Saturday—Panel 3: Reconsidering Journalism and its Effects on a Wired World

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Panelists:

Stephen D. Reese, professor, School of Journalism, UT Austin (moderator and discussant)

"You've got News: a permission-marketing model using sponsored electronic newsletters" - **Anca C. Micu** (graduate student) and **Clyde H. Bentley** (associate professor), University of Missouri-Columbia.

"Wikipedia as Participatory Journalism: Reliable Sources?" - **Andrew Lih**, assistant professor, Hong Kong University.

"Travelling without moving: Foreign news and boundary-crossing in Cyberspace" - **Jeremy Edwards**, graduate student, UT Austin.

"Redefining Multimedia Toward a More Packaged Journalism Online" - **Amy Zerba**, graduate student, UT Austin.

"Examining the Media Agenda: a comparison of the way traditional and online media presented the 2000 and 2004 presidential primaries" - **Donica Mensing**, assistant professor, University of Nevada-Reno.

STEPHEN REESE: He has poetically called third panel, although he went on to say it's reconsidering journalism and its affects on a wired world. I'm Stephen Reese. I'm a professor in the School of Journalism and Rosental was kind enough to involve me to moderate and I will restrict my role to time keeping. We will have five papers here and I'll ask the authors to stick to a maximum of 15 minutes apiece. And so I'll give them the signal and try to enforce that time according to the Brazilian style of rigidity.

But I would just like to take a moment to thank Rosental because since he arrived here at Texas he has had as his mission to make bridges between the professional and academic communities and he has done that again today by including some research papers in addition to the excellent professional talks and panels. And so we're very pleased to have a number of competitively selected refereed papers for presentation today. So, I would like to acknowledge them, half the faculty, my colleague Rosental, for doing that. So how about a round of applause? I know that's why he invited me to be a moderator, because he knew I would praise him and…Ok.

Well, we're happy to have these authors, who many have traveled from quite a distance and because of some time constraints and scheduling we're going to alter a little bit the order in your program and we will begin with Andrew Lih from Hong Kong University. He will be speaking about, "Wikipedia as Participatory Journalism: Reliable Sources?" Andrew.

ANDREW LIH: First of all, I'm happy to be here after 17 hours on a plane, and I'm a great admirer of Madan so I'm really happy to have met him for the first time here. I think on his business card should be a label, "After Lunch Speaker," because I've never felt so energized after a big meal, after hearing him. Actually, I'm going to do something

unusual because what I'll talk about is actually not, actually my paper is only going to be part of the presentation because over the last day when I've been talking to a lot of folks here I realized a lot of people don't even know what Wikipedia is, much less analysis of its impact on the media ecology.

So, a lot of what I'll be talking about today is just an overview of Wikipedia and the kind of online community that it's developed. So, we'll talk a little bit about participatory journalism, Wikipedia, and some of the research that I've done recently on it.

Participatory journalism is kind of a new label for what we've been seeing happening in the industry and a lot of what Madan's been talking about today. But in this paper, which I recommend all of you read in the **"We Media" paper by Boman Willis**, they define participatory journalism as this: "The activist citizen or group of citizens playing an active role in the process of collecting, reporting, analyzing and disseminating news and information. The intent of this participation is to provide independent, reliable, accurate, wide-ranging and relevant information that a democracy" – and I'll put in or civil society – "requires."

I think the democracy angle is uniquely an American orientation. But in many places where I speak in Asia, where democracy may or may not be in their immediate plans, I think there still is a role for participatory journalism in a civil society when we talked about those areas.

The two main things that we like to talk about in terms of participatory journalism are weblogs, which we've talked about today, but also this new thing called a "Wiki," which some of you might have heard of before but it's a new, but very simple concept. At Hong Kong U. had an experience in using both these tools in the classroom.

So, Dan Gilmore from San Jose Mercury News, I think someone quoted him earlier today. We actually co-teach a class. We've been co-teaching class there since 1999 at Hong Kong U. Only this past year have I been there fulltime. But we have basically been teaching weblogging since 1999. Dan likes to say we're probably the first journalism school in the world to have taught weblogging and last year we're the first one to teach Wikis and Wikipedia.

So, what are Wikis? Well, Wiki is basically based on the Hawaiian word Wiki Wiki, which is the word for quick in Hawaiian. And what happens is it's just a website where every single page has an "edit this page" button, so that any user, whether you're registered or not, can just edit any content on this text oriented page.

It's actually a very simple concept and as I talked to some other folks over lunch, this is actually the original vision of Tim Berners-Lee's Internet, which is not just one-way publishing where people browsing and surfing and just reading but actually participating in creating content, exchanging viewpoints, exchanging results. And it's ironic that it took ten years to actually get this very simple function so that a lot of people could actually collaborate on content.

But what's really interesting about this is when people hear about an encyclopedia in this format, basically articles and any subject that anyone can edit, they say there's no way it could possibly work. It's the craziest idea I've ever heard of. So, I like to, and we'll explain why it isn't the craziest idea ever. But I like to compare the different types of authoring in this way where in the early days of the Internet we basically had websites in

the lower left hand corner. It was fairly involved to create a website. You had to register your DNS name, you need to have a web server running, you needed to FTP-up your files, you needed some kind of web authoring software, maybe Photoshop. So, that kind of suite of resources was actually quite a barrier to participation.

I would argue that the proliferation of open source content management systems - cheap bandwidth, cheap hard disks, cheap server space - has allowed weblogs to arise because weblogs are very easy to deploy today. Free services like Blogger.com or you go to Type Pad - you can download any number of weblog software and put it on your server. And I think the ultimate in ease of use and participation is the Wiki, where you need no knowledge whatsoever about the organization of data, you can actually pitch in and create whatever you want inside a Wiki space.

Roger had a great point about how long weblogs last. Students always ask me, "how come I don't have a weblog?" And I say it's the same reason why I don't get a dog. There's just too much maintenance, right. Once you start it, unless you keep it up, it's a failed experiment. So, engaging in weblogs is easy but keeping one running is a pretty hard thing. It's like keeping a plant or dog long term. It takes a lot of work.

So another way of looking at this as well is that participation in website creation itself is fairly low because of the obstacles in doing that. That was strange. But then you have other things here that you have on a website. You have a lot of rich media, which right now Wiki's don't have. Wiki's are pretty much just text-based websites.

This is an example of what a Wikipedia page looks like. Ok, so Wikipedia was a project started in 2001 as an online encyclopedia that is completely user-contributed – it doesn't even matter if you're a registered user or not. So, this is an example of an article that I think you probably wouldn't find in your typical Encarta or other type of encyclopedia, but this is completely user-contributed. Here, it's on private military contractors. If you look at the bottom of the page here you have links that go out to different places on the Internet, or to links inside this Wikipedia site. And on every single page you have this button, "edit this page" button, which will bring you to something like this. Ok, it will bring up a page just like in your web-based email programs - allows you to edit the text.

You notice the syntax is much simpler than HTML - allows you to make links within Wikipedia by just putting two brackets on each side. So, much simpler syntax, no mismatch less-than signs, double quotes, slashes, those type of things, HREF, equals, those type of things. It's very simple to do that. Bolding is done with three single quotes. Italics are done with two single quotes. Links are done with brackets. Bullets are done with an asterisk. Very simple markup, which allows more people to engage in creating content for this site.

So, how could this possibly work? Well, what happens is there is an overarching editorial policy for this site. It's called a "Neutral Point of View." And the ways it goes is this: The founder said the Neutral Point of View attempts to present ideas and facts in such a fashion that both supporters and opponents can agree. Sounds very idealistic – not all of the articles, or most of the articles, don't even, I guess, comply to this, but it's a good starting point for editorial direction for this site. Another way of seeing it is NPOV or Neutral Point of View is an absolute, non-negotiable requirement of everything that we do.

So, what happens is with this guiding principal people who contribute things to Wikipedia or the regular use of it have adopted these type of principles along side that - sticking to

the facts, attributing sources. In other words, pointing to references on the web that support what they've written in these articles maintaining balance in the article. So, the types of things that you see in Wikipedia are very much like what you would see in a news organization.

For example, they avoid the word "terrorist" or "terrorism" unless it is something that is explicitly labeled so by the initiators of an act. So, it's very similar to what Reuters has adopted as their policy on using the word terrorist as a blanket term in their reporting. There was a very intense community debate within Wikipedia users on whether to name the accuser in the Kobe Bryant case.

Ok, you have all types of people as active participants in Wikipedia, some are lawyers, some are people in the U.S, some people overseas. It's an interesting debate. The ultimate decision was to stick with the mainstream media's decision not to disclose her name even though there are no real legal ramifications for it at this point.

The name of historical locations: Hotly debated inside here too. Gdansk/Danzig, you know, the Polish or German name, is a big issue in there. Or names of disputed areas like the small islands in the Pacific that Japan, PRC and Taiwan are constantly feuding over.

As of March 2004 there are about 2,800 active Wikipedian's in this community, so that means 2,800 folks in March that contributed at least five times. And then 521 what they call very active Wikipedian's, kind of the true believers of this project, that guide and are stewards of the process about a 100 times or more per month.

The growth is quite phenomenal if you take a look at how it's grown since 2001. At this point there are over 240,000 English articles – this is the March 2004 count here. But this is significantly more than the other online encyclopedias that you find, and you'll see that there are some strange bumps in this graph. There are sometimes articles added en masse and here in 2002, 30,000 articles based on the census data for United States towns and cities was added in one bulk upload. But the majority of them are actually hand-edited by individuals in this very simple format that we showed you before.

This is probably the most telling graph is that in the last nine months it is more popular than Britannica or Encyclopedia.com. And, in fact, in the last – this only goes up to February/March. It's actually gotten even further apart in the last month or two. So, there's a lot of popularity of this resource on the Internet, and the funny thing is you might've even used it without realizing it because sometimes Google will index you right into the middle of the Wikipedia. You might read the article but may not even know where it was that you were looking at.

So, multi-lingual statistics: English is by far the largest one but German is a formidable encyclopedia. It's by far the second largest one here. Japanese, French, Polish, Swedish, Dutch, Spanish, and believe it or not Esperanto is tenth on this list, which is quite phenomenal. It's in front of Italian and Chinese, if you can believe that.

I'm really glad Madan brought up the whole idea of how do we move up this information pyramid with Internet information. And I like to say that Wikipedia fills an interesting knowledge gap that's been missing for a long time. At the bottom of this information pyramid we have things like live feeds, stock market quotes streaming in live over the wires. And then as we move up this information pyramid we find that although we have a lot of sources for information and eventually knowledge and books,

academic journals and history books, we are kind of missing things in the knowledge gap there.

So the traditional knowledge gap I define as things are, events that are too old to be retold in the news but too new to be in the history books. And I think examples in 1970's – and I say this because I was growing up in this era – and subjects where I would read the news but I would have no clue what the context was for these stories - were things like the Vietnam War, Israel/Palestine, Lebanon – I had no idea what was going on there when I was reading these articles but I knew things were happening. Or Watergate. These were things they would not retell in the news on a daily basis but it was somehow things, somehow something you could put together if you read the last year or two's worth of news articles, but they were never compiled in one area.

So I would describe it as this knowledge gap – something between the newspapers and magazines and the history books. And if news is the first draft of history, I think Wikipedia serves a role as the working draft of history as it moves along in sync with what's happening in current events. So, Wikipedia kind of fills this gap but also fills the magazine and history book role in the same time.

Wikipedia is International. It's an International audience that participates with it. It's a 24-hour newsroom. It's a strange phenomenon but once it started, it's 24-hours a day, 7 days a week - it's constantly updating. And that's what I want to show you here. This is a live stream of what articles are being edited in Wikipedia right now. This is actually Internet relay check but it gets a feed of every single article that's being changed in Wikipedia right now, and it's almost like an AP news wire where things just keep rolling in. You can see which article's there - technology services, Royal Bank of Scotland, list of counties in Michigan – that's a new article. You can see the capital "N" there. That means someone just newly created that article.

You can click on the link there – it will bring you to that web page right away. So you can inspect that page and what people have added to it. And right next to the web page name is the name of the user in the system that created it. You can choose to register or not to register. If you're registered your name will show up there. If you're not registered then you will see basically an Internet address. I don't know if you can see it here but right there is an IP address. That's an anonymous user – it shows you the IP address of your computer out on the Internet. Yeah, and it constantly keeps rolling over and over and over. Ok, and you can see the time stamp on the left-hand side there.

Ok, so this is what we call the "recent changes" that happen inside Wikipedia and it's constantly rolling over and over. Obviously, during U.S. daytime hours it's more active than during the dark period that we in Asia like to call our prime time where the rest of – when Europe and the U.S. are asleep and Asia's awake the Internet's only running on 1/5 or 1/6 its normal capacity because Asia just does not have as many absolute number of Internet users. But it's an interesting thing just watching all these changes go by and you can inspect all these things by clicking on the name there.

What is the impact of Wikipedia? That's one reason why I want to do the research. There's some famous uses of Wikipedia. One is a court case in Colorado where our favorite "F" word was used by a student in school and he was actually going to be kicked out of school, so the lawyer brought him into, brought the case into court of law, and they actually sited a Wikipedia article in a court of law. It's actually the article on the "F" word – our favorite "F" word.

So quite interesting to see where Wikipedia's popped up in terms of usage just kind of out of nowhere in about two years. This is actually on the Smoking Gun, which someone mentioned today as well. So, this won the Smoking Gun's most, I guess most interesting legal case of the year for that year.

Ok, so some challenges: Vandalism. Obviously, everyone knows this is going to be right for vandalism. Anyone can go in and change it. The solution to this is the "Broken Windows" theory, or the solution to the Broken Windows theory, that you might've seen in the book "The Tipping Point," or have seen with graffiti in New York. If you immediately get rid of the vandalism and graffiti, it will demoralize the people coming into vandalize the site, therefore it's a fruitless exercise for them. And in general this works. You have people monitoring this list day in, day out, minute-by-minute, undoing vandalism within usually 30 seconds of it happening. And that helps keep the vandalism down. It doesn't, it pretty much demoralizes anyone who tries to do anything wholesale on the site.

Edit wars: You have people who don't agree with something and will edit things back and forth and back and forth. It's a strange phenomenon but the solution is talk it out. You might need some arbitration with users in the system, but in general these edit wars work themselves out.

Accuracy: How do you know whether something's accurate or not? Part of my research is looking into the metrics to determine how much credibility to put into an article. So, the solution is for some things are warning messages saying, "this article only has a few number of edits, you may not be able to trust the content at this point," or a request for additions. Basically, putting a message out on their boards there asking for more additions or revisions to an article.

Ok, so some of the research questions I put out there is which articles were analyzed or sited by the press and what are the quantitative metrics for quality in a system like this? So, I basically used two measures here. One is the rigor – the number of absolute number of edits that an article's been through, and the diversity – meaning how many unique editors have actually put their hands on this article? And this is taken from the edit history that you see for every page.

This is an example of the edit history for any single article inside Wikipedia. And it shows the date, the person who edited and the little comment that they can leave describing the changes they made. That's completely voluntary at the end.

But you can actually compare any two versions of an article using a Unix utility called "diff" if you're familiar with that. It will show you the differences between any two text articles and it highlights those changes for you.

Ok, so the methodology was to establish a benchmark using some basic terms out of a general set of topics and to look at which Wikipedia articles fell above or below that benchmark. So, skip the numbers you can actually go into the paper and see those things. I did the same methodology on the actual articles that were sited by the press – 113 citations over 14 months. And what happens here, these are the reputations of the major encyclopedia categories that see you inside Wikipedia. You can see that Islam, WWII, astronomy, Hinduism, earth, Canada – these are subjects that have been edited a lot and edited by a lot of users.

So, they're up in the upper right-hand corner of this graph. The ones that haven't are in the lower left hand corner. This is kind of skewed based on popular topics like WWII, so if you use a logarithmic graph here and kind of stretch it out to see what's being done here you'll see that this is the distribution use logarithmic graph there.

Ok, these are some of the publications that have cited Wikipedia over the 14 months that I've studied this - last year to this year March. You can see they're pretty big publications here. This is just a partial list and these are the articles that were mentioned by the press and where they rated on this chart. You can see – I was talking to the folks from Spain yesterday – the March 11 Madrid tax was one of the most active articles in the last two months. You had people online watching the news and updating this article with the latest updates about whether ETA was involved, the body count, the government reaction, the elections, the whole thing. It's a brilliant article – you should take a look at it. It had, as you can see, almost 900 edits and over 130 unique authors for this article. And the ones toward the right-hand side here are very, what I would call reputable, with our metrics here. And you can see that they have some interesting characteristics there.

If you stretch this, I'll show you the last graph in a second showing you the comparison before and after the mentions. As we said before, Madrid attacks subject of constant updates. The Asian topics are interesting because they actually float above this, meaning that there aren't too many authors but there've been a lot of edits, meaning that you have a dedicated band of folks updating Asian topics but it's not as widely edited as other topics there.

Science and history have a high showing indicative of the type of users that use the Internet. And there's a dedicated current events community - people who watch the news, the addicts of CNN, or BBC and immediately go onto Wikipedia to write the profile of a shake in Iraq or a victim of a bombing, those type of things. Really interesting.

Ok, so this is before the citation by the press - the distribution of articles in terms of reputation. And then after the citation you can see these articles actually improved in quality, whether it's because they were in the current events and people were updating them or the press mentioned itself drove more traffic to the articles and they were improved as a result of the mention itself, ok.

I won't go into these but these are the topics that have actually moved the most from before the press mentioned to afterwards. These are all detailed in the paper and I invite you to take a look at those. I won't go into those specifically.

Conclusion: Simple metrics for rigor and diversity can help identify some of these trends. No one has really done a study of which articles have been cited by the press for Wikipedia topics and I think it's a good starting point for analysis on how these work. And I'm really glad that someone brought up the Catholic and Protestant metaphor because the whole thing for open content, which is what Wikipedia is – an open source software – is a seminal paper called "The Cathedral and the Bazaar." In that paper they talk about Microsoft and closed source as the cathedral - people thinking that you need central control, that you need dogma, you need people to put their stamp on things. And then you have all the people that believe in the bazaar – the power of the people, the power of individuals to mix freely and create things in an organic way.

The same type of thing is true of online content here. I would consider mainstream media as the cathedral, Wikipedia/participatory journalism as a bazaar. But you need both. You don't have one taking over the other and I think it's a good symbiotic relationship that they have.

So I went over a little bit, but that's all I have for now. Thanks.

CLYDE BENTLEY: And so I decided to start thinking about the idea of normalizing it – was this just a semantic situation? They called – my techie friends call it Spam - other people might have called it advertising. So, in true journalistic way I Spammed the university and a, with a survey that we hit on the Internet and got a lot of comments back. I'm going to let Anca talk about it but as she has persuaded me that you may be, this may be the last time you hear the term Spam, because what we've looked is if you start looking at the area, the permission marketing or asking someone, "Can I put this on your email?" it's seen in a much different way.

And there's some goals in here and the one we found is would people be willing to take a discount on their cost of media to do this type of marketing. Let's say normalization. If you're on television, you get free broadcast television because you've given them permission to give you an advertisement. The newspaper business we get an 80% discount on the circulation of newspaper by giving them the permission to give us advertising. With the Internet we pay the full cost of getting our Internet and this is what we're going to go into. If we give you permi – if we get a discount, will you take the advertising?

So, Anca – any who?

ANCA MICU: Thank you Clyde. Before I start talking about our project I want to thank Rosental for the idea of bring academia, academic papers here to this conference. It's been a great, great experience to be here during these two days and meet both professors and practitioners, and I think it's a good blend and I think that academia should have stronger ties to the industry.

Also, I'll refer to quite a few people mentioned that journalists that they talk a lot to their advertising departments lately, and our featured speaker today talked about a lot of things being studied only in business schools and I'm proud to be a product of business school and a person who switched from a business school to a journalism school. My entire background is business. I have an undergraduate in finance - actually and an MBA for Masters with a focus on marketing. And when I said in my marketing department that I want to study advertising they told me study over at the journalism school. So, I think there is a very good reason why they do study advertising in the journalism school. It is communication and it is important to tie and have journalists talk to advertisers.

So, this was a long introduction. Also, yesterday somebody asked if there are some statistics about what are some, what do people do over the Internet. And this is just a statistic on some of the, on advertisements, on the different types of ads, what people trust and what people are annoyed by. Ok, this is very common. And what people trust most is email and then what people are annoyed by most is pop-ups.

This is a statistic from the "Best Practices in Corporate Communications." It's a report that came out for 2003 so it's pretty recent report. So, this is how we focused on email and we thought, ok email is something that people do use most when they go on the Internet.

And this is the model we came up with, as Clyde mentioned a little. We thought, ok people do pay for Internet connection and if they have a broadband connection they do pay quite bit of money monthly for it. I'm a student so I do feel that a lot since I do research online I do need a broadband connection.

So, we figured let's ask people if they would accept email messages, advertising email messages. And since I'm a businessperson we called it "email marketing" instead of Spam. And this is, we said, ok we'll offer a discount. And we actually asked them what percentage of discount, where is the limit, where would you say ok, I'll take it if you give me this much of a discount on my Internet connection fee I'll take it. And then the additional piece of data.

So, initially this model didn't have the newspaper in there. It just had the advertiser, the Internet service provider and the consumer in it. I don't want to offend some people I think consumer instead of readers but they're consumers of the Internet here. When we conducted our, we basically did a, we call it an exploratory research since we didn't statistically sample our university population. We sent an email out the entire university population, so it's students, faculty and staff - it's not only students.

We asked about the different email content – what's the content of email that they would accept? Ok, we'll give you a discount on your Internet connection fee if you would accept marketing over email and what's the content you would at least, you wouldn't mind or you be interested in?

And actually people don't mind getting news over email. If they sign up, if they get their local news – let's say subscribe to their local newspaper I don't think they would mind getting their news over email. And that's the top, it's a huge difference from the first, the top two they don't, it's 63% of them who said, "yeah, I don't mind getting news over email."

And then the second one was accepting emails from websites they already subscribe to, which is pretty obvious. But the news one actually scored higher – there was a higher percentage of people who said I will take unsolicited emails if they're, they have news about – mostly local news – this is what we were looking at.

And then it's below 20% of emails they would be interested in, and the next one far third places emails with job offers or next, retail coupons. Again, we're very much focused on the local thing since we did a local survey for Columbia Missouri.

So, this is where online, the online newspapers, came into the picture. …I'm trying to figure out how to go back on this… Ok, we introduced online newspapers in our model. To put that advertising in, to be carried by the local news, this local news medium that would go through email so local newspapers would be able to send news in this email format. And these are some numbers if an Internet service provider would be interested to actually carry out this more statistically relevant survey to see, those would be some numbers that could be taken to advertisers that would convince them ok this is email that people would actually open and they would not delete with our initial model when we didn't have our newspapers in there.

Some comments that we got were, well, people say they would accept these emails for a discount on their Internet service fee but however they would delete them as soon as they got them, they would delete them and not even open those emails. So, this is an

improved model in terms of you're providing something that people would be interested in – getting news – and it could be supported by advertising since people would be interested in reading those emails and not just deleting them as any other advertising emails.

The discount that we were looking at, obviously, I'm pretty sure, the higher the discount the more the percentage that people were looking at. I'm pretty sure if you would have went up and said 50%, 60% you would have went higher up. However, we have about 45% of people that said, no way - no way, I don't want to see any type of advertising in my inbox.

Ok, so that's 45%, which is not bad from a marketer's point of view. We have the rest of 55% of this local market this is saying I would want to open these emails. I would accept this business model. And then I just ran a couple of regressions to see who are these people who said yes - and very clear adoption of innovation, I think, theory here that's been proved with adoption of technological innovations.

We have the younger people who would be more willing to adopt this model and then the other significant feature that's characteristic of our respondents that was significant is the number of Spam emails that they already receive per day. If we talked to people already have, receive a lot of Spam – and I think since then the university has taken care of that. We have some stronger filters on. But if we're talking to people who already receive a lot of Spam they will ? be locked into - that's a negative relationship there – negative significant relationship there.

Ok. So, that ? was what those were determinants of the attitude towards email marketing. And these are determinants of actually accepting the model. So, of course, attitude towards email marketing - the more Spam I receive I don't like email marketing and then the younger I am I don't mind it as much.

Then they were presented with the model and, again, we have the younger people accepting the model and, of course, the people who had a more positive attitude towards email marketing also were more likely to accept our model.

And that is all I had to say. Thank you.

JEREMY EDWARDS: …And thanks too to Eric for letting me borrow his style for his presentation. It's a great one. So, I'm a Masters student here at the University of Texas and I'm in journalism and I'm studying International communication and globalization and I come from a background in information technology, so hence my presentation, "Foreign News and Boundary-Crossing in Cyberspace."

So, what am I talking about? My study kind of starts from the idea of the online world. On the Internet you've got essentially distance between places that can publish web pages or have email servers that essentially is no object and you can quote/unquote travel to another country just by going to a web page or by sending or reading an email.

So, I was wondering, I was asking the question, who are these people that are doing this - the online travelers, people who are going to websites outside of their own country to read news or talking to people outside their own country on the Internet? And actually Madan talked a little bit about diasporic populations and I am going to get into that, but

I want to start by backing up a little bit and talking about the theory that's already looked at this in communication theory.

There's been some work done on the idea of sort of national consciousness. There's a book called, "Imagined Communities" that came out in the '80's that talked about the rise of nationalism being tied to print media and there's been other studies that have found that if, seen the same sort of thing happen in TV and on the web. Essentially, the idea is that the media is being used to communicate cultural products and it's kind of serving as a way of people reinforcing their cultural and national identity.
And one study has looked at national boundaries, borders. We've seen that those are recreated on the web. If you look at web pages and you follow all the links off of a specific web page you find that they most of the time will link to another page that's hosted in the same country. So they tend not to cross national borders.

And like Madan was talking about you have the research on diasporic group, which looks at groups that have left their home country and are using the Internet or using other media to kind of get back – I call it going back home – get back to their own culture, their own nationality and kind of continually experience that through the Internet.

So the picture that I see as kind of emerging is it's contrary to one that I think maybe sometimes people have of the Internet which is sort of this ocean of information. I think it really is sort of divided up along – I think somebody used the phrase earlier – parallel universe. I think that's a good image. It's like a parallel universe of our own world. There are nations and communities in our own real world that are recreated on the Internet just by the whole structure of the way the thing's put together.

So, then, my research is looking at what happens when you cross these boundaries and who are the people who are doing this. So I kind of came up with this idea of boundary crossing to try to address the similarity between traveling in the real world – quote/unquote "real" I guess – and traveling in the cyber world.

It does seem that the culture on national boundaries sort of behaves the same way on the Internet, at least preliminarily looking at them – that they behave the same way on the Internet as they do in the real world. And so I like to think of travel as boundary crossing and also think of reading a foreign news website, and that is to say one, I'd like to make a distinction between reading a news website that's published from outside your own country and one that's published from inside your own country. I think there's a qualitative difference there. But also communicating with people outside your own country through email or through instant messaging and what have you. I think the important thing that ties all this together is that information or cultural products are crossing a boundary, even if a person is not crossing a boundary. So, anyway, so look at this.

I did an online survey last year of students at a large southwestern university, which shall remain nameless but it was this one – very large one. This was an email survey which I sent out an email that Spammed the whole, about 1/5 of the campus, and I got 842 responses. This was part of a graduate research class so it wasn't just me, but I did this analysis. Anyway, and I wanted to look specifically at the American college students, the U.S. citizens, because there's been a lot of work done looking at the diasporic populations like when you have International students here who we know use the Internet to read their news from their hometown and talk to their families, but I was curious what about the people who aren't from outside the United States but who are

born here or who live here long enough to be citizens and who are using the Internet to actually sort of go outside and travel. And who are these people?
So I asked a couple of different questions. I asked how many countries have you actually traveled to, cause I was looking at physical travel also. I asked do you use the Internet to communicate with people outside of your home country, outside of the United States. And do you read foreign news websites? And I gave the examples of the BBC, I think, Al Jazeera, you know, of course there's a bunch.

So, here's kind of the immediate results. Ninety-two percent of the people that responded said they had traveled abroad to at least one country. I think that's pretty high but I don't actually have any figures on nationwide how many people have traveled, so I don't know but just intuitively that seems pretty high. About half said they use the Internet to communicate Internationally sometimes or often. And about 1/5, 20%, said they read foreign news websites sometimes, at least.

So my question was then you know are these three groups of people, are these the same people doing all of this or are they different people and how do you know? So I crunched the numbers and basically what I found is that the people who are travel – or who are doing this boundary crossing, who are reading foreign news web sites and who are communicating using the Internet for online, for International communication, they are people who have already traveled, by and large.

I found that almost, there was only one person in my whole sample of 800 people who said that they ever read foreign news who had not left the United States, which I think is pretty striking and in general the more that someone traveled. So the more countries they had been to, the more likely they were to say that they read foreign news and the more likely they were to say they did it often instead of just sometimes.

The same thing was true with International communication. The more that someone had traveled abroad the more likely they were to say that they use the Internet for International communication and that they did it a lot as opposed to just some.

And finally there was the same relationship between International communication and news reading ?. The people who read a lot of International news, or a lot of foreign news rather, are the same people who were doing a lot of International communication.

So, I thought this was interesting and I wanted to look at it too from the perspective of well what happens to you when you do this ?. Let me go into this thing before I talk about that. This diagram, by the way, looks really awesome on my computer at home. But, I hope it's kind of clear what's going on here. Basically, I've got, looking at the three different groups that I was looking at, people who – up there at the top in yellow – people who have traveled. That whole big circle represents those people and then the overlapping circles represent the overlapping of the groups. I hope that that's clear.

And what you can see from this diagram is that almost everyone who fits into any of these categories fits into the category of traveling. I think that that's a big thing to take away from this. There's a little asterisk in foreign newsreaders because we did have one person who was in that category, but it's hardly statistically significant. Bu he was there. And so you can also see that about half of the people who traveled did not make any use of the Internet for reading foreign news or for International communication, and then about another half did.

So, the kind of preliminary model that I'm looking at for this is that it looks like travel abroad is something that is kind of a precursor to actually using the Internet in these ways. It's a – it looks like someone is traveling abroad and acculturation is taking place. Acculturation, which I haven't really mentioned here, although I talk about it in my paper, is when you travel to another culture and you sort of internalize some aspects of it.

A person returns home and it looks to me as if the media's being used then to reinforce, revisit or expand on that travel experience. It's not something that someone is using to have a new travel experience that has not traveled before.

So, then again as I was saying, my question is what happens to these people, or does it have an affect on your person? And I was doing this research at a time when the big – I had just read some research about how the Iraq war was polarizing the world in terms of public opinion and that there had been some public opinion surveys done outside the United States that found majority of people opposed to the war. A lot of public opinion surveys done inside the United States had found people supported the war.

So, I was curious if people who did more of this sort of reading foreign news sources and International communication would be – would that have an affect on them? Would they be more likely to share the opinion of the people outside the U.S.? And the answer that I found was "yes, but…" That did happen, but I found that it broke down along lines of people's political identification.

I also asked people, "Do you consider yourself politically moderate, liberal, conservative?" And people who answered those questions, they all said, well, not all of them, but within the limits of this statistic, people said that if they were liberal they more or less supported the war – supported – I'm sorry, opposed the war. And the people who said they were conservative more or less supported it, although I mean, obviously, there was some variation.

But that relationship totally explained the relationship that I found between travel and opinions about the war. However, interesting is that it turns out travelers, communicators and foreign news readers all were more politically liberal than non-boundary crossers, which I think is an interesting finding. That there's sort of two ways to look at it. One is that either traveling, communicating and reading foreign news makes you be a more liberal person or that liberal people are more likely to be the people who travel, communicate and read foreign news.

And I was originally leaning to the first of those interpretations but I found another – after a little further analysis – I found that this relationship only holds for people who are under the age of 26. So, only for young people. The relationship disappears for people over that age, which is consistent with the hypothesis that was put forward in 1991 by Allen and Krosnick called the "Impressionable Years Hypothesis." It's from the theory about political socialization, which says basically that – and I think it's something that's also kind of common sense – that people who are younger are more likely to change their political identity. And that's something that was shown in some analysis that they did.

And so based on that my instinct is to say that what's happening is that at the very least people who are travelers – and I think you know people who are 18 and who have traveled to 12 countries probably didn't do so on the basis of their political leanings, although that could be wrong. But it seems to be the people who have traveled a lot at

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a young age are shifting towards the liberal end of the political spectrum and that, again, the sort of reinforcement that they're getting from the Internet, access to foreign news and foreign communication, maybe is reinforcing that.

So the last thing I have here is some questions and sort of directions for future thought about this. I did choose to do, look at college students – well, partially out of necessity – but also this – it's a good population to look at for this because everyone at the university is required to have Internet access. So, if you want to look at people's Internet use patterns you know everyone's going to fall into the category of being someone you can ask.

I do think it's – it does pose a question about the represenitivity of the sample. Obviously, the rest of the United States and the world 100% Internet access is not the way things are and as I said before I'm not sure about the 92% travelers. So, it would be definitely interesting to look at a larger population that's not confined to a university and see if these same trends still hold outside of this environment.

Another question I have is whether people are traveling online are reading the foreign news from places that they've already been – communicating with people in places they've already been? Or are they actually, does there come a point where they're sort of expanding their horizons and traveling to new places on the Internet, which seems to be kind of the promise of all of this stuff in the first place. Or are they just going home the way that it seems like a lot of the ex-patriots and diasporic populations are doing?

And the last thing is I think there's a lot of other ways to look at this idea of boundary crossing besides just reading news and sending emails. Obviously anything like film, music, literature, pop culture, you know clothing, you name it could be considered a cultural product and it may be, as far as acculturation is concerned, all of those are sort of fair game. So if that's what's going on then it seems like all of those could be things that might bring this on and there would be – there would be things to look at.

So. That's it. Thanks.

AUDIENCE QUESTION: How many of your sample was over 26?

JEREMY EDWARDS: About a quarter

AMY ZERBA: …I'd also like to thank you for staying. I'm so used to being last with my last name, so this is par for the course. I'll start of by saying today I'd like to talk to you a little bit about the concept of multimedia. What does it mean? What does it look like? And what is its purpose?

Back in the mid-1990's, late '90s - let's see if this link works…You mostly saw links like this - video links, audio links coupled with stories. And now you're starting to see more packaged journalism, if you will. And let me get rid of all these Washington Post pop-up ads. Here we go. No Flash, right. Ok, well this is one of the problems with multimedia packages is the downloading, but that's ok.

We all know what multi-packages, or think we know, what they are. One of the ones demonstrated was yesterday in the MSNBC presentation – a really nice one at that. Or was it the New York Times?

So, what frustrated me about a year and a half ago is I'm interested in this type of storytelling and I realized in the literature there was no clear definition of what multimedia was. We have this assumption of what we think it is, and what it looks like, but I was really aggravated that I couldn't really understand what researchers were thinking about when they said multimedia and how they were defining it. So I wanted to take a stab at it. This is probably one idea in probably a sea of ideas that haven't been written or recorded.

So, I wanted to devise kind of an operational definition of multimedia for future studies. Now I, journalists hate academics for trying to define things and making them clear and so forth, but journalists could take the satisfaction in knowing they are the ones who helped me form these definitions because I did in depth interviews to come up with a model, so.

So, what I did – I did three things. I broke down multimedia into its smallest unit, which is - what is a medium? And I just looked at the surface level. I didn't try to be philosophical in who gets the message, who doesn't, because that's a whole nother project in itself, so I kind of just looked at media in general and the tangible mediums out there.

So, a medium is a means of communication. We all know this is a tool to transmit a message. A photograph is a medium but yet a newspaper is a medium, so both are a way to deliver a message - one maybe to just one person, the other to many people at a distance.

The multimedia literature: This is the second way I looked at the concept. Basically, researchers and journalists themselves say it's the integration of more than one medium. However, the word multimedia predates computers. It goes all the way back to prior to the 1940's when scholars and doctoral students were looking at the word in classroom learning. They were looking at how additional media can help in the learning process, bringing in a slide show, bringing in a map. So they were looking at how the purpose of multimedia, the purpose of adding additional cues to learning, increases the understanding of information for students.

So I looked at the word itself and looked at the smallest unit of it. I also looked at previous definitions – these broad definitions that were out there – and I also interviewed seven multimedia journalists who are doing it every day, including Naka Nathaniel was one of the interviewees. I used "snowball method" – just asked journalists to refer me to someone else, and the interviews lasted between one and two hours in the fall of 2002.

These are the sites from the, where the journalists work, anywhere from a huge staff to a one-person freelance journalist in the United States. And these were the three questions I focused on: What is a multimedia feature? What is a multimedia package? And what can multimedia online give readers that they can't get from just reading text?

And when I asked this question the same tangible media that we think of was their answer – text, photographs, audio, video and graphics - media we see and we can hear. But also in these interviews they kept referring to interactivity. Interactivity was repeatedly mentioned throughout the interviews. So, in looking at this I saw that multimedia is used – something is multimedia because it's text and it's audio or it's text and it's video – but something can act like multimedia and maybe because of this interactive component.

So, I went a little further and asked them well, would an interactive map without audio, just a geographic map that was interactive, would that be considered multimedia? So I took that second media mount and placed it with interactivity to see if that makes something multimedia. And their answers were very unclear. There was a lot of "I think so's, probably, technically it's not, it's just one medium, I don't know." So even multimedia journalists have trouble defining what they do. There's no clear definition for them. I even had one person say that's for you academics to figure it out. So, it was pretty funny.

So there's this uncertainty about the concept but in summary, what they said was something like an interactive map is part of a bigger picture. It's not – you can't just take it out. It has to be related to something, context of sort. So that's where I started looking into the concept "multimedia package," which is what you starting to see more of on sites.

I had to, of course, look at the term "interactivity," which is, probably everyone is looking at this term now. And there's also no clear definition of interactivity, but if you look at interactivity at its most basic level it's a hyper-link. It's this three-step communication process where if I go to the Washington Post they give me information, I click on a hyper-link, I get related information back. So, it's kind of a three-step exchange process and all of the information is related to each other. So that' the most, arguably the most, simple of interactivity.

So in looking at a multimedia package and in looking at their interviews and their responses, I kind of looked and brought the themes that surfaces together and realized the characteristics were more than one medium. It could be static or dynamic. It had to have some sort of context or they would be just two separate, individual mediums. And also interactivity.

So a multimedia package consists of more than one medium, in combination with interactivity that is related to a story, event or information.

So here's kind of a model that helped me form that definition. Figure one is like a pre-computer model of multimedia packages. Multimedia packages have always been around. It's not a new thing. Teachers could include text in a map in a classroom, but there's still context. That hasn't changes at all. Interactivity in classrooms can be pushed at a user so, I mean multimedia can be pushed at a user, or it can be an interactive feature in pre-computer days.

But now with a news site model of multimedia package interactivity is a required component of multimedia. You, the user, has to choose to select video – a user has to choose to select audio. Rarely do you ever see it pushed at a user and that's the most basic level of interactivity with multimedia. So this multimedia package on the right side is what journalists are striving for in telling a story.

The third question I asked is what does multimedia give readers that text can't? And the overwhelming purpose, according to these journalists, was giving them additional ways to understand information. Another theme that surfaced was this heightened user experience and this came from them referring to emails they received from users about stories that they had did on the site.

An example: "I got this email before that said I'll never look at a computer the same way again." For some people this is the first emotional experience they've ever had with a computer that didn't involve a member of the family or email with a grandfather, and that's sort of a new thing. And this was Joe Weiss, one of the interviewees.

Another purpose of multimedia that surfaced, another theme, was this extension of reporting, this – just something's being told better with added media. And they talked about the art of multimedia – being able to pick and choose between mediums to tell a story.

This was an Elvis thing I was going to show you at the beginning. This multimedia journalist did a story about Elvis tribute artist that had to be done in video. I mean, I couldn't see that any other way. You had to see this guy move and so it doesn't feel like it's actually a decision. It sort of feels like, well, that's the way I should've done it.

So in summary a multimedia feature is an integration of more than one medium. Features include text, photographs, graphics, audio and video, both static and dynamic or a mixture of both. A multimedia package consists of more than one medium, combined with interactivity that has context. The primary purpose was to give readers additional ways to understand a story. Also, heightened user involvement was another theme. And extension of reporting was a third theme.
And, in closing, the purpose was to kind of get a better understanding of what researchers are really studying and what multimedia does look like – its physical attributes. Future studies? What's fascinating about this multimedia storytelling, it has great implications for young adults, especially non-readers of news. It also could be good for people with different learning styles who may not want to read and want to watch something that's more entertaining or more interactive.

Also, the time that multimedia journalists put into these packages they could be anywhere from a few minutes to more than a year. So, my question is, do users even care about these huge packages that they're producing? And, if so, what are they getting from them?

I also thought about it a few days ago, if their main purpose is to get users to understand information - is that really happening? Future studies could look at the different dimensions. I just basically looked at the basic level and can build up from there but there's obviously several dimensions of multimedia storytelling still to be explored, so. That's it. Thank you.

DONICA MENSING: …I also wanted to thank Rosental for this fantastic conference -and this room is starting to feel like a bus to me and it's like we've been on this road trip together and we've seen some incredible scenery and some fantastic things and now we're back in the city limits and this final paper I feel is like being on the freeway and we're almost home, so I'll be as concise as possible.

I worked at the Minneapolis Star Tribune online in 1996 when they switched from interchange to the web, which was a fun process to watch. Also, they were doing some incredible packages for the elections, looking at ways to involve people, to get precinct information, things that I did not see happening the newspapers or TV at all, so it got me thinking of the role of online media in political information. I then went to school and got a Ph.D. in political science so that I could look at this and I now teach at the University of Nevada–Reno, so.

The premise for this study is looking at agenda setting. Researchers have tracked the media agenda and they have plenty of evidence that what the media chooses to focus on is what people think is important – that there's a transfer of issue salience from the media to the audience. And so it puts a lot of responsibility on the media as to what is important – what the top stories are. And what we've also found is that political news has a fairly established pattern among traditional mainstream media – how it's covered.

So the big questions that I was looking at was compared with newspapers, which are kind of the gold standard, do online news sites present a same media agenda when it comes to political news? And the second question I had was whether there are differences in the way political news is presented in different types of online news sites, thinking that probably down the road we're not going to talk about online newspapers and online broadcasts but that they'll just be online news, and if we can track kind of how that changes. What happens to news as it becomes less defined by the old medium -- it becomes its own medium.

But of course I couldn't answer the big questions, so the small questions that I looked at was just wondering how did newspapers and online news sites cover the Presidential Primary in 2000 and 2004? I picked the Primary because media is most important during that Primary stage because people need information. They can't vote on the basis of their party. They have to decide within the party who to support. So the media's been shown to have the most effective, most influence, at that stage of the Presidential process. And then I also wanted to know were there differences in the way online newspapers, online broadcast sites and then online only news sites presented news about the Primary?

Now agenda setting: It's a specific theory and it looks at certain variables - and some of you might consider this the "no duh" page. Front-page stories have a bigger impact than inside stories. Prominently placed stories are noticed more. Photographs attract attention - and you guys have already seen that is the same in online media. And also that longer stories indicate that editors have placed a higher priority on this issue then other issues. So these are ways to measure the media agenda.

What we also know is that the media agenda has been shown to be fairly consistent among between types of media and there's also studies that have shown the New York Times has been a media agenda setter. You see the story shows up in The Times and it then disperses to other media.

So the sources that I looked at in this study for online newspapers, I took the three largest - well I started with the print – the three largest general news daily newspapers: New York Times, LA Times and USA Today. Took their counterparts as the online newspaper sample. For broadcast sites I looked at ABC, CNN – in 2000 I tried to look at MSNBC but like somebody else mentioned today they were very hard to download and copy. So, I ended up using CBS. With MSNBC's redesign I was able to capture it for 2004.

Online only: I did Salon and Slate in 2000. This time I added Yahoo News just to see how it was doing. And you can see the left-hand piece there – that's just a little clip from front page of the New York Times, a Maureen Dowd column, you know with a link to the Dean video, which I though was fun. Right there – "The squeal heard round the world," is what she called it, ok.

So the data that I collected: I started about 11 o'clock at night and I collected the front pages of each of those sites. And then I also copied the foremost prominent front-page stories about the Primary each day, and I did it from the day before the Iowa caucus until the nominee was chosen. That was 47 days in 2003 and it was 49 days this time period, so, happens pretty fast.

And the results: This shows you the number, the average number, of front-page stories about the Primary for each of those categories. So, in 2000 online newspapers actually had the fewest average number of stories and online only stories the most in this time period. Newspapers had the fewest – it goes right up the scale - online newspapers, then online broadcasts.

Online only sites are averaging ten stories a day about the Primary. Now, the reason that is is their front-pages are more like indexes, so there are stories that show up, some of these are repeat stories. Very different – a newspaper would never run the same story two days in a row. But Salon, Slate – they do it all the time. CNN also does it regularly – keeps the same story up for three or four days in a row.

I looked at the average length of the front-page stories and 2000 newspapers had the longest stories. Online broadcast sites had the shortest stories. Again, reflecting their parent media, I think. In 2004, interestingly, their stories grew longer than the newspaper stories. Online broadcast sites still had the shortest stories. And online only sites grew but I think that's primarily because of Yahoo, which is 99% AP news wire. And those stories were longer than the columns that Salon and Slate.

Another thing I looked at was how prominent did they play the stories about the Primary. This is the data from 2000 and if you look at the first column, "highest priority," that's the lead story. Online newspapers, 1/3 of the stories about the Primary were the lead story, whereas in online only news it was down to 13% led with stories about the political Primary.

If you go and then look at the lowest priority these are just one line, not even a teaser, just a headline link somewhere down on the bottom of a very long page. So, for the online broadcast sites 58% of the stories about the Primary were buried at the bottom with just a headline.

In 2004 online newspapers - now I should explain. In 2004 I have not finished coding. This only represents a week. And I think that's going to skew the data because I looked at the week between New Hampshire and South Carolina thinking, gee, that'll be really fun, that's when a lot was going on. I think that's when there's the least amount of difference between the different sources so that's why on the paper it says "preliminary – I'm still coding" because this is the tedious stuff.

Anyway, newspapers were, they played the Primary story as the lead story much more frequently than the online newspapers or online broadcaster, online only. The reason that I chose to download and look and compare late at night is because that's when it's getting prepared for the next morning, thinking that would most closely reflect the news judgment of the mother media. During the day when updates are going on I thought it'd be very hard to capture. So, it is interesting the news choices, the difference there, just between newspapers and online newspapers.

I looked at the number of photographs – only in 2000. In 2004 I haven't yet coded this variable, but in 2000 newspapers by far had more photographs than the other media sources. And as much as we've talked about today that photographs attract attention, that they're very important to our viewers, they were not being used very much in 2000. Now, my sense from looking at these articles is that these numbers are going to change in 2004, but still newspapers have far more photographs than the others do.

So, then, trying to figure out could I come up with some number to represent how important these different news sources made the Presidential Primary…I gave each story a score based on the story placement, the story length and whether it had a photograph. And so each story had a score for those three variables. I decided to exclude the stories of lowest prominence, the ones that were at the bottom, because I just felt that they weren't adding anything to most people's understanding about the Primary or about the media agenda because they were so far down the pages.

And when I added up the scores for each story, what this graph represents - the number that the left-hand axis, is the mean for adding up all the scores by each group. So for newspapers the average mean for the three scores that I put together was a seven. And you can see it's an interesting line; newspapers placed the political primary highest on the media agenda, then online newspapers, then online broadcast, then online only news falls much lower. So there's a clear pattern of how the Primary is being played if you accept this as a way to look at it.

I have some other ideas on ways to analyze this that I will continue with for 2004 and be interested in seeing how that might change. I have a lot of other data and if we had two more days I'd be happy to show it – I won't.

This was just one other thing that I've been looking at. I thought maybe you'd be interested. These are the types of stories that are showing up in Primary coverage. So the top one - newspaper, first column, straight news – these are often wire stories. They're just, you know, kind of horse race coverage – who won the Primary, what they're doing today. So, newspapers, online newspapers, a little over half of the stories are straight news. Online broadcast even more. Online only, 5%. And in 2004 the online only straight news went up. Again, only because of Yahoo and those AP wire stories.

If you then go to the far other side with the Opinion and Commentary, online only news in 2000, 59% of the stories were opinion and commentary. And I think that shows a shift in the kind of political coverage that we might expect as we move to this new medium. What does that mean? How does that affect our understanding of what political news is? But there's definitely a shift.

In 2004, looking in that Opinion/Commentary column, at least in the one week that I've coded so far, no newspaper put any opinion on the front page. But, again, half of the online only news stories were opinion and commentary.

So what does that mean? I think, you know, the differences in the number of front-page stories, as I mentioned, online only news sites are making their front pages indexes to content, rather than a guide to the most important stories of the day. I think that's a real shift in how we're using a front page, a homepage – those are two very different things. And, obviously, what Roger is working on gets us back to a front page that indicates the importance of stories. An index is not much of an editorial judgment, so how that changes what we click on, what we see…

There's an interesting study done, (inaudible), I can't remember the other author, that had a group of New York Times readers read just the print version and a group to read just the online version and then they gave them this recall and "what happened in the week that you did this study." And the people that were only reading online news missed some major events. I mean there were things they didn't have a clue about, compared to the print readers. And they felt it was because they were picking off this index and able to choose what they were most interested in wasn't necessarily what was happening day to day, which is what they'd asked about in the survey. So, interesting.

And also the fact that broadcast sites and online only news sites keep stories posted for several days in a row. If you're a reader and you only have time to check in on a site every few days that might be very useful. You can catch up on news; you can see what you missed. If stuff disappears quickly you develop these gaps in what had happened - so, the kind of archival purposes of the news, online news space.

Other obvious points: Online only and broadcast sites are writing much shorter than the newspapers and online newspapers are. These sites are also breaking stories into separate chunks, so say rather than having one very long story that mentions every candidate and what they were doing, you can click on each candidate. And so it's a different way of organizing information. And, again, research about which is most effective for readers would be really helpful.

Differences in placement: You know, print and online had more top stories about the election than broadcast and online only. And does this indicate there is a broader definition of what makes a top story online? Or do newspapers have a more narrow definition? I guess that's the same question posed a different way. And does it mean that readers will be less clear about what stories are most important (getting back to the idea of a media agenda)? Will we understand what stories we need to be aware of as citizens to participate in the kind of government that requires participation?

Two final thoughts: Ok, if newspapers and online newspapers places news about the Primary election higher on the media agenda that could mean a couple of things. One, that readers of online news, of non-newspaper news sites, will not come in contact with as much primary news as do newspaper readers. Other types of news may become more news worthy online that customization, personalization, greater diversity and what constitutes news could make traditional political news stories less prominent in the collective political consciousness. And I think what it's doing is creating a space where people who want to be informed will be even better informed and those who are not as motivated will become even less informed because they're not running into it as often.

The conversation that we were having yesterday about all the great content that's on these sites, at least for sure in 2000, it was not being linked to off the front page. I mean there was some incredible election stuff going on in online newspapers but you couldn't see it. If all you did was look at the front page, read an election story, you didn't get there. I mean the links were not set up in a way that would allow people to find that information through a story. It came in other places but it wasn't in a logical fashion for some people. So, lots to think about and that's all I have to say.