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UNIT 1 Living with Media

Unit Overview xvi

- 1. In the Beginning Was the Word**, Christine Rosen, *Wilson Quarterly*, Autumn 2009
This is an essay about the place of the **book** among its contemporary competitors for attention. 3
- 2. Revolution in a Box**, Charles Kenny, *Foreign Policy*, November 2009
Charles Kenny contends that even in the age of the Internet, **television** “is still coming to tens of millions with a **transformative power**—for the good—that the world is only now beginning to understand.” 7
- 3. Tele[re]vision**, Jenny Price, *On Wisconsin*, Summer 2009
Research exploring how **children** watch and respond to **television** concludes that **prosocial programming** can be effective, although children’s interpretations of meaning may differ from adult producers’ intent. 12
- 4. Television and the Decline of Deference**, Stuart Clayton, *History Review*, December 2010
Stuart Clayton asks whether the mass media have undermined the status of leading authority figures in Britain, including **politicians and royalty**, since 1945. Points of reference include softened regulations, profit motives, investigative journalism, and the cult of **celebrity. Feedback** trumps feedforward in Clayton’s conclusions. 16
- 5. I Can’t Think!**, Sharon Begley, *Newsweek*, March 7, 2011
Research summarized in this article indicates that, and explains why, **information overload** can lead to bad decisions. 21
- 6. The Digital Disruption: Connectivity and the Diffusion of Power**, Eric Schmidt and Jared Cohen, *Foreign Affairs*, November/December 2010
The “**interconnected estate**” is “a place where any person with access to the **Internet**, regardless of living standard or nationality, is given a voice and the power to effect change.” Eric Schmidt and Jared Cohen explore the relationship of **connection technologies** and **international governance**. 25
- 7. Journalist Bites Reality!**, Steve Salerno, *Skeptic*, vol. 14, no. 1, 2008
Steve Salerno takes on **agenda-setting effects** of news and information media. Examples in his argument include journalists’ failure to distinguish between random data and genuine statistical inference, oversimplification (**red state-blue state** dichotomy), and **iatrogenic reporting** (provable harms that didn’t exist until journalism got involved). 30
- 8. Girls Gone Anti-Feminist**, Susan J. Douglas, *In These Times*, February 22, 2010
“What the media have given us . . . are little more than fantasies of power,” writes Susan Douglas. The article examines contradictory **female roles in media**, raising implicit **feedforward versus feedback** questions. 36

The concepts in bold italics are developed in the article. For further expansion, please refer to the Topic Guide.



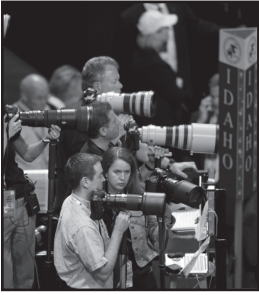
UNIT 2

Telling Stories

Unit Overview

- 9. The Reconstruction of American Journalism**, Leonard Downie Jr. and Michael Schudson, *American Journalism Review*, November/December 2009
 A thoughtful and comprehensive analysis and prescription for the roles of **print and television news media** as information is reported across a greater number and variety of sources. Topics include content, accountability, and **financial models** that support public information access. 40
- 10. Retreating from the World**, Jodi Enda, *American Journalism Review*, Winter 2010
 Jodi Enda presents an in-depth description and analysis of diminishing presence of international bureaus among **mainstream media**, and of **nonprofit and for-profit organizations** stepping in to report **international news**. 43
- 11. Capital Flight**, Jodi Enda, *American Journalism Review*, Summer 2010
 The theme of this article is summarized in its header: **“Watchdog reporting** is at an alarming low at many federal agencies and departments whose actions have a huge impact on the lives of American citizens.” Jodi Enda analyzes the implications of reduction of the **Washington press corps**. 47
- 12. Overload!: Journalism’s Battle for Relevance in an Age of Too Much Information**, Bree Nordenson, *Columbia Journalism Review*, November/December 2008
 The Internet offers thousands of free news sources. Much of its content is **unfiltered and unpackaged**, and studies indicate the American public is no better informed than in less information-rich times. Bree Nordenson applies insights from **cognitive psychology** to interpreting effects of **multitasking, attention economy, and learned helplessness** on news consumers. 60
- 13. Learning to Love the New Media: Shallow, Divisive, Unreliable**, James Fallows, *The Atlantic*, April 2011
 James Fallows presents an insightful analysis of the “fall” of journalism and the **rise of new media**, organized to deliver **“what people want**—not what they say they want, nor what they ‘should’ want, but what they choose when they have the chance.” He concludes with concerns and **predictions for journalism’s future**. 67
- 14. The Toppling**, Peter Maass, *The New Yorker*, January 10, 2011
 The subtitle of this article is “How the media inflated a minor moment in a long **war**.” It presents as a case study a particular string of events in **Iraq** that resulted in **iconic, symbolic events** created with acute awareness of **visual imagery** and newsworthy impact. 77
- 15. Whence the Revolution**, Stephen Franklin, *The American Prospect*, April 2011
 Stephen Franklin offers a firsthand account of the role and actions of workers, **journalists, and bloggers** in laying groundwork for **political revolution in Egypt**. The article includes perspectives on **feedforward, censorship, and government-controlled media**. 89
- 16. North Korea’s Digital Underground**, Robert S. Boynton, *The Atlantic*, April 2011
 The Democratic People’s Republic of **Korea** is a holdout nation in a world of open information. Media remain broadly under government control and there is little Internet access. This article describes illegal, dangerous, and largely **low-tech efforts** of reporters to bypass **censorship** and tell alternative stories. 95

The concepts in bold italics are developed in the article. For further expansion, please refer to the Topic Guide.



UNIT 3

Players and Guides

Unit Overview

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17. What's a Fair Share in the Age of Google?: How to Think about News in the Link Economy, Peter Osnos, *Columbia Journalism Review*, July/August 2009

Peter Osnos provides perspective on the **Google** economy, which developed under the premise “information wants to be free.” There is a tension, however, between free distribution and **fair use**—both ethically and as determined under **copyright** law.

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18. Long Live the Web: A Call for Continued Open Standards and Neutrality, Tim Berners-Lee, *Scientific American*, November 22, 2010

Tim Berners-Lee describes threats to principles of universality, decentralization, and open, royalty-free access upon which **World Wide Web Consortium** members individually and collectively built the Web. Berners-Lee is critical of “walled gardens,” such as Apple’s **iTunes** system and **magazine smartphone apps**, and a proponent of regulation that protects **separation of design of the Web from that of the Internet**.

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19. A Vaster Wasteland, Newton N. Minow, *The Atlantic*, April 2011

Newton N. Minow proposes six **national policy priorities** that should guide **mass media regulatory decisions**. These touch on areas of open Internet access, broadcasting spectrum allocation, availability of free television time for political candidates, and financial support for telemedicine, public radio and television, and emergency networks.

132

20. Frenemies of Free Speech, Sam Schulman, *The Weekly Standard*, March 21, 2011

Sam Schulman dissects the concept of **free speech** as it is defined in the United States and in other parts of the world. This article explores differing perspectives regarding **limitations on expression** in the interest of **civility and tolerance**.

134

21. The End of Secrecy, Micah L. Sifry, *The Nation*, March 21, 2011

Political leaders including President Obama and Secretary of State Clinton have defended **free speech rights and free flow of information** on the Internet—but not including Julian Assange and **WikiLeaks**. This article explores the concept of **secrecy as a form of media regulation**.

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22. The Quality-Control Quandary, Carl Sessions Stepp, *American Journalism Review*, April/May 2009

Carl Sessions Stepp asks, “How far can you cut editing without crippling **credibility**? How do you **balance immediacy and accuracy**? How much does fine-tuning matter to the work-in-progress online ethos?” Careful proofreading is a victim of newsroom **staff cut-backs** and is also compromised by priority for speed in posting Internet copy.

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23. The Fact-Checking Explosion, Cary Spivak, *American Journalism Review*, Winter 2010

The fact-checking explosion referenced in this article’s title is not fact-checking within media but rather media’s serving as **watchdogs** over **political discourse**: “Teams of reporters are scouring the airwaves, speeches, brochures, Web sites and legislative sessions weighing the accuracy of virtually every word uttered by politicians and TV talking heads.”

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24. Too Graphic?, Arielle Emmett, *American Journalism Review*, Spring 2010

In covering the January 2010 Haitian earthquake, **images of death** were overwhelming and widely available. American news organizations chose to use strong images. This article addresses varied reasons for doing so and responses of news consumers.

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25. A Porous Wall, Natalie Pompilio, *American Journalism Review*, June/July 2009

Traditionalists shudder at **front-page newspaper ads** as unprofessional and unseemly, compromising the wall between news and ads. Natalie Pompilio describes why these and other “new” **ad formats** that **mix news space and ad space** evoke strong responses and how newspapers come to terms with their subtext.

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26. What Would You Do?: The Journalism That Tweaks Reality, Then Reports What Happens, Daniel Weiss, *Columbia Journalism Review*, January/February 2008

Daniel Weiss ponders the **ethics of investigative “experimenters,”** who “step out of their customary role as **observers** and play with reality to see what will happen.” The practice dates back a century, but has new prominence in **television newsmagazines**.

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The concepts in bold italics are developed in the article. For further expansion, please refer to the Topic Guide.

27. **The Lives of Others: What Does It Mean to ‘Tell Someone’s Story’?**, Julia Dahl, *Columbia Journalism Review*, July/August 2008
Julia Dahl relates her experience of writing “drama” pieces that **personalize victims** of tragedy. The essay discusses the options of **choosing and discarding** in the process of how stories are packaged for **reality shows** such as *America’s Most Wanted*. 166



UNIT 4

Paying the Bills

Unit Overview 170

28. **Your Data, Yourself**, Joel Stein, *Time*, March 21, 2011
Joel Stein looks into the extent and accuracy of information collected by **data-mining companies** that monitor **Internet** and consumer behavior. Each piece of information is worth about two-fifths of a cent when sold to **advertisers**, who use it for **targeted marketing**. The article lends insight into the marketing model that supports **Google**. 173

29. **Multitasking Youth**, Andrew J. Rohm, Fareena Sultan, and Fleura Bardhi, *Marketing Management*, November/December 2009
Media multitasking is defined as “the practice of participating in multiple exposures to two or more commercial media at a single point in time.” It is of interest to folks such as **Nielsen Media**, who influence advertising rates based on projected efficacy of the **advertising message**. 178

30. **Unkind Unwind**, *The Economist*, March 19, 2011
This article is about paying the bills in the **movie industry**. Topics include the importance of the home entertainment market, implications of evolution in **post-theatrical release distribution** (DVD sales, downloads, rentals), and **market-driven tensions** among studios, movie theaters, and small-screen distributors that affect not just how money flows but what kind of movies are made. 183

31. **A Television Deal for the Digital Age**, John Dunbar, *Columbia Journalism Review*, January/February 2011
This article is about **Comcast’s** acquisition of a majority stake of **NBC Universal**, a plan scrutinized closely by the **Federal Communications Commission** and Department of Justice. At issue is **breadth of control**, specifically Comcast’s ability to control of both **content and distribution**, shaping the future of **Internet television access**. 186

32. **Tomorrow’s Interactive Television**, John M. Smart, *The Futurist*, November/December 2010
John M. Smart offers a prescription for democratizing film and television media through **Internet television**, enabling all who wish to do so to **eliminate unpersonalized advertising**. In an iTV future, consumers will **pay “micropayments”** directly to content providers or content aggregators, somewhat like eBay, and have the option to “dislike” and ban advertisement content in which they aren’t interested. 192

33. **Open for Business**, Michael Shapiro, *Columbia Journalism Review*, July/August 2009
Michael Shapiro suggests that consumers will pay for **niche-specific** specialized content online and herein lies a future for print journalists. A model combining free and paid **news content** is proposed, 80 percent free and 20 percent paid. Comparisons to **Netflix**, cable television, and iTunes provide context. Orangebloods.com, a **membership site** for University of Texas football fans, provides an example. 196

34. **Pay to Play**, Cary Spivak, *American Journalism Review*, Spring 2011
Newspapers debate how best to realize **revenue** from content consumers access on computers and other electronic devices. What are readers willing to pay? For what kind of content? To what degree do readers accept that it costs money to produce the news? How will the product change when **advertising** no longer pays 80 percent of production costs? 202

Test-Your-Knowledge Form 206

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