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Journalism 347

Assignment #1

One of the quickest ways to get educated on what’s going on around your town or city is to consume news. Whether it be through print, online, or on the radio, news can be accessed quickly. Having piece of mind is always comforting, so why not consume news?

I love investigative news! Articles or stories that uncover a secret or information that the public didn’t know before interest me. These are usually in-depth articles or a series of articles that are accumulated over weeks or even months. Investigative stories are hard work, but because these stories are juicy and exciting, they are often worth it. I also really enjoy any kind of sports news. As a journalism major, I just can’t get enough of sports. This goes for the state and national level. I love to hear or see what articles other reporters can come up with and think about how I would have done my own. One thing I admire about sports news is the professionalism. The everyday sports reporter for NBC may not go into great detail for his story, but consumers will still watch and trust them because they watch them every day. Reporters for ESPN and beat reporters for specific sports teams really go into detail with their stories. The interviews with players or coaches seem so genuine, but also very professional. As a consumer, that is exactly what you want.

I am a sucker for a good old-fashioned feature story. These are usually interesting pieces that I always come away with learning something new. Features are usually centered around a specific person or a place, most of the time it has a “local atmosphere”. Reading text is always a great way to read these stories, but video really does them justice. I took a video production class here on campus when I was a sophomore, that really taught me how to write a feature story and collect video/audio. The first one I did was focused on the Whitewater City Market, held every Saturday in downtown Whitewater. It felt so cool to do interviews with customers and vendors, then put it all together in a three minute video. These stories are great to find out what activities or important events are happening in or around your town. I am not one to follow political stories or annoying “Trump News”, but I definitely pay attention to what is going on with the environment, schooling for children, and our military. Those are just a few things that mean something to me. I feel I can contribute to society as long as I stay current and do my part as an American citizen.

I don’t follow my hometown news as much as I would like to. Up until this year, it has been available in print only, so I haven’t been able to access it. I like to know what is going on locally, even if I don’t live in that area anymore. I still have friends and family back home so it is nice to see how the town and the schools are doing. Now that their paper is online, I will have to check out the *Daily Herald* for all of their updates! I would have to say my favorite news site is by the *New York Times*. Their page still physically looks like a traditional newspaper, but with more space. They utilize the space on the page very well, using pictures and putting enough strides on each page without it looking to cluttered. Plus, you always know what to expect from a newspaper company that has been around for as long as it has.

Google isn’t my favorite way to access news, but sometimes it is the best way for me to read what I want. My first choice is to always listen on my morning podcast or read it from the *New York Times*. I usually only use Google if I have heard about a particular story already and I want to find out more information. That way I can check out a few sources to make sure the story I am following is factual and current. I like consuming my news through mostly video, but also through a podcast called the *Daily*. It is a well-written podcast that delves into politics, legal issues, juicy stories, and even international news. It is usually only 30-40 minutes long so it doesn’t bore the listener, but it always keeps my interest. Interviews are done professionally, there is no left or right wing agenda, and they refer their listeners to other podcasts and websites.

I am not a big Facebook user and I do not have a Twitter account. Those are platforms that plenty of people, use to collect their news, I just never really got into that. I will sometimes see a news story that sounds interesting and I will watch the video or read the article. From there I usually like two use Google to double check my sources and credibility. I have found myself clicking on stories and really liking them, only to find out they are fake. Sometimes the name of a particular site or company can be a red flag. Sites like “the Onion” are notoriously fake sites that somehow still have a following. It is always important to check sources, because you don’t want to be the one looking silly when you post a video or article to Facebook and someone calls you out on it. I have never really interacted with a news company on social media. I have liked a post or a news story here or there, but I usually stay out of the social media aspect of news.

Some think that the addition of online newspapers and political podcasts have hurt newspaper companies; I don’t believe that to be fully true. Online news allows anyone who has access to the internet, access to a whole plethora of stories and articles and the click of a button. Sure, the nostalgia of getting a paper delivered to you is gone, but now you can get any news coverage you want (not including companies that require subscription) on your phone or computer. That is one of my favorite parts of consuming news.