribution of stuff out there is not particularly surprising, because any time there's something to get, there's some people in our society who will obtain it, and others who will not have access to it.

So the more interesting thing, as she points out, is what's associated with those people who get it. And who get it before others do. And I think, particularly with the student sample, and the case is Because they're all students, it tends to flatten out some of these other factors, and so gender sort of pops out as the one factor among these students which really differentiates them from each other. Because, generally speaking, they're of the same educational attainment and the same age, more or less, and even the same socioeconomic status, to some degree.

I think it, again, points out how difficult it is to identify: What is the object of adoption, in this case? Because in the case of online journalism, it supplants a practice which otherwise is associated with getting stuff early, and that is using the mass media. And so, when we're using the mass media to predict using online journalism, those two variables are quite highly correlated, because one is defined as part of the other.

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I think it's more interesting to see this relationship with cosmopolitanism, which I think is going to be an increasingly important factor as we think about globalized communication, because people are pulled out of their national context and into greater identification, a more cosmopolitan identification, more multilateral, transnational, kind of outlook, than they ever have before. And so I think that variable is the most interesting. How much they read about, communicate with, visit other countries, is an indicator of using online news. And properly so, because online is by its very definition a cosmopolite, translational, de-territorialized form of communication.

And by the way, I see we have identified a very disturbing PowerPoint gap between our graduate students and our faculty. [laughter] And I think we really need to close that gap. I've been lagging a laggard, in terms of adopting some of these cool graphics. I hope I'll enlist them as consultants next time I do a presentation.

I won't say much more about methodology, because I'm more we're more interested in the issues here. But I'm just curious the people who did not use online at all, you kind of eliminated them from your analysis. Which strikes me, there are still laggards, in the sense of the word, that they haven't "gotten it" yet. So. Something to think about. Again, the question is: Where is the audience, anyway? Even if you're located here at the University of Texas as a student, we have a huge international student population, and they might as well be in Korea, or China, or wherever, in some respects, as far as their information-gathering practice, as they go online and get that news from their home country.

And finally, Tania's paper used, kind of, a tried and true theoretical framework, with uses and gratifications, to try and understand online reading. I suppose, in this case, you have to acknowledge that it's kind of informed by uses and gratifications, rather than testing it precisely, because we don't really ask them, "What are you getting out of this," and "Are you being entertained by it," and "What are your uses to which you put this?" Nevertheless, we're interested in inferring what uses people may get out of it, especially international news, because it reminds us, again, where is the audience anyway? And what is its identification? It may be located here in Austin, but its identification is very cosmopolitan. And so, with regard to online international news reading, it's quite highly predictive of that, as and properly so, again.

So, I think, again, this perspective reminds us that the audience doesn't always make these discriminations between whether I got this from the BBC.com, or Yahoo, or Google, or OhMy News; they just get it. And they're using it, and they're using this overall structure, whether it's an interconnected, multilayered blogosphere with traditional news media or not. It's simply the case that they're using it, and they're receiving some gratifications from it. They don't always know what "it" is, and it doesn't matter. Because they're adapting it, and putting it together to suit their own needs.

So, difficult definitional issues, and overlap, and audience measurement questions. But we still need to move forward and spend some time trying to identify it, because

the issues are important, and just because research is difficult doesn't mean we shouldn't do it.

So, thank you very much. Now we have some time for some questions from the audience.

ALFRED HERMIDA: We have many questions. It's Alfred Hermida, from the BBC. I was interested, particularly in gender, in terms of what effect the news source has on the perceived consumption. Anecdotal evidence suggests that more people get their news online than self-reported, because they get it from sources they don't consider as traditional news sources. So they get it from a portal, not from the New York Times or the Washington Post.

And I'd be interested to hear if you had any views, in terms of how the nature of the source affects the consumption, from a gender point of view. Is it that women do still get their news from the net, but they're seeing it on Yahoo or AOL, so therefore don't consider themselves going to a site for news whereas men go somewhere deliberately, like the Washington Post or some other online paper?

SHAYLA THIEL: OK. Well, most of my research is actually on adolescent girls' use of instant messaging, and they don't go to news sites. So that's as far as I know. All the ones that I've worked with for the last couple of years.

I think that's a really interesting perspective to consider: why aren't women going to we need to ask, "Why aren't women going to online news sites as much as men?" Because it's not a technological problem any more. It can't be. It's too easy now. And, I mean, as long as we're assuming that people have access, what's going on? And I think it's the way that the news is presented. And it's just I think the medium is gendered, in a lot of ways, and I think it does alienate women, in a lot of ways. And I think more research needs to be done on that particular topic.

STEVE REESE: Why why would it be alienating to women?

SHAYLA THIEL: I think it's presented I think women understand news differently, and have different values about well, OK, for example, the Pew center last year came out with a pretty big study about American life and the Internet. And talked about how, especially young people there was a big divide between just what you were saying. How young girls envisioned what news is. And they had placed a lot of value on interacting with other people, and using that as a source of news. Whereas guys tended to go to your, sort of, mainstream news source, and read in, sort of, a traditional kind of way. I think that there are different ways of incorporating interactivity into the news that, I don't know, might especially attract younger women readers. But that's just a theory.

THOMAS TERRY: I think the issue's also is and I'm sure you would agree, that it's also the way women are represented, as well.

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SHAYLA THIEL: Yeah.

THOMAS TERRY: And there's a continued objectification of women online, as well as in the mainstream media, and that has got to be a disincentive.

SHAYLA THIEL: Yes.

STEVE REESE: Another question? Yes.

RACHEL NIXON: Rachel Nixon, BBCNews.com also. My question also concerns gender, but from the other side of the fence. Shayla, you were talking you gave us a very bleak picture, for women editors in the online news room. For those of us who really want to stay in the online profession, do you have any suggestions as to what we can do to move forward? [laughter] Or other any other industries that we can draw examples from, as ways in which women can progress in an organization?

SHAYLA THIEL: I don't. I don't! Just because I feel all the research, right now, has shown that news rooms are just, generally, so gendered. And I mean, so I wouldn't want to advise anyone that they should start acting more like men, from traditional news. But, I mean, if you wanted to follow how a lot of places I've seen have been going, that's exactly what you should do. [laughs]

And I also I found it a little disheartening that a lot of people have spent a lot of time working on how to learn the technology, and really incorporate it and tell stories with it, were sort of marginalized. And I know, in my own experience fortunately, Washington Post hired Jim Brady, who started there from the very beginning. But before that, most of their executives were people who had a hard time even knowing how to turn on the computer. They would call it younger people to come it and show them exactly the famous, the infamous story, is, one of the vice presidents came in on his first day, and was freaking out because his document had disappeared. He just didn't realize that it was on the toolbar below. And he called in the whole tech support team. I mean, it was very disheartening. [laughs] And hadn't really been online at all. So, no. I don't know. I wish I knew. I might still be in it, if I did.

THOMAS TERRY: You have to work harder and better. I have a daughter who I give that same advice to, by the way. That's the only thing. And ultimately, you will have to succeed. [to Shayla Thiel] Don't you agree? I think so. Because if you give up on it, then it's just perpetuating the whole, ah you know, you go from, most of them are women, suddenly, Rachel was the onlyS

SHAYLA THIEL: I do disagree.

THOMAS TERRY: Oh, you do?

SHAYLA THIEL: I do disagree.

THOMAS TERRY: So you think you should abandon it?

SHAYLA THIEL: I think our culture needs to change. [laughs] I really do.

THOMAS TERRY: You should be an instrument of that change. It sounds a little scriptural, butS

SHAYLA THIEL: I'm trying to be.

[Professor Reese solicits another question.]

NEIL THURMAN: Is this mic on? I think you're in the right place, in Britain, because of the ten major British news sites that I survey, 50% of the editors are women. So I think you're in the right place. [laughs] And the other thing The Daily Mail, actually, has a majority of female readers. I mean, it's traditionally a newspaper that's been popular with women. And they've managed to maintain that gender balance online. But certainly, I think there doesn't appear to be a glass ceiling in the U.K., at least up to, sort of, editor position of the major news sites. It's always difficult, with small samples, to draw conclusions. But that's the British experience, anyway.

STEVE REESE: OK. Well, thank you for our panel.

[applause]