

Lecture 13: News on the Net

Lecturer's Overview

This lecture highlights the special challenges and opportunities for news consumers navigating the Internet and the revolutionary changes that the Net is bringing to news presentation and access. Students should leave this class with an appreciation of how to maximize the Internet's strengths but also minimize its potential pitfalls to spread misinformation and create deception. The concluding question, comparing and contrasting the Gutenberg and Zuckerberg revolutions, primes students for the last lecture, in which we discuss the responsibilities news consumers now shoulder in their role as news producers and publishers.

Opener: Slide shows "corpse at his desk."

Who Is George Turklebaum? Students were assigned to read the Mercury News story. Ask them how they feel about it. Will anyone recognize it has a hoax? We use the Turklebaum story to make two major points and prompt a discussion.

(1) Why suspect it is a hoax? (Weak sourcing and suspect level of verification fails the "smell" test.)

(2) Why won't the story die? It was first published in a British tabloid in 1999 and has resurfaced year after year on the Internet, including a BBC site, as well as Canadian and U.S. newspaper sites, as well as on many Human Resources sites. It is likely millions of people have seen the story, even though it is a hoax. Revealed as such in 2001 by a British reporter. Is this because it reinforces preconceptions that the corporate workplace has become impersonal and uncaring?

The Turklebaum story also illustrates the power of the Internet to spread disinformation as well as reliable news and information. What does this demonstrate about the Internet?

News Matters:

Housekeeping: Remind students to participate in the survey if asked

Essays are due in final recitation

Final exam is Wed. NIGHT, 15th, 8:15-11 PM

Change your home page for the final quiz

Lecture points:

- ✓ A brief history of the Internet
- ✓ Rank/Wiki/typosquat/
- ✓ Authority, Point of View, Currency
- ✓ Wikipedia lesson
- ✓ How the Net is changing news (citizen journo, crowd-sourcing, etc)
- ✓ Email/Facebook/YouTube hoax signs
- ✓ We are all publishers
- ✓ Two Revolutions (Gutenberg/Zuckerberg) One Idea?

Assignments:

1. Work on your essay.
2. Due at recitation Within the next several days you will receive an e-mail from a member of the News Literacy staff. Evaluate it and decide whether to pass it on to a friend, classmate or relative. In 150-200 words explain why and how you made your decision and if you did forward the e-mail, whether you included any comments. Attach a copy of the email you received to your paper.
3. Due at next lecture: News U assignment. (it's TV Deconstruction practice and a quiz)