



THE STUDENT GUIDE TO NEWS LITERACY

HOW TO BE A CRITICAL NEWS CONSUMER

BOBBIE EISENSTOCK, PH.D.

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

The Student Guide to News Literacy

How to Be a Critical News Consumer

Bobbie Eisenstock, Ph.D.

California State University, Northridge
Journalism Department

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How news savvy are you?

News helps us make sense of our world and understand how important events, issues, people, and policies affect our lives, our family, community and country, and the global society in which we live.



Do you follow the news?

What news stories do you read?

Where do you get your news?

Most college students do not closely follow national or international news. . . unless it is a breaking story or happens to catch their eye when they're keeping up with news about entertainment, celebrities, sports, personal health or other interests on their digital devices.

You may not realize that there is a skill to reading the news, no matter what the content - distinguishing fact from opinion, information from misinformation, and trustworthy from untrustworthy sources. Knowing how to critically read the news can empower you and your understanding of the world.

Take the [News Survey](#) and get news literate!

Where do you access news?

In the emergent digital culture, there are new ways evolving every day to access local, national, and international news.

Traditional news media - such as print newspapers and magazines and TV and radio news broadcasts - are converging with new digital technologies and morphing into a multitude of online news platforms that compete with search engines, news aggregators, blogs, and social media such as Twitter, Facebook, and Reddit.

With news available on-demand from a diversity of sources, our personal news habits are changing: we tend to find news we want in the formats we prefer on devices that fit our needs at the time.

Do you access news from traditional print or broadcast outlets or their online editions?

Or do you get news from social media and apps on your mobile device?

Do you check multiple sources and compare news outlets?

Is the reporting accurate, fair and balanced? How do you know?



Why does news literacy matter?

News shapes the way we see the world and affects our experiences. The choices news media make have the power to set the public's "agenda" - the stories emphasized in the news tell us which issues and events to think about and how much importance we should assign them based on the amount and type of coverage.

At a time when emergent digital technologies are redefining news, it is more important than ever to understand who is responsible for deciding what is news and how it gets reported, and the impact these decisions have on our lives.



News literacy skills help us become informed and engaged citizens who actively participate in the world:

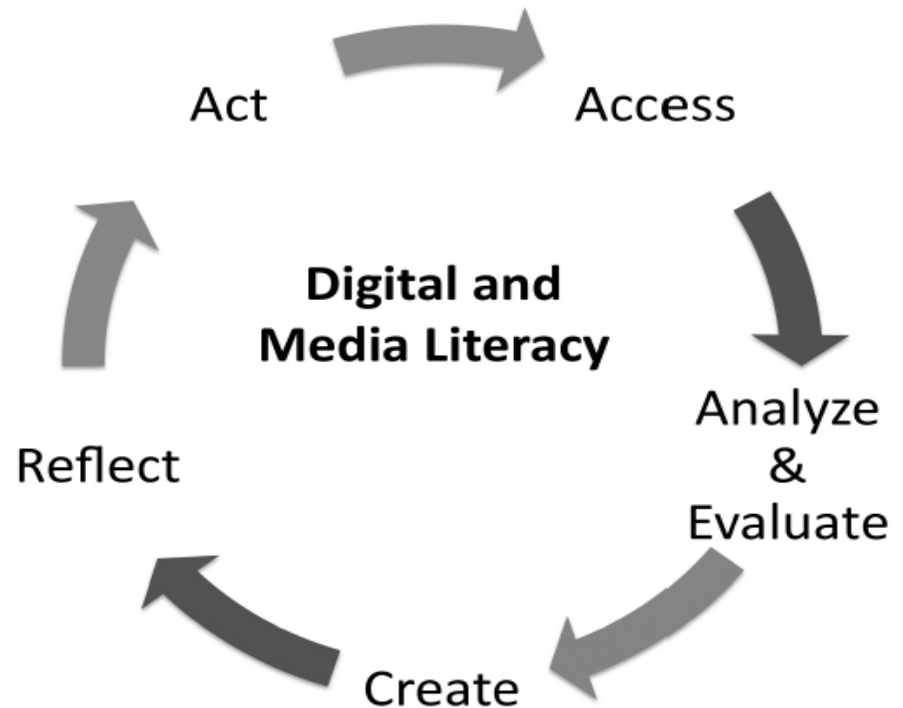
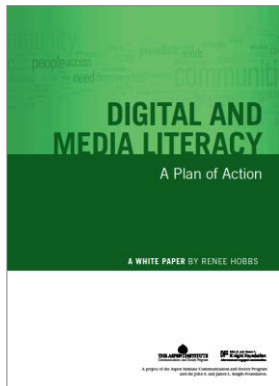
- ❑ *Distinguish between professional journalists and citizen voices, bloggers, pundits, information spinners, and qualified experts*
- ❑ *Detect news bias and balance, determine fairness and objectivity, check facts, statistics, source credibility, and visual accuracy.*

What is news literacy?

News literacy is the ability to *access, analyze, and evaluate* news stories created by professional journalists in news organizations – both traditional and new media – as well as by citizen journalists, bloggers, and others, including ordinary people like yourself.

It is also the ability to *reflect* on the news process and its

impact on our construction of social reality and *take action* to meaningfully participate in a democratic society.



Digital and media literacy is the ability to . . .

Access

Make responsible choices using media and technology tools and apply critical thinking skills to find and share appropriate, relevant, and reliable information to guide your knowledge, beliefs and actions

Analyze

Know how to *decode* and make sense of information and examine the content to ascertain purpose, point of view, accuracy, and currency

Evaluate

Determine value, quality, and relevance of the content while considering potential effects of messages on yourself and others

Create

Use appropriate technologies to produce and disseminate messages with awareness of purpose, audience, creative techniques, and potential effects

Reflect

Apply social responsibility and ethical principles to your personal and public identity and communication behavior, and to your lived experience as a citizen in the digital media culture

Act

Take social action individually or collaboratively to share knowledge and solve problems and to participate in one's community locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally

Adapted from The Aspen Institute Communications and Society Program, *Digital and Media Literacy: A Plan of Action*, Washington, DC: The Aspen Institute, 2010

NEWS LITERACY STRATEGIES

MEDIA LITERACY CORE CONCEPTS
AND KEY QUESTIONS

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News Literacy Key Questions

Media Literacy and News Literacy

Media literacy is an inquiry-based skill that expands the definition of literacy beyond reading and writing to critical thinking about the thousands of messages we see, hear, read, and create every day using print, audio, video, and multimedia technologies.

That means questioning and challenging the messages we consume and create in all forms of print and digital media — when we watch TV, movies and videos, play video and computer games, read magazines, newspapers and books, listen to music, visit websites, use apps, interact on social media, drive or walk by



billboards, posters and ads on busses and buildings, even decipher skywriting!

News literacy strategies start with the basic media literacy core concepts and pose key questions about the news process.

News literate individuals know how to ask the right questions about the way a news story is constructed, its purpose and underlying message, and the meaning it has for different people.



Media Literacy Core Concepts

Media messages are constructed

Each medium uses a unique “language” of creative techniques and structural elements to construct the message

Media messages are representations of social reality with embedded values and points of view

Media messages are produced for particular purposes — most often for profit

People interpret the same message differently based on individual knowledge, skills, beliefs, and experience

Adapted from the media literacy framework developed by The Center for Media Literacy

Media messages are constructed

What You Need to Know:

News messages are constructed based on certain criteria — or news values — determined by a news staff who decides how to frame the story and how much prominence to give its coverage for the audience it serves.

News staffs are comprised of many types of media professionals who play a gatekeeping role in the news production process to gather, report, and disseminate information:

publishers, general managers, news directors, editors, reporters, editorial writers, op-ed columnists, political cartoonists, copy writers, headline and caption writers, graphic artists and designers, photographers, videographers, researchers, fact-checkers, marketing and advertisers, etc.



Key Questions:

Who created the message?

Who wrote, edited, designed, produced, and distributed the message - news brief, feature, interview, review, analysis, editorial, op-ed or other news story?

How credible is the source?
How do you know?

When was it published, broadcast or posted?
How do you know?

Who is the target audience?
How do you know?

Each medium uses a unique “language” of creative techniques and structural elements to construct messages

What You Need to Know:

News media construct messages with words, images, graphics, sounds, video, and multimedia using creative, technical, and stylistic rules specific to the type of story and delivery system for the respective print, electronic or digital news content.

News storytelling uses a variety of narrative frames that drive the nature of the story structure — news brief, feature, editorial, sports or other type of story.



News media also use specific terms to describe the news process and the parts of a news story, news page or newscast.

Key Questions:

Which medium, format, and techniques are used to report the story? Why?

Is it a straight news account, feature, editorial, sports or other type of story?

How do the limits or advantages of the creative, technical or structural conventions of a particular medium or story type affect the news coverage?

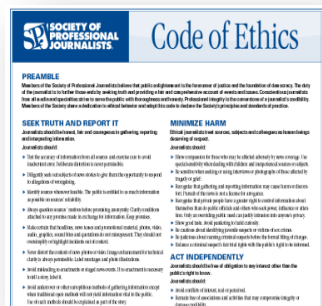
Media messages are representations of social reality with embedded values and points of view

What You Need to Know:

News is an account of an event that presents a view of reality. How news stories are reported by journalists, who have their own values, attitudes, and perceptions of social reality, often interweave social, political, cultural or folkloric messages to provide perspective. In turn, these stories shape news audiences' view of the world.

To ensure the rights of citizens to truthful and unbiased information,

news reporting practices and standards are guided by core principles of journalism and professional codes of ethics.



Key Questions:

How does the news story represent the real life event?

Is the message fact, opinion, satire, dramatization or something else?

What are the underlying values and points of view of the message?

What is implied but not stated?
What is left out that might be important?

How might news values and the news-gathering process affect objectivity, bias, accuracy, fairness and balance in reporting the story?

*Media messages are produced for particular purposes
— most often for profit*

What You Need to Know:

Media messages - whether news, entertainment or advertising - are produced to focus audience attention on a topic, issue, person, place or product for one or more purposes:



- ☐ to inform
- ☐ to entertain
- ☐ to educate
- ☐ to transmit culture
- ☐ to preserve history
- ☐ to persuade
- ☐ to make money

Key Questions:

What is the purpose of the message - is it to inform, entertain, persuade, and/or profit?

Who owns, controls, pays for, and profits from the message?

How does the purpose affect the news storytelling and audience's understanding of the news event?

People understand the same message differently based on individual knowledge, skills, beliefs, and experience

What You Need to Know:

People construct their own meaning from messages depending on their prior knowledge, skills, and experience, as well as their preexisting values, beliefs, attitudes, opinions, and behaviors.

The bottom line is: No two people are influenced by media in exactly the same way.



Key Questions:

What meaning does the message have for different people based on their age, gender, sexual identity, income, race, education, ethnicity, cultural heritage, upbringing, religion, politics, abilities or appearance?

What do you, your friends, family, and others with similar or different beliefs, values, and attitudes take away from the same message?

Who might benefit or be harmed - socially, emotionally, physically, financially or politically? How might it affect the democratic process?

How does it affect your knowledge, feelings, and actions or the way you relate to other people?

TOOLS FOR DECONSTRUCTING NEWS

THE LANGUAGE OF NEWS

15 News Values: Story Criteria

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News Values: Story Criteria

Timeliness

- How recent or current is the event?

Proximity

- How relevant or nearby is the event to the intended audience?

Impact or Importance

- How many does the event impact and how far-reaching are its consequences?

Human Interest

- Is the story relatable or inspirational about someone overcoming the odds or reaching a goal?

Conflict or Controversy

- Is the story negative news or positive news?

Sensationalism

- Is the story unpredictable or amazing, even shocking?

Prominence

- Is the newsmaker a prominent person, public figure or celebrity?

Novelty or Oddity

- Is the event unusual, different or strange?
“Man bites dog” or “dog bites man”

Adapted from Pew Research Journalism Project, *Framing the News*

News Storytelling: Narrative Frames

Straight News Account

- No dominant narrative: Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?

Story

- Focus on conflict inherent to situation or brewing among players

Consensus

- Emphasis on points of agreement around an event or issue

Conjecture

- Focus on speculation about what is to come in the process

Story

- Explain the process or how something works

Outlook

- How current news fits into history

Horse Race

- Who is winning or who is losing

Trend

- Describe ongoing trend

Policy Explored

- Explore a particular policy and its impact

Reaction

- Response or reaction from one of the major players

Reality Check

- Close look into the truth about a statement or information

Wrongdoing Exposed

- Uncovering wrongdoing or injustice

Personality Profile

- Profile of a newsmaker

Adapted from Pew Research Journalism Project, *Framing the News*

Basic News Story: Story Structures



A diagram of an inverted pyramid. Inside the pyramid, the text is arranged from top to bottom: MOST IMPORTANT FACTS, ADDITIONAL FACTS, MORE FACTS, ETC., ETC., and ETC.

The most common structure for a straight news account is the *inverted pyramid style*. The story starts with the lead that summarizes key facts with 5W's and H - who, what, when, where, why, and how - followed with the next most newsworthy information in descending order of importance, ending with nonessential details to understanding the story. *Story type: hard news briefs or breaking news*



A diagram of a martini glass or hourglass shape. The top wide part is labeled 'THE LEAD' and 'KEY FACTS IN INVERTED PYRAMID FORM'. The narrow stem is labeled 'CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS'. The bottom wide part is labeled 'KICKER'.

Martini glass or hourglass uses a chronology narrative that tells how the event unfolded. The story begins with an inverted-pyramid summary of key facts, then details a step-by-step account of the event, ending with a kicker or strong quote. *Story type: crimes, disasters or dramatic events*



A circular diagram showing a cycle of four elements: 'CLOSING ANECDOTE' at the top left, 'OPENING ANECDOTE' at the top right, 'NUT GRAF' at the bottom right, and 'DETAILS' at the bottom left. Arrows connect them in a clockwise cycle.

The *circle or Wall Street Journal formula* begins with a quote or anecdote about a specific person that broadens into a general discussion with details about the topic and circles back to the person again with a closing anecdote or quote. *Story type: shows how actual people are involved or affected by trends or events*

Images from Tim Harrower, "Newswriting Basics," chapter 3, *Inside Reporting: A Practical Guide to the Craft of Journalism*. NY: McGraw Hill Higher Education, 2007

News Storytelling: Examples of News Story Structures

Hard News	Features	Editorials	Sports
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead: 5Ws/H • Inverted pyramid structure • Formal writing style • Often includes direct quotes • Meets several news value criteria such as: timeliness proximity impact interest conflict sensationalism prominence novelty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead: “hook” or attention-getting • Answers 5Ws/H in body but not always lead - emphasizes Why and How • More informal writing style • Descriptive language • Often includes direct quotes • Makes direct connection between topic and audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead: focuses on a major topic in the news • Presents specific position or point of view • Uses facts and examples to support position • Often presents opposing viewpoints and challenges them • Often ends with appeal to reader to support the editorial position 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead: attention-getting • Includes information about important people or events • More informal writing style • Short sentences, catchy phrases, and expressive words to describe people and events • Presents story in carefully sequenced way

Adapted from American Press Institute, *Introductory News Literacy*, www.americanpressinstitute.org

THE PARTS OF A PAGE

Join stories together and you create a full newspaper page. And at most newspapers, no page is more important than Page One, which showcases the most compelling stories and images. Here's a look at the components you might find on a typical front page:

News Page Elements

- Flag
- Edition
- Infographic
- Deck
- Text
- Jump line
- Cutline
- Teaser
- Refer
- Wire story
- Mug shot
- Centerpiece
- Index
- Logo

Tim Harrower, How Newsrooms Work," Chapter 2, *Inside Reporting: A Practical Guide to the Craft of Journalism*.
NY: McGraw Hill Higher Education, 2007

FLAG
This is the one front-page element that never changes: the name of the paper, set in special type.

EDITION
Daily papers often print one edition for street sales, another for home-delivery to subscribers.

INFOGRAPHIC
These informational graphics display key facts from the story in a visual way. At big papers, they're created by artists; at smaller papers, they're produced by editors or reporters.

DECK
A subheadline, written by copy editors, that supplements information in the main headline.

TEXT
The actual story. When text is set into columns of type, it's measured in inches. This story runs for about seven inches before it jumps.

JUMP LINE
When a long story is continued on another page, editors run this line to tell readers where the story continues, or jumps.

CUTLINE
(also called a *caption*). Information about the photo is often collected by photographers but written by copy editors or reporters.

The Bugle-Beacon

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2011

50 CENTS

FLAG

EDITION

INFOGRAPHIC

DECK

TEXT

JUMP LINE

CUTLINE

ECSTASY USE SURGES AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE

Teen drug use rising dramatically, Bush warns

Man freed after serving 29 years on Death Row

TRAPPED BY A TWISTER

When last month's tornado ripped through Mudflat, Ada Plum was driving home from prison — little suspecting that her worst fears were about to come true. Now, for the first time, she tells her astonishing story.

MUG SHOT

WIRE STORY

TEASER

REFER

CENTERPIECE

INDEX

LOGO

ECSTASY USE SURGES AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE

By [Name]

WASHINGTON — President Bush on Wednesday warned of a "crisis" in the nation's youth as he announced that the use of ecstasy among young people has risen sharply in recent years.

... (rest of article) ...

Teen drug use rising dramatically, Bush warns

By [Name]

WASHINGTON — President Bush on Wednesday warned of a "crisis" in the nation's youth as he announced that the use of ecstasy among young people has risen sharply in recent years.

... (rest of article) ...

Man freed after serving 29 years on Death Row

By [Name]

COLUMBIA, Miss. — A man who served more than 29 years on Mississippi's death row was freed Wednesday after his conviction was overturned.

... (rest of article) ...

TRAPPED BY A TWISTER

By [Name]

When last month's tornado ripped through Mudflat, Ada Plum was driving home from prison — little suspecting that her worst fears were about to come true. Now, for the first time, she tells her astonishing story.

... (rest of article) ...

MUG SHOT

... (rest of article) ...

WIRE STORY

... (rest of article) ...

TEASER

... (rest of article) ...

REFER

... (rest of article) ...

CENTERPIECE

... (rest of article) ...

INDEX

... (rest of article) ...

LOGO

... (rest of article) ...

SO WHO DESIGNS THIS PAGE?

The editors choose the stories and decide which get biggest play. But the actual layout is usually done by a staff designer or copy editor— someone with both design ability and dependable news judgment.

News Story Elements

- Byline
- Dateline
- Lead
- Quote
- Attribution
- Headline
- Photo
- Photo credit
- Liftout quote
- Tagline

Tim Harrower, "How Newsrooms Work," Chapter 2, *Inside Reporting: A Practical Guide to the Craft of Journalism*. NY: McGraw Hill Higher Education, 2007

THE PARTS OF A STORY

Not all publications use the same jargon, but there's agreement on most terms. Here are some common elements found in a typical story.

BYLINE

The reporter's name, often followed by credentials. Many papers require that stories be a certain length — or written by a staffer — to warrant a byline.

DATELINE

Gives the location of a story that occurred outside the paper's usual coverage area.

LEAD

(also spelled *lede*). The opening of a story. Here, this *news lead* condenses the key facts of the story into the first paragraph.

QUOTE

Someone's exact words, usually spoken to the reporter during an interview.

ATTRIBUTION

A phrase that tells readers the source of a quote

OR the source of information used in the story.

Freeway closed as ornery oinker hogs traffic

A pig named Mama falls from a truck and causes commuter chaos

By SUSAN PAYSENO
Staff reporter

PORTLAND — Westbound traffic on Interstate 84 was backed up for nearly five miles early Monday when "Mama," a 600-pound hog on the way to slaughter, fell from the back of a truck.

For two frustrating hours, the sow refused to budge.

Fred Mickelson told police that he was taking six sows and a boar from his farm in Lyle, Wash., to a slaughterhouse in Carlton when Mama escaped.

"I heard the tailgate fall off, and I looked back and saw her standing in the road," Mickelson said with a sigh. "I thought: 'Oh, no. We've got some real trouble now.'"

Mama was "pretty lively and loud" when she hit the ground, Mickelson said, lumbering between cars and causing havoc on a foggy day.

There were no accidents, police said.

After about an hour of chasing the pig with the help of



The Associated Press / KIMIG SCATTARELLA

Highway workers use a loader to lift Mama, a 600-pound sow, onto a truck Monday on Interstate 84. The pig fell from the truck on the way to slaughter.

police, Mickelson began mulling over his options, which included having a veterinarian tranquilize the hog.

About 10 a.m., a crew of highway workers arrived and decided to use a front-end loader to pick up the sow and load her back into the truck.

"That pig was in no hurry to move," said Wally Benson, the highway crew chief. "I think she knew where she was being taken, and she was in no hurry to get there."

Even the police were sympa-

"That pig really honked off a lot of commuters."

— TRACY COLLINS,
Oregon state police trooper

thetic to the pig's plight.

"That pig really honked off a lot of commuters," said trooper Tracy Collins — a vegetarian. "But I was sad to see her go."

Sue Payseno covers traffic and transportation issues in Oregon and Washington. She can be reached at suepayseno@news.com.

HEADLINE

The big type, written by copy editors, summarizing the story.

PHOTO

Photos are usually shot by staff photographers, but they can also be bought from national wire services. Photos usually run in black-and-white, since color pages cost more to print.

PHOTO CREDIT

A line giving the photographer's name (often adding the paper he or she works for.)

LIFTOUT QUOTE

(also called a *pullquote*). A quotation from the story that's given special graphic emphasis.

TAGLINE

Contact information for the reporter, enabling readers to provide feedback.

News Audiences: Agenda-Setting Effect

As part of the news process, media gatekeepers have the ability to influence the public's agenda - the issues and events that news media select to emphasize in their coverage focuses public attention on these stories and people perceive the topics to be more important than others.

How news storytelling is framed can affect our understanding of an event and influence our attitudes and opinions, even our actions.

Media use certain cues to signal the importance of a news story that leads to an agenda-setting effect:

lead story

story length (time/space)

duration of coverage

headline size

color photograph

graph or chart

liftout quote

live coverage

breaking news

etc.

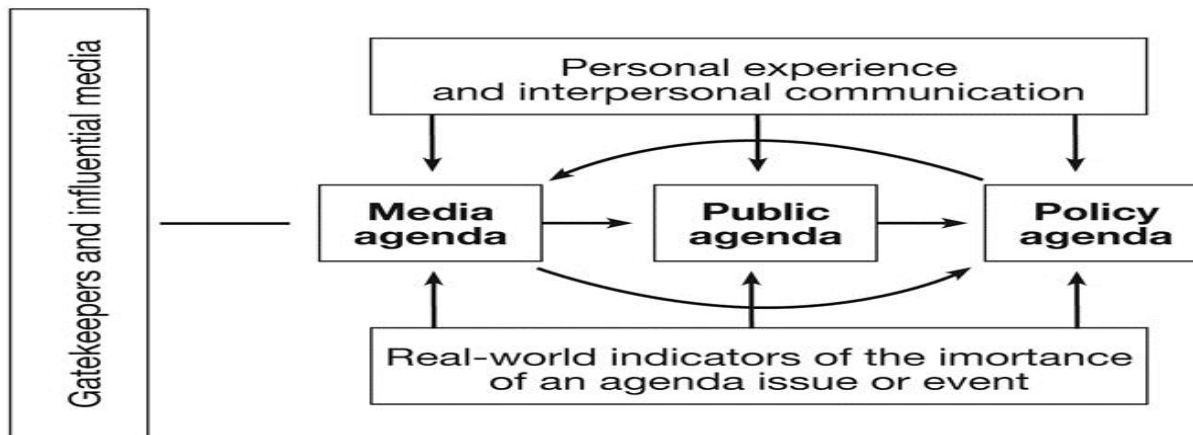


Image from Denis McQuail and Sven Windahl. "Conceptual Model: Agenda-setting," *Communication Models for the Study of Mass Communications* (2nd ed.). Routledge, 1993.

NEWS LITERACY RESOURCES

FOR NEWS CONSUMERS AND CREATORS

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News Survey

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Readings & Resources

NEWS SURVEY

How do you get your news?

What do you think about news media's performance?

Take the news survey and compare your news habits and attitudes with friends.

From Tim Harrower, "The Story of Journalism," chapter 1, *Inside Reporting: A Practical Guide to the Craft of Journalism*.
NY: McGraw Hill Higher Education, 2007



- 1) I think news stories usually:**
☐ Get the facts straight
☐ Contain inaccuracies and distortions

- 2) I prefer to get my news:**
☐ By watching pictures or video footage, with audio narration
☐ By reading printed text
☐ Through a combination of text and images

- 3) Generally, I think the government:**
☐ Should do more to restrict what the news media publish
☐ Should do as little as possible to restrict what the news media publish

- 4) The president is assassinated. What would you be most likely to do? (You can choose more than one):**
☐ Turn on the TV, then leave it on constantly to monitor the situation as intensely as possible.
☐ Turn on the TV, see what's happening, then turn it off and get on with my life.
☐ Track developments online by monitoring news Web sites.
☐ Buy a newspaper as soon as I saw one that had a big assassination headline.
☐ Listen to radio news and talk shows.
☐ Avoid the news as much as possible to escape the annoying hype and overkill.

- 5) Which of these people do you consider to be journalists? (Check all that apply):**
☐ Bill O'Reilly ☐ Rush Limbaugh
☐ Bob Woodward ☐ Katie Couric
☐ Oprah Winfrey ☐ Jon Stewart

- 6) In general, the news is biased in favor of:**
☐ Conservatives ☐ Neither
☐ Liberals

- 7) If you heard conflicting versions of a news story, which version would you most likely believe?**
☐ The local newspaper
☐ The local TV news
☐ The national TV news
☐ Radio news
☐ An independent Web site

- 8) Which of these adjectives would you generally use to describe most news today? (You can select more than one):**
☐ Boring ☐ Entertaining
☐ Useful ☐ Sensationalized
☐ Depressing ☐ Negative

- 9) How often do you generally watch TV news?**
☐ Daily ☐ Occasionally
☐ Several times a week ☐ Never

- 10) How often do you generally read newspapers?**
☐ Daily ☐ Occasionally
☐ Several times a week ☐ Never

- 11) How often do you generally read news online?**
☐ Daily ☐ Occasionally
☐ Several times a week ☐ Never

- 12) A news reporting career seems like it would be (check all that apply):**
☐ Fun ☐ Frightening
☐ Frustrating ☐ Important

WHICH OF THESE STATEMENTS DO YOU MOST AGREE WITH? CHECK EITHER "A" OR "B"; LEAVE BLANK FOR "NEITHER."

- ☐ **a)** I prefer to read, watch or listen to news that's presented with an attitude, even if it's opinionated, because it makes the topics more interesting.
☐ **b)** I prefer to read, watch or listen to news that is as neutral and objective as possible. I resent it when journalists inject their own opinions into stories.
☐ **a)** I could easily go for weeks without reading any news.
☐ **b)** I couldn't go a day without reading any news.
☐ **a)** Journalists are too critical of public figures and government policy.
☐ **b)** Journalists don't do enough to challenge public figures and expose governmental problems.

- ☐ **a)** I can usually relate to most news stories I read, see and hear.
☐ **b)** I generally feel that most news stories have little relevance to my life.
☐ **a)** The news media don't do enough to explain the important issues of the day.
☐ **b)** The news media do a good job explaining the important issues of the day; the problem is, people just don't pay enough attention.
☐ **a)** Generally, I prefer to read news about serious issues and major events.
☐ **b)** Generally, I prefer to read celebrity news and lighter, offbeat stuff.

READINGS & RESOURCES

UNDERSTANDING NEWS LITERACY

AMERICANPRESS
institute

Youth News Literacy Resources

The Media
Insight Project

AP

NORC

www.universityofchicago.edu

AMERICANPRESS
institute

THE PERSONAL
NEWS CYCLE



Conducted by the Media Insight Project
An initiative of the American Press Institute and
the Associated Press NORC Center for Public Affairs Research

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Alisa Miller:

**The news about the
news**

TED

TED2008 • 4:29 • Filmed Mar 2008

IDEAS.WORTH.SPREADING



FACTCHECK.ORG
A Project of the Annenberg Public Policy Center

**SPJ JOURNALIST'S
TOOLBOX** PRESENTED BY THE SOCIETY
OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS

PewResearch Journalism Project



HARVARD Kennedy School

SHORENSTEIN CENTER

on Media, Politics and Public Policy

**JOURNALIST'S
RESOURCE**

A research database

NEWSEUM



TODAY'S FRONT PAGES

freepress
reform media. transform democracy.

COLUMBIA JOURNALISM REVIEW

AMERICAN JOURNALISM REVIEW

I ♥ NEWSPAPERS



The background of the slide is a collage of various newspaper clippings, documents, and printed text. The text is in different fonts, sizes, and orientations, creating a busy, layered effect. The colors are primarily black, white, and shades of brown/tan.

Get News Literate!



The Student Guide to News Literacy
How to Be a Critical News Consumer