

## **Day 2, Panel 4: Journalism online: How content is affected**

### **Moderator:**

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### **Panelists:**

**Sue Robinson**, University of Wisconsin at Madison

**Ji Young Kim** and **Pamela Shoemaker**, Syracuse University

**Edward (Ted) M. Kian**, University of Central Florida

**Scott Lambert**, Southern Illinois University

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**Gabriela Warkentin de la Mora:** Yeah? Okay, so good afternoon and welcome to our last panel of the day and of the symposium. After that we'll have a wrap up discussion session and later we'll have you for a very interesting papers are being presented but let me introduce myself first. My name is Gabriela Warkentin. I am the head of the Communication Department at the University Iberoamericana in Mexico City and my, I'm also a UNESCO chair holder and this brings us all together to this symposium. And as was said this morning, these last panels, they have sort of like a common theme or area about what they talking and this time we're going to close with 4 papers that in different ways they address similar issues related to gatekeeping, related to stereotyping, related in itself more to the content of the journalism that is going on online. In a way it's sort of a continuation from the last paper we listened with Alfred. He was talking about gatekeeping in a way and so we're picking this up and we will have several issues related to this broader area.

So I'm very glad to introduce our 4 panelists. I'm going to change a little bit the order in which they are in the program because Scott Lambert has to leave a little bit earlier. He has to catch a plane so he will be starting. Scott Lambert, he comes from Southern Illinois University and he has a paper on "To post or not to post: Gatekeeping affects of breaking news on Internet newspaper websites." And then I'm going to follow the order that was pre-established and we're going to move to Sue Robinson, who is here with us. Sue, from the University of Wisconsin at Madison. She has a paper on "The new newsroom: A case study of the journalistic paradigm in a news narrative's journey from a newspaper to cyberspace." Then Ji Young Kim, did I say it well? Yeah? Ji Young Kim from Syracuse University, she has "An examination of newsworthiness indicators in online journalism." And then we're going to end with Edward M. Kian from the University of Central Florida and the he, the title of his paper is really, really long but it's very interesting. Has to do with stereotyping in sports contents online. Just very interesting, particularly considering basketball.

So let's start with Scott Lambert. Please, Scott.

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**Scott Lambert:** Alright, at least I didn't fall over myself, I don't think. Okay, yeah. I'm a big guy, as you can pretty much see. I'm a 2<sup>nd</sup> year Masters student at Southern Illinois University and I worked for 13 years as a sports editor at small to pretty much small newspapers in Illinois. So I'm a big guy but I understand that the point of view of the little guy and that's kind of what I'm writing about here because I've looked through this today and I've seen people from the New York Times. I've seen people from BBC. I've seen people from a lot of the heavy hitters, the big, big, big papers and the big places and they have stuff that small papers just don't have in a lot of senses. And that's kind of what I'm focusing on is how small papers deal with breaking news and the gatekeeping affects they have on breaking news when they're Internet websites.

I have got an awful lot, this is my first time so I've got an awful lot of my literature review here so you can see that I had a big literature review. We'll get to the research questions and the thing that I came up with are what are the gatekeeper's role in putting breaking news on a website? What are the affects of the gatekeeper putting breaking news or a scoop on the web before it actually hits the ground in the actual newspaper? And what gatekeeping factors will come into play as the decision is reached?

These questions are important in the news industry. Newspapers are fighting to maintain circulation and learning to deal with the emergence of the Internet. These are even more important when you're talking about smaller papers, which have a different set of rules that they're going by because smaller papers don't have as wide of a readership online as well as on the newspaper or in their regular thing.

The methods, I had in depth interviews with 5 editors from small to regional newspapers across Illinois. The largest paper that I talked to was the editor for the Herald Review in Decatur and that was a 33,000 circulation newspaper. The smallest was a sports editor from the Morris Daily Herald and that paper is approximately about 8,000. I asked them a set of questions then after I asked them this prescribed questions which usually lead to follow up questions. The people that I talked to have a lot of experience. Bill Air was the managing editor of the Charleston Times Courier. That's about a 14,000 circulation newspaper. He's been in sports editor or the regular editor there for 20 years. Eric Fidler is the Faculty Advisor at SIU student newspaper, the Daily Egyptian. He rebuilt the online newspaper this year. And he was also had 25 years in the newspaper business, including 15 at the AP news bureau in Chicago. Tim Crosby was the former city editor at the Southern Illinoisan in Carbondale, Illinois. He was the key decision maker in what went into the Southern's website and was an editor at the Freeport Journal Standard before he went there. He also played a role in what happened at the Decatur Herald as he worked his way through Lee Enterprises. Gary Sawyer is the editor at the Decatur Herald and Review. He is the person that is pretty much in control of what is going on and what goes onto their website at any given time. He's been in the industry for 28 years. He's been a publisher and editor for 15. And the last one is Tim Smith. He's the sports editor at the Morris Daily Herald. He's been there for 10 years. He's been in the newspaper business for 16 and he's been in a lot of different aspects. He's also worked as circulation and in the advertising department. So he had a little bit different point of view in a lot of different ways.

The findings that I came up with, the gatekeeper's role in putting breaking news on the website, it showed that while formal policies aren't in affect for most

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newspapers, everyone seems to have a routine or a set of routines that help to serve the newspaper. I'll go back to here in a minute. There! And these routines can be a lot of different things. You know, for some of the people and some of the papers, they were talking about how it was just a 1 person decision but that's the way it always was. Others went through an, you know, we're going to go through this whole group. They had a meeting every day to decide what they needed to put up and whether or not they needed to put something up on a daily basis.

Tim Crosby is a firm believer in routines as getting this. He believes that even for smaller newspapers which have smaller budgets, if your reporters and your copy editors are trained on a daily basis to think to put something up on the news or the website early, breaking news especially, then it becomes a less difficult problem for a smaller paper to get something on the website.

What are the affects of the gatekeeper putting breaking news before it hits the ground in the newspaper? Everyone now, a couple of years ago there were, I know that there were a lot of people at smaller papers that believed that they shouldn't put anything new or anything that was breaking on their paper before it went out. They believed that if they did that, people wouldn't want to read the paper the next day. I think that as time as went on, they found that it's kind of maybe the opposite, that people find stuff online and they want to read more in the paper the next day. But they were pretty clear that they were in agreement with it. There was similar argument and nowadays the feeling is "get it up online, let your reader know it's going to be there". Gary Sawyer said the fact is, readers aren't interested in who gets stuff first anymore. I mean that's basically a newspaper reporter's worries about who gets the scoop first anymore and 'cause people aren't really going to worry about who got it first. They're just going to worry about where they got it.

The key factor for most is consistency. If the Internet website is to make a major difference, the gatekeeping process must be consistent. Stories need to be updated and updated at regular intervals. At a number of the newspapers they've got themselves to the point where they're making regular updates, 3 or 4 times a day. The Decatur Herald is making updates on any breaking news story. As Gary Sawyer said during this that he believed that they've got to get stuff up before the local television station. And for smaller newspapers, that's important because many times their only conversation or their only competition does come from the local newspaper. And since nowadays local. Or local television station. And since nowadays a lot of people are putting stuff up on television on their websites that newspapers, especially smaller ones, need to get stuff like that up quicker just for that reason.

Should you run the entire story? This is still a problem, especially for some of these people, because a lot of people want the four or five paragraph tease. You know, they think it will help drive readers to the paper the next day. Others disagree. They say, as Fiddler said, "I hate it when I see a newspaper site that does that. It certainly isn't going to drive advertising sales up. It's not going to raise traffic to your site because nobody is going to read your site if that's all you have." I kind of agree with that. But the problem is that for a person who is going to be doing that, you know, he's got to have an organizational routine to fall back to know exactly what his newspaper is going to want to do in that situation.

What gatekeeping factors will come into play as a decision is reached? Gatekeeper has to find more information. Matter of fact, he must constantly update the web to

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make it interesting for readers to come back to multiple times during the course of the day. Face it, people don't just get up in the morning, read the daily paper now and that's it. People are going in, they're taking a few minutes at work and they're checking their newspaper site. And they're checking to see if there's anything new and this is happening on a daily basis at a lot of different times. So the newspaper and the site has to be different every time they come up to it.

Once again, we get back to size. Smaller papers with smaller staffs seem to struggle to get news on the Internet in a timely manner. Tim Smith, the guy at the Morris Daily Herald, when I asked him, you know, what occasions they'd had recently to put anything new on their website as it was breaking, he said, "Well, I've done it once. Our football team won the state championship and we didn't publish the next day so I put it on the website that day." And I asked him, "Well can you think of anything else that might do it?" And he said, "Well, we've got a nuclear reactor near town. I think if something happened to it, we might put something up. It'd be a decision we'd have to make." So, you know, I think that when you're at smaller newspaper with smaller people, you have that problem. And that's the reason he said that they didn't do it is because they just didn't have the people to do it. I mean they have like a 6 person, 7 person staff for their entire newspaper and everybody is booked. So they don't have the time to make the, the thing.

Now the larger the paper is, I think you've got, you know, fewer and fewer problems with that. And as Tim Crosby said, I'm still back on that last one, but as Tim Crosby said, "If you teach everybody to be looking to do that all the time and your writers are constantly updating, it makes it a lot easier for people to know what needs to go up online at that time." And, you know, especially, earlier.

The competitive backgrounds either moved or disappeared. The battle to get a story out first in print has changed to the battle to get the story on the net first. Well Sawyer may be right in his comment that people don't really care who gets it first. Crosby also made a strong point that the battleground for scoops is moved from the newspaper to the Internet website and I think that you can find that in a lot of battles you'll see with TV. Especially for, you know, small to midsize papers where that's their only competition because if the TV gets it first now, they're putting it up on their website so the newspapers have to beat them if they're going to have any sort of credibility.

Final point is that there's much more information that you can make available to the public. Many Internet websites make documents and press releases available. This is something that small papers can do as well as big papers because this is stuff that's available that they can get up quicker. Gatekeeper's role has actually expanded. Today the gatekeeper must continue to narrow the images into a manageable amount for the reader to digest but at the same time, work inside his own newsroom and convince the staff writers to update their stories and get information ready to be put on the website at a moment's notice.

That's it!

[audience applause]

**Sue Robinson:** Excuse me. Okay, hopefully this is working. Excellent! Okay, I'm Sue Robinson and I'm currently teaching at the University of Wisconsin in Madison but this paper is actually from my dissertation. And I renamed it from what it is in

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the program. It is called "The cyber newsroom: A case study of the journalistic paradigm in the news narrative's journey from a newspaper to cyberspace." And what I did was I looked at three different case studies but today I'm just going to talk about the 1 case study, which was the Spokesman Review in Washington State and their investigation of Jim West, the Spokane mayor who was accused of pedophilia back in the 1970's and then during the investigation it came out that he was using or he was accused of using city hall computers to lure gay teens to go on dates with him. And the Spokesman Review did a year long investigation and then put a whole bunch of stuff, both in the print and the web.

And so my case study incorporated all the elements in the print version, which was about 500 elements altogether; 250 stories and 200 or 250 photos as well as everything they put on the web. And they put everything on the web. They put all their audio of their interviews or most of their audio of their interviews. Video clips of press conferences as well as interview that they had. They did reader comments in a forum and there are 428 readers who commented on this in this forum. They did three different chats with the editor and there were 78 readers who interacted with the editor, as well as all the links from Technorati and Google for blogs that were talking about this as well. So some of you might remember this particular case. In fact, Jim West just passed away this past summer but he ended up becoming recalled from office.

They also hired a forensic computer expert to loiter on Gay.com, which is a site that attracts homosexuals to talk about the issue of homosexuality and their own personal issues with it and then the computer forensic expert, which is how they talked about this person, remained anonymous during the entire coverage and he eventually became, came in contact with Jim West himself and the two of them had all these chats and emails and developed a relationship and so that was also a basis of this investigation and that also created sort of a firestorm of criticism against but also praise for the Spokesman Review for whether they should have done that or not.

I also ended up talking to Steve Smith, the editor of the Spokesman Review, Ken Sands the online editor, as well as a couple of the reporters involved in the investigation and Steve told me this about why they would decide to put all this reporting up on the web, which is that they wanted to establish a culture of transparency and that they felt that this was an offensive move on their part because the Spokesman Review had some credibility issues in the past and they wanted to just put everything up online so it was really a credibility and authority issue.

So I looked at all of this and I wanted to understand, okay, great that they did this. This is an extraordinary case. This doesn't happen with all sorts of news stories but I wanted to know when it does happen, what happens to the news narrative itself? And I wanted to look at the content. So I wanted to understand what happened to Jim West's character, for example, from the newspaper into the online. So these were my two research questions; how did the news narrative of Spokane, Washington mayor change from the newspaper's website, uh, from the newspaper to the website and then what did that, those changes perhaps indicate about the traditional news paradigm? And I was thinking specifically about the five Ws that we all used to write about or at least I did when I was a journalist, the who, what, when, where and why. And how each fact builds upon every fact and collectively they self

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validate. And the document idea of the web [affectivity] and then what those online changes do to traditional structure.

So I'm going to go right to the website so you can see what I'm talking about. They still have it archived. It's still accessible from the Spokesman Review homepage and you can see they did a number of stories from May 5th through December until he got recalled in 2005. And I'm going to go to a story that they did on May 8<sup>th</sup> to sort of, when you talked about in the print version what was the story and it was basically followed the traditional news paradigm and particularly Jack Loolee's understanding of how we write myths. And this was very much the trickster myth and when we talk about the trickster myth we're talking about a myth in which there's a person who is very deviant, who is set apart from the community, who doesn't really have any malevolent motivations for the bad things that he does but that everything is, in fact, bad. And through this person the newspaper can sort of moralize about the various community values that we hold.

And in this case, Jim West was the "trickster". And you noticed in all the coverage, you know, and I didn't scan this picture in but this is just one picture. They had him in the present. He was always pictured alone and very isolated. You know? And there were a number of pictures. And any pictures they had of him with other people were done in the past and they were always of him on the job and like winning his campaign and he was surrounded by all his supporters, the idea being that at that point he was pretending to be something he was not. And this, in fact, I should also mention the accusations were never proven and the FBI ended up clearing Jim West of all of the, of any misuse of public office.

The victims that came forward, they had two victims who came forward and were named and gave these detailed stories, they were always pictured as sort of like the young, innocent boys, for example, and the place of their abuse, the place of the news stories, the settings and the chronology, was always about the news events in the past, either the place of the alleged abuse or even the press conferences that were held were always done in the past. And the people were always these experts and, or they were officials or they were community people who sort of exemplified the rest of the community. Here's one story that ran on the first day of coverage.

So the forensic computer expert that you might remember, he adopted the pseudonym "Motobrock" online. And when they wrote about him in the print stories, he was always their forensic computer expert. "The expert, a former federal agent who asked not to be identified..." And even when they would take excerpts from the chats that he had with Jim West, like in this story, they interspersed them with editorial comments. So you're always reminded that Motobrock is a fictitious person and that he is really there just bearing witness to what Jim West is doing.

So online, though, we learn a lot more about Motobrock and we have all of these nine chats that happened between Motobrock and Jim West and if you read them from start to finish, they have this whole chronological relationship in which the two of them become very close and you understand Motobrock's dreams and his fears about being a gay teen and what is he do about dating girls and Jim West is sort of a mentor and look at the, this is how long it is. There's no editorializing, there's no interspersements. You're just reading their chat and it's as if you're there at the site of this news event that's gathering and you'll notice, look how long it goes on. I mean, and in fact, at one point, you know, it gets very sexually explicit. At one point

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he has an orgasm like in the middle of the chat. You never see this kind of stuff in the print version.

They also put up online, oh you also get a much different picture of Jim West, too. He becomes, even in all the audio where they have these interviews where the reporters are, and they have transcripts of all the interviews but they also have audio snippets, you hear him and he's very passive and he, you don't, he's not exactly sympathetic but his character becomes much more layered. You start, he doesn't understand why he goes to the sites that he goes to. He categorically denies the sexual abuse and yet you also hear the news gathering happening, which I found to be really interesting.

I know this was going to happen, to play or not. Oh, this is the transcript. In the audio clips that they chose to put up

[recorded audio audible in background]

Okay, so you notice in that audio clip all you hear is the reporter and a lot of those clips it's like that, you only hear the reporter's voice and then you sort of hear Jim West at the very end saying "yes" or "no". You do get the full transcripts and the transcripts themselves are fascinating because you see the chronologies and the settings that we've seen nicely laid out in a narrative format and the print stories trying to be negotiated online.

And so one of the findings that I had was that this story online became as much about the journalism of what was going on at the Spokesman Review as it did about the Jim West. And certainly in all the reader forums, at least, you know, half or 60% of the readers were talking about whether the Spokesman Review should have had Motobrock be anonymous, whether it was entrapment, you know, all the, everything about the investigation itself as opposed to what Jim West did or did not do and what it meant for the community.

Let's see, so back to this. Bear with me. Well, okay. Oh, and the other thing I wanted to mention is the journalists, even when the investigation, even when the Spokesman Review propelled this story and Jim West would call a press conference to accuse the Spokesman Review of victimizing him, for example, or being out to get him [laughing], they would write the story with a third person point of view. The Spokesman Review was written about as an institution, even when Jim West called Steve Smith at home at 6:00 AM one morning and that call and that interview prompted its own story, you don't even hear from Steve Smith until like the 6<sup>th</sup> graph down in the story and the rest of the story is about the Spokesman Review and Jim West's reactions and what he said during that interview. But online Steve Smith put his notes that he'd taken during that interview online and you see Jim, uh, Steve Smith's little notation. You get a feeling for, you know, what Steve Smith's thoughts were during this whole interview. You also get in the audio and the interchange between reporter and sources, the little small talk, the way in which these stories are reported, come out.

You really get the news gathering part of it. And they become developed characters. For example, you get the press conference videos in which Steve, um, Jim West is accusing the individual reporters, "Karen, you know the FBI didn't say that. And Bill, what are you trying to do to me?" And it becomes much more personal story, which I also thought was pretty fascinating.

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So then I was thinking about all this and what does that mean for the news paradigm? And I sort of come up with, came up with this a couple of weeks ago, I guess right before I had to send in this paper, the revised paper to put online. So this is still a work in progress but the idea is that, to me it seems like we have these, the traditional newsroom happening where you have the reporters reporting and going to their official sources and gathering all the information and then culling it down into something that appears in text. But on the, we also have this sort of onion layer that's a sheath over this traditional process and in this process you have individual citizen contributors and you have sources and you have individual reporters who are renegotiating that story and the new narrative is coming out of that process. You have audiences preparing information, countering information, accusing and also praising the journalism that is happening but also adding new information that they've come across and new analysis.

And I find this idea kind of fascinating having just come from a traditional print newsroom because it represents a shifting of not only the news paradigm and the routines that we go about 'cause I think I would conduct my interviews a little bit differently if I knew that everything was going to go up online. But also I'm wondering if there's a shifting of authority happening?

And that does me.

[audience applause]

**Ji Young Kim:** Hello, my name is Ji Young Kim and I'm at Syracuse University. Before I start I want to say that I'm really happy to be a part of this event and it's really nice of you to give me a chance to visit such a nice city and great campus.

This is a consultative research study which I've done during my Masters study with my professor, Dr. Pamela Shoemaker. And in this study we will focus on the organizational gatekeeping effect and we examine how newsworthiness is defined differently on online news media. Especially in [inaudible] research study, we focused on two types of online media, such as traditional newspaper on one side and [inaudible] on this side.

Let's see why we think the study of [inaudible] is important in journalism study. After emailing and going online to conduct a search, usually just the third and most popular are line activity. And as a new format of news to the system developed, what we formally know about news production has changed. Or so our research said online media development changed the nature of journalist skills and the characteristics of news content.

The chart on the left side shows the encouraging use of online media to get a news. And you can see some significant increase during the past four to five years. Or so the second chart shows that the portal media have a relatively strong power as a news source. So here I looked at news content from traditional news website and portal news website. In many cases we think traditional newspaper online site uses same principle when they choose their news content as to the printed version of the newspaper. And we want to pass that, what prints or [inaudible] for portal news website.

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Usually portal website at collecting news stories from other online news media or traditional news media and they created their webpage with headlines and some teasers for news. So they can attract online users. And while we do not know is that these remediation news process is different from the online mediation process.

Actually there are some arguments about this issue in journalism field. For example, those who believe that news media have a social responsibility say that the portal news website are money makers only. And they do not have a sense of social responsibility and some others are that portal news website are reading news stories is entertainment activity.

It might be a little hard to read but this article shows also that the portal news website insists they should not be asked to carry those same rate of responsibility as traditional media outlets.

We found out they already go back around and we're going to organizational to gatekeeping. In terms of a gatekeeping, organizational effect is very significant in news making process because organizations hire gatekeepers and make the lures. And success for gatekeepers are who to contribute to the organization's goals and following their lures.

So here are some differences between two online website in this point of view. Traditionally government or business organizations are the main news source for newspapers. But now portal news website consider more about individual online users' needs and their interests. Based on this concept, we were looking at the newsworthiness of news stories. We used seven indicators with two newsworthiness concept. They are deviance and social significance. Dr. Pamela Shoemaker and her colleague defined this newsworthiness and indicators and we used that as traditional study.

I will give you a brief idea about what is indicator [inaudible]. Status deviance means how unusually event can occur in [inaudible] and socialistic significant deviance is measured by how potentially news threatens the state, social status quo. And also the normal rate of deviance is measured by how much the news spreads to low and the policy of the society. And the social significance means that how our news is important and how much it has impact on the society. And there are 4 different perspectives in social significance, which are; political, economical, economy and the [inaudible] and public.

To help your understanding I will give you very simple examples. I copied some headlines of most popular news stories from two line website and highlighted some key word. You can see some word "police", "U.S. envoy", "spy force", and the NewYorkTimes.com and you can see some "comedian", "trees", "grape seed" in Yahoo news. In this example, the New York Times stories has more, the NewYorkTimes.com has more stories related to the government officers or government activities.

Previously one researcher or so found that 60% of news stories are related to the government officials through the [team] in traditional newspapers. But this trend has changed in the portal news site and that's why some people argue that the portal news website cannot satisfy the criteria of journalism and thus also why we want to see it as content on the portal news site.

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So here we proposed two hypothesis, basically saying that stories of the portal media site are more deviant and more socially significant than the stories of the traditional newspaper [website].

The methodology which we used here is content analysis. Every day we visit a website, these 2 online website, and collected a news stories from their first page of the main news section. For 1 [inaudible] period. And then we coded it newsworthiness of each news stories. As a [inaudible] we collected 342 news stories from the traditional newspaper online site and we collected 344 news stories from portal news sites. And also we landed on this, consolidated 80 newspapers, 80 news stories out of the 686 news stories. And two people coded newsworthiness of this news content and here is the [inaudible] liability.

Our measure to show stat is three indicators of deviance. Our lead by portal news site. For example, the portal news site has more breaking or unusual news stories than the traditional online media. And this differences were all significantly supported so we found the strong relationships between the deviance of news stories and the type of news organizations.

Next we also asked whether there is a significant relationships between social significance of news stories and the types of online news media. As we were measured, we supported this relationships. But the directions of relationship was somewhat different from what we proposed. That is the political and economic significance were lead by traditional online media while the cultural and public significant are lead by the portal news media.

This is measure of somewhat reasonable when we think that traditional newspaper online site is collaborative from the traditional printed version of newspapers. And for a long time newspaper has responsibility to deliver a socially important news content or news stories to its public. So their main news source was government or economic event. And so consequently the tradition is newspaper online site, the political and economic significant news stories are more important.

So keep things short, I conclusion we founded the organizational effect on this remediation news process. Also regarding to the newsworthiness, we also founded that these 2 newsworthiness construct are deliberate and validated to study of online journalism. And furthermore, this study implied that, the study about the portal news media is very important to understand the current online journalism and forecast the nature of online journalism in the near future.

Finally, we suggested that future study will, should have, should look at the intensity of a news worthiness indicators to have a better understanding about the degree of difference of the newsworthiness between the different type of online media.

So that's all I have today. Thank you very much for your attention. I also want to think my co-author, Dr. Pamela Shoemaker. Thank you very much.

[audience applause]

**Edward (Ted) M. Kian:** Well, there you go. Okay, like Sue, this is basically part of a much larger study, i.e. a dissertation, and this was, I changed it, too, from the original which was going to look at both newspapers and online to look at specifically for online for this conference. So basically this was going to be one-third of a

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dissertation. Now it's one-sixth, in a sense I split one area to look more at that. So I may make some references to other findings but I'll try to stay focused on the online because I know that's what is of interest here.

Okay, I imagine many of you are not familiar with research on sport media but what we have seen, this goes all across the United States, Great Britain, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, etc., both quantitatively and qualitatively is that, and that should be like television. I'm not Senator Stephens, using plural when I shouldn't. That should be television, newspapers and magazines have shown sport media provide less and different types of coverage to women's sports than men's sports. This holds true across the board in terms of numbers. The only exceptions to that are what considered gender appropriate sports for women, historically construed as, which are predominantly gymnastics, figure skating, and, to a lesser extent, tennis. Tennis is seen as more of a gender neutral sport. And men in those sports of gymnastics and figure skating receive considerably less coverage. The rest of the sports women are considered historically inappropriate for, basketball being one of those, they receive considerably less.

Qualitatively, they use different types of language to describe female athletes. Talking about their physical appearance, their attire, their domestic relationships, etc. Basically away from their actual skills or athletic prowess. And this has been shown repetitively on all forms of media.

And as you can see, they do cover less. We talked about and they trivialize. You often see humor involved when writing about female athletes. I mean, you see, if you watch ESPN Sports Center, they'll show Morgana the Kissing Bandit running out during or they'll show what would have been called "honey shots" in research, which is where an ABC cameraman literally focuses on what is perceived to be an attractive female to heterosexual males. And by the way, I saw one time covering a game that the ABC cameramen were literally drinking beer during Monday night football so now I realized why honey shots are so prevalent because you add alcohol to this.

[audience laughter]

But what we have found out is that sport, many scholars have said that sports serves as a [inaudible] institution to preserve the power of men over women in society. And really they say that sport along with the military and maybe some forms of religion are the most, reinforce [misogamy] in society more than any other institution. The mass media goes along with this and helps reinforce that and they do this by covering less of women and when they do cover women's, female athletes, women's sports, they trivialize it, often comparing their abilities to men or lack of ability, lack of physical prowess.

Okay, but there's been a little research done on this new area of online support journalism, which is interesting because, you know, you have different types of writers, different backgrounds, and different rules or lack of rules to follow. I've seen some different numbers here. What I got from the Pew Research Center was 50 million Americans now employ the Internet as their primary source of news information. I teach both undergraduate and graduate students and I can tell you from the college-aged students, the percentages are much higher than one-sixth of Americans because they do not read newspapers anymore and they selectively watch what they want on television and they predominantly get their information from online. At least from the students that I've had at two different universities.

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But, and what we found these gender specific stereotypes that are reinforced through research where we talk about females attire, physical appearance, etc. to make it less on their athletic ability to, you know, and trivialize female athletes. These have been reinforced through descriptors, portrayals, narratives, broadcasts, but we don't know if they are prevalent in online sports writing.

So I had two research questions mainly focusing on, and these changed, too, about a week ago. That mainly focusing on the second one, which was how are these gender specific stereotypes also common that we found have been, found in broadcast commentary in March Madness, are they commonplace in online sports writing? And the reason I say broadcast commentary is because in terms of March Madness, only thing studies have been on television content, from televisions broadcasts but there's been plenty of studies on traditional print journalism and which these are prevalent in other areas of sport.

So I also did a content analysis of March Madness, the men's and women's basketball tournaments, and you can see what the content analysis is. I'm sure many of you all are familiar with that. I believe that's supposed to be 248 total articles. I only did byline articles and the reason for that is what you will find, CBS Sports Line, ESPN.com were all these sport sites will literally link hundreds if not thousands or tens of thousands of AP type stories without bylines. Most of which are redundant and I certainly wasn't going to spend 15 years of my life coding every single one of those articles. So I picked the byline articles. I used two sources, ESPN Internet, I saw a guy had ComScore Network up there. ESPN Internet is the most popular sports-specific sit according to Com Score Network. CBS Sports Line ranked 9<sup>th</sup> but the reason I chose that was because ESPN Internet hosts the entire, televises the entire women's basketball tournament so why not choose the one that televises the entire men's tournament, which is CBS? And then use their network.

Okay, now what I did was I coded every single article for these descriptive categories. Statistical information was not included unless it included a descriptor, some sort of adjective, adverb, something to show that they're describing this. So even though it may sound impressive that someone scored 20 points, if they just said, "Joe Blow scored 20 points," that was not included. But if they said, "Joe Blow dominated play by scoring 20 points," then that was used. So we use these 9.

Also did intercoder reliability. There were two coders that coded every single one of these 248 articles and we did a pretest and 1 category was eliminated. It was initially 10, a category of sexuality because we weren't even close on that but the intercoder reliability rate I believe was like 91.2. I can't remember, it may have been a little bit less but it's supposed to be around 90% or higher.

And the general findings, what you can see there, CBS Sports Line basically ignored the women's tournament. And remember they are the ones that telecast the men's tournament. Almost, uh, 94% of their articles were on the men's tournament. Ironically from the qualitative part of this, of those 5 that were on the women's tournament, they were all written by a correspondent, i.e. a stringer, and the 74 that were on the men's tournament, 68 were done by staff writers or columnists, senior columnists. So basically the full time writers covered the men's tournament and they hired 1 stringer to do the women's tournament and in his 5 articles in the women's tournament, he mentioned men's basketball in all 5 of them. He compared female basketball players to men's basketball players in 4 of them. Okay? And he

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lead with the men's tournament in three of them in which case he then jumped into the women's tournament. ESPN, though, covered a great deal of the women's tournament, as you can see. More than 40% of their articles were and ironically of their 68, I believe 42 of them or 44 of them were written by female writers or columnists.

So based on that primary research question, assumptions were made from numerous studies that have been done on print and broadcast and in most studies have confirmed this. Women's studies would include more descriptors on physical appearances, family roles, athletic weaknesses, negative skill level or failures and, especially, psychological, emotional weakness and humor. And men stories would include more talking about straight up athleticism, positive skill level accomplishments, and psychological strength, fortitude, etc. But the only one that held true was that there were more descriptors on athletic prowess for men's basketball. Saying, "So and so is a natural athlete," along that lines.

Most interesting, the online writers were more likely to include descriptors on physical appearance, such as attire, and family roles when covering men's basketball than women's basketball. And no one had ever found this before. You know, and all these previous studies have talked about how they talk more about the relationships, etc. for women's basketball, you know, their upbringing, etc., whereas with men's basketball focused more on the actual sport or their abilities, physical abilities.

So maybe at least if you use these two online sources, maybe attitudes are changing among the writers in terms of the style. Maybe it's just for the online that they're focusing more on the athleticism and skill level of the female players as much as they do for the male players. But you got to remember, this research only looked at two major media outlets. You certainly cannot generalize for the entire field of online sports journalism in this. And I know for a fact that many of these writers came from traditional newspapers. A friend of mine is ESPN.com traditional. I mean he's the main college football columnist and he worked the Washington Post, before that the HAC and they often hire these people at big bucks. So you certainly can't generalize and they do have a lot of reporting background but it was surprising, these results, nonetheless.

You know, something, study needs to be done on more of what you think of the traditional, cliquish sports genres on the internet, like Rivals.com, Scouts.com sites which are becoming increasingly popular.

And unusual circumstances may have skewed these results. For those of you who are getting ready to watch the Final Four in about an hour and a half, you know, the University of Florida is back there this year. They have three lineage, three players whose parents all played, were professional athletes so Horford, Green, and Noah, whose father was Janek Noah, the great tennis player, and his mother was also a former Ms. Sweden and is a renowned sculpture. So there were continued references to this team that actually won the championship. There were also at least a half dozen stories on UCLA player named Mabaha Amut who is from Cameroon and father's was a tribal leader and was involved with a lot of things and so people, it was interesting stories and they seemed to be repeated. So basically those two alone may have skewed the study because those were the two teams that advanced to the finals and, of course, as you continue to advance you have many, many more stories written about you.

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And that's it.

[audience applause]

**Gabriela Warkentin de la Mora:** Well thank you very much. I don't know if there is question. Are there questions for our panelists? Around here?

[audience comment inaudible]

**Gabriela Warkentin de la Mora:** Sure, you can, just push the button there. No, no, there.

**Sue Robinson:** I just forgot to mention, which is that Jim West is actually presented himself as a heterosexual, very conservative politician who would routinely vote against homosexual rights and so I didn't want to imply that the Spokesman Review was out of line for investigating him. I just wanted to make that clear.

**Audience Member:** I just had one question for Sue. To what extent did the Spokesman Review's website become a forum for critique and complaint about coverage and the nature of the... I mean you alluded to obviously the criticism over the methods used in reporting but was there also a wider critique of why were of they going after him or was there, you know, a concomitant defense of the newspaper online by readers?

**Sue Robinson:** Incredibly, in fact, all of the three chats that the readers held with the online editor were full of those kinds of accusations and with the Stephen Smith continually trying to focus the story back to Jim West and sort of doing his own sort of news repair in those chats. And then the reader forums went back and forth, not only talking about Jim West and, you know, a lot of people accused the Spokesman Review of attacking a homosexual, for example, and then all of the blogs that were linked to off of this site, they were, I'm sure you guys remember a couple of years ago it was just this incredible national story that took on national legs, that the site linked to, as well. So.

[audience member comment inaudible]

Sue Robinson: What they did was they linked to Technorati and then it automatically put you into the search and so it would, and it was always the most recent so it wasn't like it archived it on a particular day. So when I accessed it, if I accessed today I would get different blogs than when I accessed it. So, yeah, it was neutral in that sense.

**Gabriela Warkentin de la Mora:** I just want to, I also had a question very much in that sense. So what they did online, they did it after having the story in a way of, was it sort of like, sort of like a defense, defending the newspaper or did they plan to do it in advance? Having all those, the records and everything online?

Sue Robinson: Well, actually, Steve Smith called Ken Sands into his office about five days before they were going to splash the May 5<sup>th</sup> all the stories and the break the investigation and so Ken Sands only had a week or so to put up everything that they could and over a period of couple of weeks, eventually everything got online. However, you have to remember, too, that this was back in early 2005 and so the Spokesman Review is, of course, they do a lot more now so this was sort of a

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learning experience for them, according to the editors over there. But it wasn't something that was planned all along, like, "Yeah, we're going to have this giant web component." They did the print investigation and then the, sort of the last minute they decided to put all the rest of it up.

They don't do that anymore. No, no, now they really, the Spokesman Review is one of the innovative leaders in just pairing and incorporating web and print. They do a really nice job.

**Gabriela Warkentin de la Mora:** Anyone else? Thank you very much everybody here.

[audience applause]

**Rosental Calmon Alves:** Okay, I think, I'm not going to have a wrap up. Thank you very much for staying until now here. I hope you enjoyed the symposium. Thanks for participating. If you have any suggestion, any suggestions for next year, etc., let me know. if you have any final comment now about the symposium or the ideas that we had here, any comments, we are open now.

**Audience Member:** Yeah, the date and time for next year?

**Rosental Calmon Alves:** Oh, a date and time for next year. We don't but you going to hear from us soon, especially because we love this auditorium here and it's the kind of the darling of the campus now and I have to reserve up front. So does anybody want to make any comment, any? Thank you. Thank you for coming. Alright, thank you.

[audience applause]

And there will be a shuttle to the airport, to the hotel with someone needs. When?

[audience member comment not audible]

**Rosental Calmon Alves:** 5:30? Ewww, we, yeah, maybe we can call them and see if they come early. Alright. Thank you.