

Spring 5-14-2015

# Media Use and International Engagement

Brenna Parish

Chapman University, [paris107@mail.chapman.edu](mailto:paris107@mail.chapman.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: [http://digitalcommons.chapman.edu/cusrd\\_abstracts](http://digitalcommons.chapman.edu/cusrd_abstracts)

 Part of the [Mass Communication Commons](#), [Political Science Commons](#), and the [Social Media Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Parish, Brenna, "Media Use and International Engagement" (2015). *Student Research Day Abstracts and Posters*. Paper 152.  
[http://digitalcommons.chapman.edu/cusrd\\_abstracts/152](http://digitalcommons.chapman.edu/cusrd_abstracts/152)

This Poster is brought to you for free and open access by the Office of Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity at Chapman University Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Student Research Day Abstracts and Posters by an authorized administrator of Chapman University Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [laughtin@chapman.edu](mailto:laughtin@chapman.edu).



# Media Use and International Engagement

Brenna Parish

Department of Political Science, Chapman University; Orange, California

## Introduction

The transition from TV news to internet media has changed the way people receive and process news information. Various groups utilized the expansive landscape and interconnected nature of internet in recent years to inspire revolutions, create evangelists for movements, and spark political protests. This study will investigate whether the internet has affected the American public and influenced individuals to engage in international issues, especially human rights issues, in a more impactful way than TV media affects individuals. Using media use as an independent variable, this study will compare the affects the internet and TV news has on the engagement of individuals on foreign policy issues, and will compare what type of issues with which these types of media tend to engage people.

## Previous Scholarship

**CNN Effect:** The “CNN effect” is essentially the theoretical model that states that the 24-hour news cycle affects the public to take interest and engage in international human rights violations, and then push policy-leaders to get involved in these issues by the means of human rights interventions. The extent to which CNN effect exists has been debated among academics since the concept came into fruition in the 1990s, and various scholars have presented differing examples to undermine and support this model. This research project attempts to ascertain whether or not internet media has a distinctive effect in engaging an individual in international issues as the CNN effect suggests the 24-hour news cycle does.

**The Internet and Political Engagement:** Various studies have come up with conflicting information regarding the effect of internet media on political engagement. Some studies focus on the role of the internet in creating general engagement in political issues. Though internet use has tended to correlate with engagement in issues, this data is inconclusive as to whether the internet caused this engagement (Jennings & Zeitner, 2003). Other, more recent, studies have studied the effects of the internet on civic engagement, and thus engagement in political issues, looking at social media in general and Facebook in particular, but have come up with contradictory results.

## Hypotheses:

H1. The use of internet media is more effective than televised news at creating engagement in foreign policy, which is reflected in a voter’s prioritization of international issues.

H2. The use of internet media engages voter’s more widely in issues of international human rights than televised media.

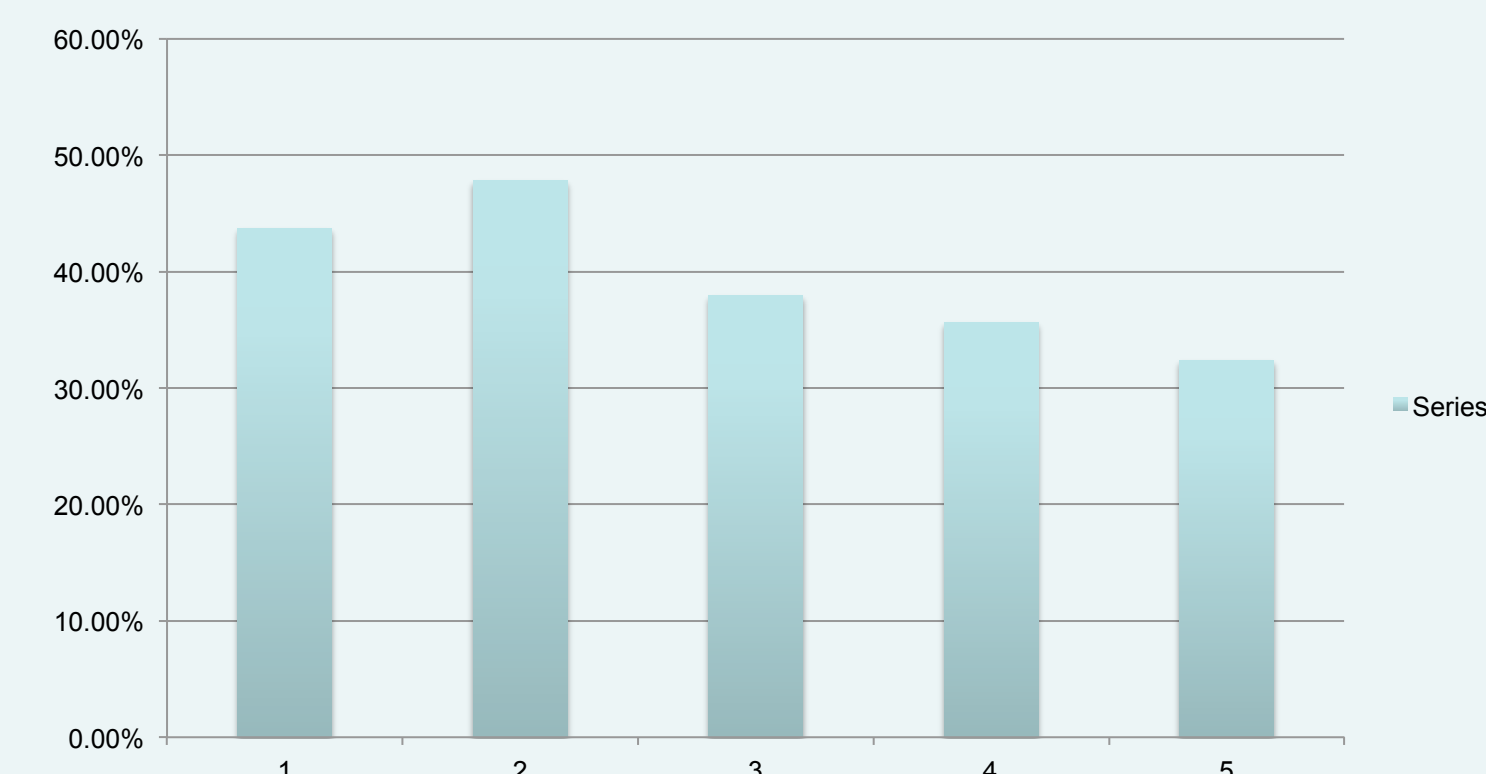
## Data

(derived from analysis of the 2008 American National Election Survey)

### Internet Use

Days past week respondent read a daily online newspaper compared to ranked importance of U.S. policy goal of defending human rights

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important at all
None	37.7%	49.1%	13.2%
One Day	36.1%	50.0%	13.9%
Two Days	29.3%	48.3%	22.4%
Three Days	41.1%	53.6%	5.4%
Four Days	31.3%	62.5%	6.3%
Five Days	41.3%	50.7%	8.0%
Six Days	37.5%	54.2%	8.3%
Seven Days	42.1%	49.6%	12.2%



Days past week respondent read a daily online newspaper compared to ranked importance of U.S. policy goal of controlling illegal immigration

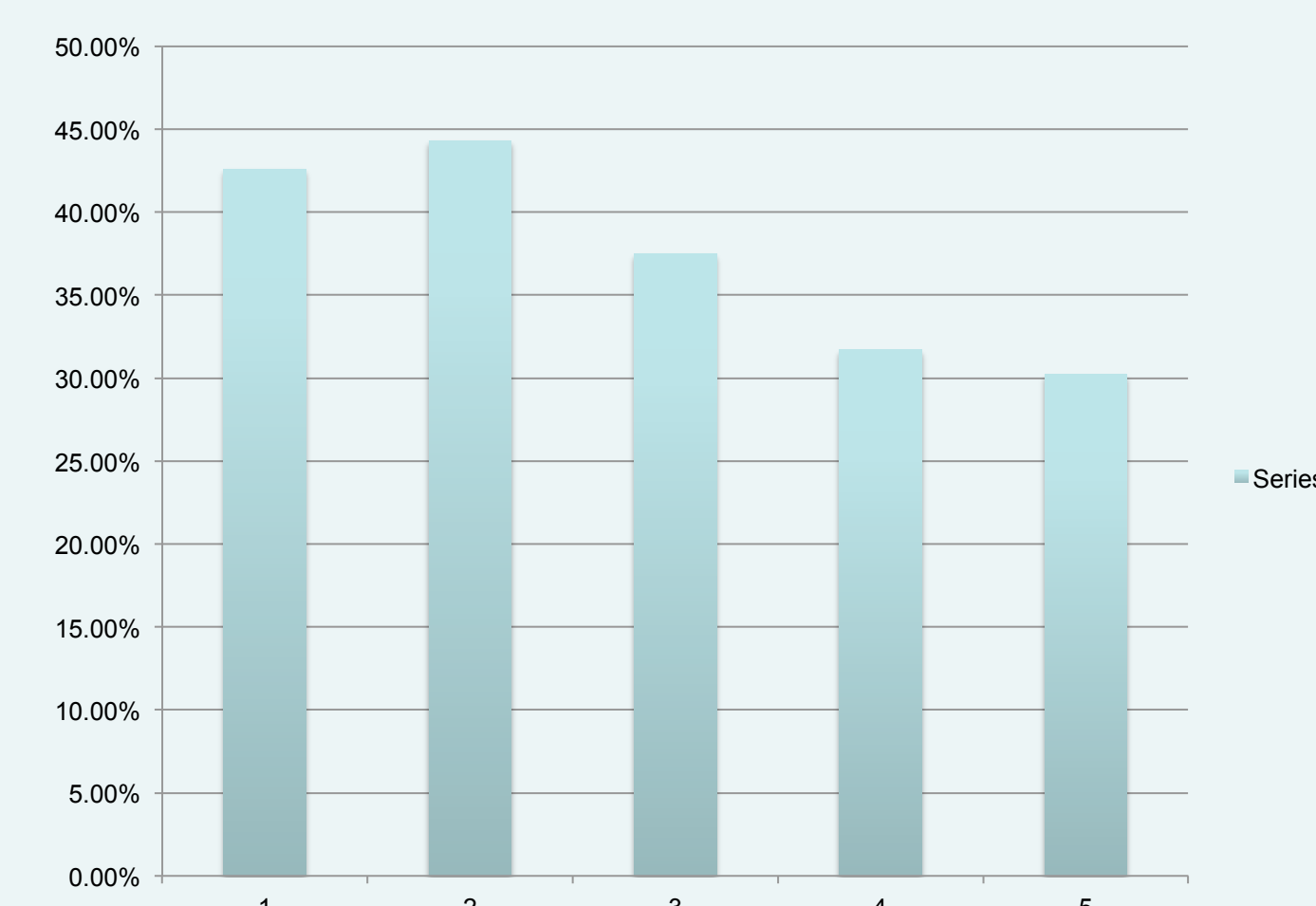
	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important at all
None	60.5%	33.2%	6.2%
One Day	43.5%	43.5%	13.0%
Two Days	63.8%	34.0%	2.1%
Three Days	42.4%	39.4%	18.2%
Four Days	48.4%	35.5%	16.1%
Five Days	33.3%	56.4%	10.3%
Six Days	27.3%	54.5%	18.2%
Seven Days	53.1%	34.4%	12.5%

Internet attention vs. foreign policy goals: The y-axis shows the percentage of respondents who ranked “defending human rights” as a “very important” policy goal, and is compared with the x-axis variables, which measure attention to internet news on a 5-point scale from “a great deal” of attention to “none at all.”

### TV Viewing

Days past week respondent watched national news compared to ranked importance of U.S. policy goal of defending human rights

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important at all
None	42.0%	46.3%	11.7%
One Day	40.4%	46.8%	12.8%
Two Days	39.2%	49.2%	11.7%
Three Days	43.7%	49.5%	6.8%
Four Days	42.3%	45.1%	12.7%
Five Days	34.4%	54.8%	10.8%
Six Days	54.8%	32.3%	12.9%
Seven Days	34.5%	54.7%	10.9%



Days past week respondent watched national news compared to ranked importance of U.S. policy goal of controlling illegal immigration

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important at all
None	47.2%	36.0%	16.9%
One Day	46.5%	46.5%	7.0%
Two Days	53.4%	37.0%	9.6%
Three Days	40.0%	45.0%	15.0%
Four Days	54.7%	36.0%	9.3%
Five Days	55.7%	37.7%	6.6%
Six Days	56.4%	38.2%	5.5%
Seven Days	55.3%	36.7%	8.0%

TV news attention vs. foreign policy goals: The y-axis shows the percentage of respondents who ranked “defending human rights” as a “very important” policy goal, and is compared with the x-axis variables, which measure attention to televised news on a 5-point scale from “a great deal” of attention to “none at all.”

## Findings

Based on this data, and further data on this topic, I have concluded:

- Both news and internet can be effective in engaging individuals in certain foreign policy issues.
- While viewers of televised news media sometimes show more engagement based on how many days a week they view national news, the number of days an individual uses the internet does not show any correlation to increased engagement in foreign policy.
- The way respondents rate their “attention” to media forms positively correlates with their engagement in international issues more strongly than how much media respondents actually consume, whether this is the consumption of internet media or televised media.
- An increased amount of attention an individual gives to either internet or televised media correlates positively with engagement in international human rights issues. This relationship is not necessarily reflected with individual engagement with other foreign policy issues.

## Conclusions

While it does not seem likely that internet media does affect more international engagement than TV news, both mediums of information carry the potential to engage audiences in foreign policy issues, especially those pertaining to human rights. TV news can, in some instances, affect audiences based on how often they watch the news, but the internet’s influence in foreign policy issues relates to the audiences “attention” to that form of media. Thus, the internet’s role in influencing its users to engage in international issues does not rely on the amount of consumption of online news forms, but someone’s trust of and attentiveness toward online news. Nonetheless, this study utilizes data from the 2008 NES and the landscape of the internet has since changed. Further research could reveal whether or not these changes have affected the ways the internet engages individuals into international issues.

## References

- Castells, J. E., & Patton, R. C. (2013). Is Social Media Changing How We Understand Political Engagement? An Analysis of Facebook and the 2008 Presidential Election. *Political Research Quarterly*, 66(4), 883–895.
- Drezner, D. W. (2007). Foreign Policy Goes Glim. *The National Interest*, (92), 22–28.
- Jacobs, L. R., & Page, B. I. (2005). Who Influences U.S. Foreign Policy? *The American Political Science Review*, 99(1), 107–123.
- Jakobsen, P. V. (2000). Focus on the CNN Effect Misses the Point: The Real Media Impact on Conflict Management Is Invisible and Indirect. *Journal of Peace Research*, 37(2), 131–143.
- Jennings, M. K., & Zeitner, V. (2003). Internet Use and Civic Engagement: A Longitudinal Analysis. *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, 67(3), 311–334.
- Price, M. E. (2009). End of Television and Foreign Policy. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 625, 196–204.
- Reynolds, G. H. (2004). The Blogs of War: How the Internet is Reshaping Foreign Policy. *The National Interest*, (75), 59–64.
- Robinson, P. (1999). The CNN Effect: Can the News Media Drive Foreign Policy? *Review of International Studies*, 25(2), 301–309.
- Vreese, C. H. de. (2007). Digital Renaissance: Young Consumer and Citizen? *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 611, 207–216.