The University of Southern Mississippi

The Aquila Digital Community

Dissertations

Spring 5-2014

Gatekeeping the Social Games in a Post-Broadcasting World: A Qualitative Content Analysis of NBC and User-Generated Olympic Twitter Coverage During the 2012 London Games

Daniel Anthony Sipocz
University of Southern Mississippi

Follow this and additional works at: https://aquila.usm.edu/dissertations

Part of the Broadcast and Video Studies Commons, Communication Technology and New Media Commons, Journalism Studies Commons, Mass Communication Commons, Social Media Commons, and the Television Commons

The University of Southern Mississippi

GATEKEEPING THE SOCIAL GAMES IN A POST-BROADCASTING WORLD:

A QUALITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS OF NBC AND USER-GENERATED

OLYMPIC TWITTER COVERAGE DURING THE 2012 LONDON GAMES

by

Daniel Anthony Sipocz

Abstract of a Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate School
of The University of Southern Mississippi
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

May 2014

ABSTRACT

GATEKEEPING THE SOCIAL GAMES IN A POST-BROADCASTING WORLD:

A QUALITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS OF NBC AND USER-GENERATED

OLYMPIC TWITTER COVERAGE DURING THE 2012 LONDON GAMES

by Daniel Anthony Sipocz

May 2014

This study examined the Twitter use of both traditional gatekeepers, such as NBC, and audience members during the 2012 London Summer Olympics. The exploratory study examined NBC and audience members as gatekeepers with a particular interest in the audience's role as a gatekeeper through social media use. NBC used Twitter, a social media platform, in ways that supported traditional gatekeeping models. The network aimed to drive audiences back to the traditional television broadcast while providing the audience with the illusion of having an influence on Olympic coverage. Most significantly, this study argues that the audience became a gatekeeper of Olympic coverage. Audience members were able to create content and counter-narratives to meet the interests of other audience members that were not met by NBC. Further, this study introduces a new model to gatekeeping—the audience gatekeeping model in post-broadcasting—to explain the audience's role as a gatekeeper. This model extends gatekeeping theory into social media scholarship by examining the audience's ability to create content, disseminate it, and influence the traditional coverage by gatekeepers. By influencing coverage in this way, the audience is incorporated into the gatekeeping model beyond the feedback loop. The final section of this study applies the audience

gatekeeping model and social media's influence on the future of broadcasting,

particularly the ability to customize content. In customizing content as a gatekeeper, the

audience will be able to decide what it wants to watch, when it wants to watch and how it

wants to watch. Traditional gatekeepers, such as NBC, stand to benefit from changes in

the gatekeeping model, providing the ability to boost advertising revenue.

The University of Southern Mississippi

GATEKEEPING THE SOCIAL GAMES IN A POST-BROADCASTING WORLD:

A QUALITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS OF NBC AND USER-GENERATED

OLYMPIC TWITTER COVERAGE DURING THE 2012 LONDON GAMES

by

Daniel Anthony Sipocz

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate School
of The University of Southern Mississippi
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Approved:

Christopher Campbell
Director

Fei Xue

Gina Chen

David R. Davies

Cheryl Jenkins

Maureen A. Ryan
Dean of the Graduate School

May 2014

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated in loving memory to my brother Christopher, who continues to inspire me to do as many things as I can. I have no doubt he would tell me my research was boring but support me anyway.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would also like to acknowledge my friends and colleagues near and far, especially Robert Byrd, Sean Martin, Chen-wei Chang, Leslie Rasmussen, and Courtney Davis for their support throughout. Their support helped keep me motivated, sane, and productive. A second thanks goes to Sean for helping me develop the design from my head and putting it to paper cleanly and appropriately.

My parents also need to be recognized. While they never understood what I was doing, their support throughout all of graduate school and the dissertation process was appreciated.

Finally, I would be remiss without thanking and acknowledging Dr. Dustin Supa for his advice, support, guidance, and friendship since 2009. Without your influence and knowledge I would not have dared a journey into academia let alone accomplished what I have. I sincerely thank you for all your efforts of the years in creating a capable researcher.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Post-Broadcasting and Post-Network Olympics
Gatekeeping Overview
The Internet and Social Media
Social Media and Sports
NBC, America's Olympic Network
NBC and the Internet

Data Collection
Procedure

NBC's Plan
Digitalizing Gatekeeping
Themes
Live-Tweeting Events
Trivia
Informative
Interactive
Engaged Promotion

LIST OF TABLES

Table

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

As darkness began to fall in the city of Stratford, England on July 27, 2012,

80,000 people sat in the Olympic Stadium while millions watched the opening

ceremonies live around the world. Americans, however, were not watching live like the

rest of the world. It was not from lack of desire that Americans were not watching the

opening ceremonies of the London Olympics. The United States audience had to wait six

hours to watch the Danny Boyle production, which took the world through British

history, paying homage to the industrial revolution, World War I and World War II, and

British popular culture, including music and literature. The U.S. had to wait six hours

because the National Broadcast Company (NBC), the exclusive holder of Olympic

broadcasting rights in the States, employed a tape delay in its Olympic coverage. A tape

delay of Olympic coverage, while not unheard of, became a sore point for the U.S.

audience with the Internet providing access to real-time results of Olympic events and

spoilers while NBC clung to its revenue model.

Much scholarship has been written scrutinizing the Olympic movement and the

coverage of the Olympic Games. Most notably, Billings (2008) has analyzed race, gender

and other issues with Olympic coverage. Billings explained that his work filled a gap in

the body of Olympic scholarship by adding a new component of research: "Without

question, there is no shortage of opinions about the strengths and weaknesses of the

modern Olympic telecast, yet what this book provides, which is not present in the present

literature, is a closer look inside the Olympic telecast" (Billings, 2008, p. 6). A vast

majority of work, including Billings', has been quantitative in nature, leaving others to

fill in qualitative nature of the Olympics. The need for qualitative work is significant because of the increased importance placed on the Olympics globally in recent decades, which has transformed cultural aspects of our understanding of the Games. Girginov (2010) noted that studies of the Olympics need to reflect changes in cultural aspects of society:

> The development of Olympic knowledge has also undergone significant transformations and helped shape our understanding of the changing nature of this complex phenomenon. Thus, social sciences inquiries into Olympism will inevitably be concerned with the processes of change—personal, group and societal. (p. 1)

Understanding not only the changes themselves, but the process of change is an important task in media studies, particularly with the Internet and social media forcing changes to how the Olympics are broadcast. By understanding the changes and the process of change we can better understand the influence that the Internet and social media have on traditional broadcast platforms.

Little scholarly work has addressed the audience's reaction to the coverage presented from a qualitative perspective. Much has been focused on the media construction of Olympic coverage (Bass, 2002; Beamish & Ritchie, 2006; Billings, 2008; Larson & Park, 1993; Lenskyj, 2000). Even less has been written about social media and the Olympics because of the relative newness of social media platforms such as Twitter. Despite the newness of social media, activity exists. According to Miah and Garcia (2012), "Olympic activity exists on a variety of social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and the photo-sharing website Flickr, the volume of which is very difficult to

capture by web searching" (p. 132). Consequently, there is room for focus on social media usage during the Olympics. Schrodt (2011), in an unpublished thesis, examined the Twitter usage of six U.S. athletes between February 11 and February 28, 2012, which coincided with the 2010 Winter Olympics.

This dissertation will provide a portion of a large missing element in scholarly Olympic research by comparing NBC's Twitter use to the user-generated content on social media during the 2012 Olympics. The purpose of the comparison is to evaluate how televised sports and networks act and viewers operate as gatekeepers on Twitter and how this will affect the broadcast model, particularly NBC's as the company continues to follow a model developed before the proliferation of the Internet and social media.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The modern Olympic Games are considered to be the leading international

sporting event, featuring athletic competition between countries around the world. More

than 200 nations participate in a variety of athletic events. Held quadrenially, with the

Summer and Winter Games alternating every two years, the Olympics hold a special

designation of importance to many. According to Seppänen (1984), "the modern Olympic

Games have grown into a social and cultural spectacle without parallel in kind or scope"

(p. 113). The social and cultural spectacle the Olympics evolved into was assisted in large

part because of technological advancements and the mass media.

The Olympics were revived in 1896 and hosted in Athens, Greece, under the

direction of the newly created International Olympic Committee (Beamish & Ritchie,

2006; Epsy, 1979). According to the IOC, it has been the "supreme authority of the

Olympic Movement" since the 1896 Games and oversees the selection of host cities, set

and enforces rules, handles every event and promotes as well as sells broadcasting rights

and anything else related to the Olympics that need attention (IOC About, n.d.). As part

of the organization's role, the IOC negotiates broadcasting rights with media

organizations around the world for their opportunity to obtain the license to broadcast the

Olympics in its country.

Print media—namely newspapers—covered the Olympics during the early years

of the modern Games. As noted by Billings (2008), the first live telecast of the Olympics

came in 1936 from Berlin, Germany (Berlin Olympics, n.d.). The IOC described the 1936

Olympics as having twenty-five large screens set up throughout Berlin, allowing the local

people and media members to watch the Games for free (Berlin Olympics, n.d.). According to Billings (2008), the quality of the broadcasts was poor, but television and the Olympics have been inseparable since. Broadcasting of the Olympics remained a local occurrence to the surrounding area of the host city for nearly 20 years before the first international telecasts of the Olympics arrived in 1956 for the Winter Games in Cortina, Italy according to Billings (2008). Even then, only eight countries in Europe consumed the first international telecast, but it was the start of the global, shared experience of the Olympics on television (Billings, 2008).

It wasn't until 1960 when the broadcasting rights were sold by the IOC to media organizations. Spence (1988) reported that CBS bought the first broadcasting rights to the 1960 Winter Olympics in Squaw Valley, California, for $50,000. Since the first time the broadcasting rights were sold, the viewership of the Games has increased exponentially because of technological advancements (Whannel, 1984). Milestones such as the advent of instant replay, first used in the 1960 Winter Olympics after the IOC asked CBS to tape the outcome of a skiing event (TV History Archive, n.d.), using satellites to broadcast live coverage of the Olympics in 1964, and the introduction of color television in 1968 made the Olympics accessible and intriguing to a wider range of people. By making the broadcasts more accessible and intriguing, interest grew and so did the ratings. According to NBC, the 2012 Summer Olympics in London averaged 31.1 million viewers and a 17.5 Nielsen rating with more than 219 million Americans tuning in over the Olympic fortnight, the most ever (Levine, 2012; NBC Airs, August 14, 2012). This was a massive increase in comparison to the 1964 Summer Tokyo Olympics that pulled in a 5.6 Nielsen rating (NBC Airs, July 28, 2012).

According to Larson and Park (1993), "The Games involve more nations and broadcast organizations than any other event; they also showcase the latest in television and telecommunications technology and attract the largest international viewing audience" (p. 5). The technological advancements that allowed for instant replay, satellite broadcasts in color also helped broadcasting networks to attract the largest viewing audience possible. Consequently, sports become an integral part of the technological advancements in mass communication and broadcasting in general. Ellul (1964) argued that "sport is an extension of the technical spirit…everything must be useful" (p. 384). Because everything is important and must be useful, all the elements of a television broadcast are critical to the successful coverage of an event. Despite the role the Olympics has played in the technological advancement of television, some feel television still fails to capture the Olympics accurately and in full glory. MacAloon (2010) argued that the spectacle of the Olympics remains second-rate when captured by television cameras:

> Though it has played a capital role in the spectacular quality and growth of the Games, television, even of the highest technical standard, reduces the spectacle to constricted little rectangles of color and form, systematically impoverishing the spectacle's gifts to the human eye. (MacAloon, 2010, p. 82)

According to the Olympic Charter, the goal of every Olympics is to reach as many people around the world as possible (IOC Charter). Therefore, a media organization's ability to reach a significantly large number of people determines whether its bid to broadcast the Olympics is considered by the IOC. Consequently, the Olympic

broadcast is immensely powerful. Billings (2008) argued that the power of Olympic broadcasts demonstrates the power of mass media influence.

The role of money also demonstrates the power and influence of both the media and the Olympics. Pound (2004) discussed the importance of producing a powerful narrative in Olympic broadcasts because of the money at stake for the broadcasters: "Media feel the pressure to broadcast the most compelling broadcasts in sports because of the massive audience size and money involved" (Pound, 2004). Without revenue, the broadcasts would not be possible. Howard (2006) noted that to ensure interest and revenue, "Networks must cast a wide net to interest as big of a demographic as possible to garner the high advertising rates and deliver the massive ratings" (Howard, 2006, p. 1B).

The Olympic broadcasts have such power and influence because of the world's love of sports and spectacle. Boyd (1997) described the media's role in the world's infatuation as part of a global narrative in everyday life: "Sports and the discourses that surround them have become one of the master narratives of twentieth-century culture" (p. ix). According to Dayan and Katz (1992), the Olympics, as a "master narrative," have become a "media event" in which the media has become obsessed. Eastman (1996) and Billings (2008) have described the Olympics as a mega-event. The Olympics are such a large event that Billings (2008) named the Olympics "the biggest show on television" in his book regarding Olympic broadcasts. Because the Olympics are such a big show, the concern over advertising is just as big. According to Woodward (2012), sports earn "the label of mega-event [because they are] increasingly associated with sport or popular entertainment because of the sponsorship they invite and the profits that can accrue to

investors" (p. 110). To that degree, the Olympics go beyond even a mega-event; they are a spectacle. According to Kellner (2003), spectacles are events that "embody contemporary society's basic values, serve to initiate individuals into its way of life, and dramatize its controversies as well as its modes of conflict and resolution" (p. 2). Consequently, the Olympics as spectacles provide meaning to the masses as well as drama that few get to experience as part of their day-to-day life. Miah and Garcia (2012) argued that television is the best medium to transmit the Olympic spectacle because it transmits images, sound, drama and emotion better than any other medium. The audience can see, hear, and connect emotionally to the Olympians and their stories, especially with help from the narratives constructed by those commentating. Smith and Bissel (2009) discussed the importance of the narratives constructed by the broadcasters, allowing audiences to make sense of what they viewed:

> Even though visitors from around the world travel to watch the splendor of the Olympic Games, for most people, the experience of the games is one that is mediated, as it often is with other types of sports. This fact alone suggests that broadcast commentators and announcers can play an important role in the way the game, the players and specific teams are represented and viewed by audiences. Since viewers do not have the real world experience to draw upon, they must rely on the calling of the games and the visual coverage of the games in order to experience the games. (p. 6)

The lack of real world experience of competition, as Smith and Bissel described it, prevents the audience from connecting trials of the competitors and the commentators make it possible for the audience to understand.

The spectacle of the Olympics provides a challenge for the media to cover, however. Not only must the media cover an athletic competition, but they must also maintain the larger historical context of a news event while profiting from its coverage simultaneously. According to Billings (2008), the media have two jobs when covering the Olympics. He wrote, "Media coverage of megasporting events such as the Olympics serves the dual purpose of entertaining the masses while providing a sense of historical background" (Billings, 2008, p. 138). The entertainment factor of coverage also plays a role in the world's infatuation with sports in general. As Smith and Bissel (2009) noted, few people actually participate in sports that comprise Olympic events. However, Rawlins (1993) argued that even fewer people have the opportunity to experience the Olympics in person.

According to Lenskyj (2008), despite the popularity of the Olympics, the general public around the world actually knows little about the Games. Many of the events do not appear on television frequently outside of the Olympics, preventing viewers from maintaining awareness and knowledge about the events. Lenskyj (2008) noted that people's knowledge of the Olympics comes from the media and not through first-hand experience: "What most people know about the Olympic Games and their players, they learn by watching television, scanning the Internet, and reading newspapers, sport magazines and books" (p. 4). This lack of general knowledge forces media organizations to take extra time in their broadcasts to explain basic information regarding events to the audience. Hughes and Coakley (1984) also argued that the audience knew little of the sporting events they watched on television: "As the media audience for sporting events has grown by many millions over the past three decades, there has been an increasing

number of viewers who know little about the sports they're watching" (p. 60). Both

Lenskyj (2008) and Billings (2008) agree the Olympic audience knows little about the

events broadcasted. Most Olympic viewers watch the events only every four years—

some of which are only broadcast during the Olympics—leaving many uneducated on

current participants, rules, and underlying factors for success in the events (Billings,

2008; Lenskyj, 2008). In short, the detailed explanation of the events is provided by the

media to ensure the casual viewers have a basic understanding of what is going on and

who is winning. Gruneau (1989) discussed the explanation to the viewing audience does

not have to occur through verbal communication, though. He wrote, "Television sports

production involves a wide range of processes of visual and narrative representation—

choices regarding the images, language, camera positioning, and story line are required to

translate 'what happened' into a program that is 'good television'" (Gruneau, 1989, p.

135).

Consequently, Olympic coverage is boiled down into narratives by media

organizations to enhance viewer understanding of the events unfolding throughout the

broadcast. Wenner (1989) described other elements of a broadcast that assist audiences in

making sense of what they are watching:

> The fan at home is aided and abetted in interpreting the contest by the television
>
> camera, which focuses on action deemed important. Announcers add to this focus,
>
> as their commentary reinforces and heightens the significance of the contest and
>
> its players. (p. 15)

The commentary added by the announcers serves as a vital element to the media

organization's broadcast, its ability to make money, and creating a strong link between

network and audience viewing (Wenner, 1989). The commentary is also infused with storytelling and dramatic narratives to capture and maintain attention.

Over the years, the broadcast production has grown more complex and sophisticated for the Olympics. Coverage has evolved from only print and radio to television and Internet as well. Horne and Whannel (2012) discussed the digitalization of media over the past three decades. They wrote, "Ever since 1988, the digitalised, computerized and globalised internet dissemination of the Games has begun to emerge (Horne & Whannel, 2012, p. 56). Since 1988, the Internet has grown dramatically and changed rapidly (Horne & Whannel, 2012). As a result, coverage of the Olympics has faced the challenges of change as well through the addition of online and mobile streaming, real-time timing and scoring, live tweeting and the ability to interact with journalists, broadcasters, competing athletes, and those attending events in person.

<center>Post-Broadcasting and Post-Network Olympics</center>

According to Merrin (2009), the old mass media broadcast era was dominated by the large media organizations that mass produced information for mass consumption, while the post-broadcast era is highlighted by innovation and re-invention. Broadcast programming, once reserved for television and serving people as part of the family room, has extended and proliferated into everyday life through computers and mobile phones. According to Turner and Tay (2009), the proliferation of multiplatform broadcasting has been a boon for broadcasting companies that have embraced the technology. Turner and Tay (2009) argued, "The major ratings successes of the twenty-first century have been multi-platform, multimedia events" (p. 7).

Technological advancements have changed how the world gathers information on a daily basis. How the world watches the Olympics has been affected, too. Billings (2008) noted the changes in viewing habits: "Most television executives will postulate that more has changed in their industry during the past ten years than in the entire history of the medium. Cable offerings provide hundreds of counter-programming options" (p. 7). The hundreds of counterprogramming options offered by cable and satellite providers are not the only changes from the early days of network television. While there are more options, there are also recording devices that allow viewers to watch what they want to watch when they want to watch it. Further, digital and computer-mediated broadcasting options give viewers even more outlets and niches for program viewing. Lumme (2012) detailed the growth of digital media consumption: "In four short years from Torino to Vancouver, we've witnessed the rapid growth of digital media. In fact, we now have the same amount of hours covered globally on the internet and mobile phones as we have on television" (Miah & Garcia, 2012, p. 131). All these new options for viewing have created what Aslinger (2009) calls the post-broadcast era, which is "defined by the ways that television industries make use of multiple distribution methods, potentially reducing the power of traditional broadcast television and opening up debates about how audiences are composed, segmented, and targeted" (p. 109).

The further segmenting of audiences, allowing mass media to target niche audiences, does not give all the power to the mass media, however. Parks (2004) refers to post-broadcasting as the customization of television on an individual level, making the content flexible and selectable based on interests. She argued that "The personalization of TV is ultimately about developing narrowly defined yet infinitely flexible content that

commodifies layers of individual identity, desire, taste, and preference" (p. 135). The new landscape of broadcasting, post-broadcasting, gives the viewer greater control over the mass media, but it also gives the media companies a better idea of where to find its audiences. Merrin (2009) noted that television—once just a box that brought content to the masses—is no longer just a box. The content can now be accessed through computers and mobile devices (Merrin, 2009).

The effects of post-broadcasting can be seen in the Beijing 2008 Summer Olympic Games, in which the International Olympic Committee—not the networks that the IOC sold broadcasting rights to—experimented with unprecedented broadcast options to make the Games even more accessible to the world. Miah and Garcia (2012) described the post-broadcasting experiment of the IOC as bold and innovative:

> The IOC took an unprecedented decision to broadcast the sports competitions to seventy-eight territories using the popular online video sharing platform YouTube. In doing so, it signaled how Olympic television broadcasting is changing, becoming more integrated with computer and mobile technology, quickly developing integration with social media providing personalized viewing experiences and being less reliant on professional broadcasters. At the same time, television viewing culture is changing. … The collaborative, altruistic and sharing ethos of online media in a Web 2.0 era means that people are less willing to pay for services, especially if they are not optimized for social interactions. (Miah & Garcia, 2012, p. 136)

The post-broadcasting and Web 2.0 era as described by Parks, Miah and Garcia do not just focus on innovation; the eras also focus on the process of change. Raboy (2008)

argued that the new media environment dictates that the media's role must be to make themselves indispensable while maintaining entertainment and educational characteristics. He argued, "as we move toward a post-broadcasting environment, it [media] must think of itself as a full-service public communicator" (Raboy, 2008, p. 363).

Raboy's assessment of the modern media environment becomes even more poignant as digital media and its usage has evolved. The new digital era places an emphasis on the general public's role in creating content. Merrin (2009) says, "In the broadcast-era, media industries produced massive quantities of content for us. Today, they're still producing that, but so are we" (p. 24). The consumers are now able to produce content through the Internet and social media. Consequently, television is being unbundled and redistributed through other channels similar to television (Dawson, 2007).

Gatekeeping Overview

Gatekeeping theory describes the process through which events are covered by the mass media, explains this process by considering concepts on five levels of analysis, and shows just how difficult it is to predict anything involving people (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009). The theory looks broadly at the field of mass media rather than testing single hypotheses. Gatekeeping addresses a media organization or journalist's power to choose which information is selected, how much of it is selected and what revisions are made. Consequently, gatekeeping is an important theory in mass communication research. Bagdikian (1983, 2004) argues that controlling the power of information flow is essential to controlling society. This places tremendous power in the hands of the mass media gatekeepers. Shoemaker and Vos (2009) argue that relatively little attention has been

given to the power of gatekeeping in the era of the Internet: "In the audience channel, we see that the internet now allows anyone to become a gatekeeper by passing along news items and commenting on them in many websites. … Therefore we must conceptualize readers as having their own gate" (p. 124).

Lippmann (1922) described a traditional gatekeeping process in which the ability to decide what to report to the audience is one of the mass media's most important features. Lippmann wrote, "Every newspaper when it reaches the reader is the result of a whole series of selections to what items shall be printed, in what position they shall be printed, how much space each shall occupy, what emphasis each shall have" (p. 63).

Twenty-five years after Lippmann, Lewin (1947), and White (1950) offered early framework for evaluating how selection of certain items occur and why some items are rejected. According to Shoemaker and Vos, the work of Lippmann, Lewin and White "also provided a structure for the study of processes other than selection, such as how content is shaped, structured, positioned and timed" (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009, p. 11). Lewin (1947) believed his metaphor in which women act as a gatekeeper when grocery shopping by selecting food that will be cooked and served to others could be applied generally and explain other decision-making processes. White fashioned Lewin's channels and gatekeeping grocery shopping concept into an explanation of decision-making processes regarding content selection and rejection in the media industry with his seminal "Mr. Gates" paper (White, 1950). According to Snider (1967), Mr. Gates defined news as "the day by day report of events and personalities and comes in variety which should be presented as much as possible in variety for a balanced diet" (Snider, 1967, p.

426). The Westley and MacLean (1957) model of mass communication was developed from Lewin and White's work and designated the mass media as the gatekeeper.

Later studies of gatekeeping viewed individuals as gatekeepers instead of just the media organization as one gatekeeper (McNelly, 1959). The emphasis in these studies was on people performing tasks for the news organization they worked for. Halloran, Elliott, and Murdock (1970) argued that gatekeeping occurred even before the information made it to the media organization with the "reporter on the street" compiling information (p.131). Chibnall (1977) argued that reporters created stories by selecting fragments of information rather than gathering the news. Further, Chibnall believed that the most important gatekeeping decisions were made by the reporter, well before the information ever reached an editor. The information then morphed slightly as it travels through the various gates within a media organization. Shoemaker and Vos (2009) noted the way information can change and that gatekeeping was not just about the selection or rejection of information. They wrote, "Gatekeeping involves not only the selection or rejection of items, but also the process of changing them in ways to make them more appealing to the final consumer" (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009, p. 12). Simultaneously, the Internet enables the audience to perform similar gatekeeping functions as described by the traditional gatekeeping model.

Gatekeepers are critical components in the dissemination of information (Chibnall, 1977; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1981; McNelly, 1959; Shoemaker & Vos, 2009; Snider, 1967; White, 1950). They can facilitate or prevent the diffusion of information as well as how much information will be allowed past the gates. The gatekeeping process determines the way in which we define our lives and the world around us, and therefore

gatekeeping ultimately affects the social reality of every person (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009). Hickey (1966, 1968) identified three types of roles in which someone can exercise control over gatekeeping of organizational information, much like the roles of a reporter, editor, and publisher. According to Hickey (1966, 1968), the communication handler controls the passage of messages within an organization, a channel mediator controls the channels the messages can travel through, and a content manipulator shapes the content. These early studies focused on simple selection or rejection regarding information. However, the gatekeeping process is more complex than that.

The Gatekeeping Process

Shoemaker and Vos (2009) expanded upon Hickey's (1966, 1968) description of the gatekeeping process: "The basic premise of gatekeeping scholarship is that messages are created about events that has passed through a series of gates and has been changed in the process" (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009, p. 22). The first gate that any information must go through is the reporter, who collects initial information about an event, person or issue. Information deemed sufficiently newsworthy is allowed through the first gate by a journalist, providing the first shaping of the information for mass audience consumption (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009). In other words, not all information may actually become a news item worthy of dissemination. Many attributes may help the journalist decide what makes information newsworthy, but the most agreed upon attributes are timeliness, proximity, importance, impact or consequence, interest, conflict or controversy, sensationalism, prominence, and novelty (Eberhard, 1982; Evensen 1997; Hough, 1995; Itule & Anderson, 2007). Events and information are not inherently newsworthy by themselves (Shoemaker, Johnson, Seo, & Wang, 2010). People—gatekeepers— are

required to determine whether an event or information is newsworthy, and the attributes assist in the selection or rejection based on newsworthiness. Further, in an online era of mass communication, information changes and can be updated, requiring multiple gatekeeping decisions about which information is selected for updates. Shoemaker et al. (2010) noted that "Selection has been only one part of the gatekeeping process. … When news began moving to the internet platform in the late 1990s, news personnel quickly realized the interactive potential of online news" (p. 57). The Internet growing as an interactive medium, where the audience has the opportunity to create content just like journalists, helped to build a foundation in which the audience could become gatekeepers.

Gatewatching

Gatewatching, according to Bruns (2005), requires a different set of skills than traditional journalistic gatekeeping. Gatewatching relies more on searching for already published information, retrieving that information and further disseminating the information online. Jay Rosen (2006) described the people who routinely use these searching, retrieval and dissemination skills as "the people formerly known as the audience" (n.p.) because they are more than just an audience. Anyone can now perform "random acts of journalism" (Lasica, 2003, p. 71) by pointing out information to other people online who may be interested or stumbled across the information. Rosen noted that these people, who he calls formerly the audience, perform acts of journalism by picking up their cameras, tweeting, commenting and blogging (Rosen, 2006). Bruns (2005) argued that gatewatchers observe the gates of many sources for relevant information that they think should brought to the attention of others. He wrote,

Gatewatchers draw on news reports and official publications but frequently use

journalists', politicians', and corporate actors' own words against them by

creatively (but, ideally, truthfully) reappropriating, repurposing, recombining,

recontextualizing, and reinterpreting such content to show a very different

conception of reality. (Bruns, 2008, p. 252)

Bruns' gatewatchers, then, are unable to control the gates through which information

passes. They are able to keep an eye on the output of information from the gates and pass

along information based on their evaluation of relevance and usefulness. Therefore,

gatewatchers promote or diffuse the information they select by making specific sources

or stories known to others. Westerman, Spence, and VanDer Heide (2013) echoed Bruns

by arguing, "Rather than publishing unique information, they (gatekeepers) make others'

information known and add to it" (p. 3). More specifically relating to Twitter, these

gatewatchers offer brief introductions to each information item while providing others

with the link to a more complete report. Gatewatchers, then, act as a bridge from

summarization of information to a primary news source.

However, as I argue in the next chapter, which analyzes the audience tweets

during the 2012 Olympics, the audience is far more than gatewatchers. They are able to

gatekeep information as well, to provide alternative narratives in Olympic coverage that

includes information that the audience desires but is not given by NBC. Therefore, in

social media and new media environments, the gatekeeping focus shifts. The gates are no

longer only located with the information providers (Haas & Wearden, 2003; Kovach &

Rosenstiel, 1999). Gates are also located with the information consumers who act as their

own gatekeepers through social media. This change has created a shift from the

traditional notion of "gatekeeping" to what I call "audience gatekeeping" in which the audience performs Bruns' gatewatching tasks.

Audience Gatekeeping

Gatekeeping does not just occur on the production side of the mass media. The audience can play a critical role in the gatekeeping process as well, even becoming gatekeepers themselves. According to Shoemaker and Vos (2009), "Compared to other mass media, the internet provides much more opportunity for audience members to interact with news makers, news creators, and each other. *This high level of interactivity turns audience members into gatekeepers*" (p. 6).[1]

Audience members can personalize their Google News front pages by asking for more or less content on a topic and by ranking the order of categories in importance. By doing so, the audience acts as their own gatekeepers, selecting which information they want and rejecting the information they do not want. Shoemaker and Vos (2009) detailed the audience's move from passive to active and what it means for gatekeeping:

Audience members have become active in a secondary gatekeeping process, one that begins when the usual mass media process stops. … The sophistication of these gatekeeping rules is shown by the ability of readers to tailor the content to their own interests, for example, by asking for more world news and less sports information. These "more or less" rules and placement of categories on the web page turn into algorithms created by individual readers and are remembered by the news portal's servers, so that when the reader enters the site again, the cookies

---

[1] Italics is researcher's emphasis, not source's.

(audience-defined sets of information and rules) left behind by the website on the

person's computer allow the server to recognize the person and his preferences.

(p. 7)

The ability to personalize content, allowing the audience to act as gatekeepers, ensures a

marketplace of competition. The audience can go straight to the media that provides the

information and content that they want. Shoemaker and Vos (2009) note that economic

theory has an impact on the media market by putting power into the consumer's hands.

The audience will get what it wants because it dictates the demand for content and

becomes the gatekeeper. Consequently, popularity of specific information makes it

newsworthy to an audience acting as a gatekeeper of information it demands.

The Internet has not killed gatekeeping. If anything, the Internet has added extra

layers of gatekeeping, putting power in the hands of the audience and consumers to act as

gatekeepers by choosing which information and how much information they want access

to as well as when to consume the information. Further, the Internet has allowed the

audience to create its own narratives based on selected information that it is particularly

interested in. Consequently, the audience can construct counter-narratives to information

disseminated by the traditional gatekeepers. All of which is significant because the

audience as a gatekeeper is visible and tangible via the Internet. Other people—audience

members—as well as media organizations and journalists can see what the audience as a

gatekeeper is saying. The Internet, ultimately, amplified the feedback loop in gatekeeping

models. However, the Internet did more than amplify the audience's feedback. It helped

to place the audience on the same level as traditional gatekeepers. This study helps to

advance understanding of the audience as a gatekeeper.

Analyzing Gatekeeping

Shoemaker and Vos (2009) provide five levels of gatekeeping analysis. According to Shoemaker and Vos (2009), the hierarchy they developed "help[s] us to study communication and build theory" (p. 31). The five levels are individual, routines or practices of communication work, the organizational level, the social institutional level, and the social system level. This portion of the literature review will cover the individual level, routines level, and organizational level, as they have the most relevance to the subject of this dissertation.

Individual-Level Gatekeeping

Everyone is a gatekeeper, especially on the Internet, where people personalize content to match our interests. This makes the audience an active information processor. Shoemaker and Vos (2009) argue the active audience as gatekeepers is "similar to the consumer decision making process because gatekeepers are consumers, producers and distributors of messages. They 'buy' some messages and reject others" (p. 39). For social media users, buying a message can be as simple as clicking a link, favoriting a post, or retweeting. It is up to the individual person to decide which pieces of information give an overall impression of importance and usefulness to selection for consumption (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1981). In other words, information that has valued attributes is more likely to be selected for consumption.

Communication Routines-Level Gatekeeping

Communication routines are an establish set of practices, repeated by content producers to move information from one gate to another. Lewin (1951) described the process as a set of rules media workers followed. While the gatekeeping process may be

more complex than Lewin's definition, routines are critical in an individual and media organization's procedure in determining which information is selected for transmission and which information is rejected. Shoemaker and Vos (2009) wrote, "Even when an individual appears to be a gatekeeper, we must ask about the extent to which the individual is merely carrying out a set of routine procedures" (p. 51). The attributes that help identify newsworthiness, for example, may assist in establishing a routine for gatekeeping. However, the channel of dissemination and the audience may also play a role in the routine as well. This study discusses the practices and policies NBC established in its gatekeeping of content via Twitter.

The role of gatekeeping in an Internet age has been one of scholarly debate. Williams and Carpini (2004) argue that the influx in online media outlets diminished the number of gates information must pass through and challenged the existence of gatekeeping. Singer (2005) disputes Williams and Carpini's conclusions, arguing that the gatekeeping function, while changing, is not losing its relevance. Others have indicated that traditional print-based media organizations have adapted to the Internet and established similar online gatekeeping functions to that of its print gatekeeping functions; (Arant & Anderson, 2001; Cassidy, 2006; Singer, 2005).

Organizational-Level Gatekeeping

The organizational level of gatekeeping is different from routines and practices for several reasons. While an organization may establish routines, it creates a symbolic identity in gatekeeping through the process in which it allows information to be disseminated. According to Shoemaker and Vos (2009), an organization selects information from a population of available content and "creates its own symbolic

environment" (p. 62). This process, referred to as preselection by Hirsch (1970), points out the mass media as cultural gatekeepers as well. Consequently, there may be multiple gatekeeper roles for different kinds of information. For instance, traditional news information may be gatekeeped by a news department while promotional and marketing information is gatekeeped by a marketing department. When working for an organization, individuals conform to the organization's routines and practices of gatekeeping (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009). The organizational level of analysis is also applied to NBC's use of Twitter as a gatekeeper in this study.

<div align="center">The Internet and Social Media</div>

The 1996 Atlanta Summer Olympics, with the first Olympic Games website, attracted 189 million hits (Horne & Whannel, 2012). The next two Winter Olympics, in Nagano (1998) and Torino (2002), exceeded 700 million virtual visitors to the Olympics website (Miah & Garcia, 2012). A record for unique views was set with the Beijing Games website with 105.7 million unique visits during the month of August 2008 (Girginov, 2010). The NBC Olympic website recorded 744 million visits during the 2012 London Summer Olympics, demonstrating an increase in Web traffic for the Olympics during the 16 years since the first Web presence in 1996 (Rubio, 2012).

Social media has a significant impact on culture and how people communicate (Kwak, Lee, Park, & Moon, 2010). Consequently, social media such as Twitter, YouTube, Foursquare and Facebook open new channels of communication between people who may not have previously interacted, making these new channels of communication valuable tools in a digital world. Thus, it makes sense that NBC would eventually include social media in its Olympic coverage to generate interest, awareness,

and advertising revenue while potentially expanding the viewing base. The 2012

Olympics are considered the first social media games because they were the first Games

to fully use social media as a platform (Wilson, 2012).

Twitter, a microblogging website that allows users to "tweet" messages 140

characters at a time, is one of the social-networking websites NBC used for the first time

in its 2012 Olympic coverage (Kwak et al., 2010; Palser, 2009). Farhi (2009) compared

Twitter to text messaging or instant messaging, only to many people at once instead of

just one-to-one communication. As the Internet and social media continue to evolve,

moving us further and further away from traditional media models, more information is

being generated and disseminated through social media platforms (Lanagan & Smeaton,

2011). The microblogging social media platform Twitter has become an important source

of information for many users (Golbeck, 2012). Twitter offers users a platform to

communicate with each other quickly and concisely (Zhao et al., 2011). Along with

national and local news broadcasts as well as interviews, we are now able to follow real-

time streams of information through social media platforms online. The ability to share

breaking news, discuss global events, post personal updates or spontaneous ideas has

made Twitter a useful tool for sharing information (Golbeck, 2012).

According to Castells (2004), the Internet had the power and ability to link almost

anyone around the world, creating a continuous cycle of information production,

distribution, and feedback. Castells' foresight came to fruition with social media linking

millions of people and creating another distribution channel in which information can be

continuously updated and disseminated in real time. Poster (1995) noted the shift from

traditional media characterized as broadcasting from one-to-many to a new nontraditional

media age of participatory information exchange from many-to-many characterized by the Internet. These two assessments of the media environment point out the changes in who, when, where, and how information is distributed. Turner and Tay (2009) point out that social media such as Twitter, Facebook, and Youtube allow the public to become engaged and interactive in the creation and distribution of information by the space afforded to them by social media platforms through commenting and sharing of content. They wrote,

> Youtube is a social networking site that encourages the sharing of content among its users. Other social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace, Orkut, and Friendster actively support putting video content from YouTube into the profile spaces of individual users so the location of a video and its final 'screening' are thus recontextualized into an interpersonal exchange. (Turner & Tay, 2009, p. 43)

Even Twitter has gotten into video-sharing services with a limited video sharing platform called Vine. Instagram, another social media platform originally designed for photos, added a video feature in 2013 in competition to Twitter's Vine video sharing service, adding to the competition in social media platforms as well as developing social media's capabilities to contribute to the post-broadcasting era in Olympics coverage.

Tough and Parr (1995) argued that social media—then referencing blogs—was a great way to access information in short bursts but that is not the optimal means of acquiring information. The same holds true in the current social media environment with the 140 character limit per post on Twitter being strictly enforced. The character limit emphasizes the short burst mentality, but long-term effects on reading habits and news consumption are unknown.

Social Media and Sports

Since 2008, Twitter has grown exponentially and become a popular platform for people to interact with one another (Fisher, 2009). This interactivity has especially affected sports and the sports communication paradigm. Consequently, Twitter helps to produce even more sports content beyond the stories reported by traditional sports journalists. Hutchins (2011) argued that the proliferation of sports content via Twitter is forcing everyone to think about the interaction between sports and digital media. He wrote, "Twitter's importance stems from the fact that it is both a constitutive part of contemporary media experience, and a frame through which this experience is filtered and understood" (Hutchins, 2011, p. 239).

The expression of opinion and interactivity creates new content for audiences and media members alike to consume. Clavio and Kian (2010) argue that Twitter has become a permanent part of the sports media landscape since its introduction in 2006. Sports are particularly suited for information sharing on Twitter because fans generally are active in the discussion of the events, results, analysis, and interviews following the conclusion of the event. Consequently, sporting events are among the most discussed and often shared topics on Twitter, creating a place for interactive people to watch and communicate with each other about the sporting events on television and live in person (Golbeck, 2012). Lanagan and Smeaton (2011) found that interest in sporting events can be measured by the volume of posts on Twitter, known as tweets, and in particular, activity centers on key moments.

The expression and interactivity of Twitter has even become part of sporting event broadcasts as trends and tweets are scrolled across the bottom of the screen. The

interactive elements of Twitter add a new layer to sports, sports media, content, and its interconnected relationship with society (Hutchins, 2011). Hambrick, Simmons, Greenhalgh, and Greenwell (2010) discussed the interactivity capabilities that Twitter provides to fans:

> Twitter gives sports fans the ability to connect with other fans as they read and discuss tweets provided by their favorite sports, teams, and athletes. Twitter also allows them to create personalized spaces where they can express support for their favorites and discuss sports. (p.455)

The connection of fans, media organizations, sports teams and athletes is made even stronger through Twitter because of the platform's availability worldwide. According to Hutchins (2011), more than half of Twitter users live outside of the United States, providing an opportunity to consume content that may not have been available in the past. Twitter is also used as a promotional vehicle for athletes to interact with fans, sports teams and sponsors to promote its products as well as journalists and news organizations attempting to drive web traffic to its websites or stories. All of which puts the power in the hands of individual Twitter users to select which content to view, becoming their own gatekeepers.

With more than 600 tweets a second (Hutchins, 2011), using Twitter has become a part of many people's everyday life as well as an activity done as part of the experience of watching athletic events. Gruzd, Doiron, and Mai (2011) examined tweets during sporting events and found positive tweets are more likely to be passed along via retweets than negative tweets. However, negative tweeters are more prolific at posting their opinions than positive tweeters by posting more often (Gruzd et al., 2011). It was these

negative tweets, using the #NBCFail hashtag that drew attention during the 2012

Olympics in response to NBC's coverage decisions.

 The opportunity to study tweets from the 2012 Olympics is a critical one in

further expanding gatekeeping theory into the social media age. With Twitter

increasingly becoming part of everyday life as well as how audiences consume content.

This study of Twitter use during the Olympics expands gatekeeping theory into social

media scholarship as it examines audience gatekeeping. Audiences who engage with

content disseminated through traditional television broadcast platforms, such as the

Olympics on NBC, are able to select information to share based on their own interests

and not the interests of the traditional gatekeepers. Consequently, the audience becomes

an important gatekeeper that creates its own narrative—sometimes counter to that of the

traditional gatekeepers because of the varied interests—and holds the traditional

gatekeepers accountable for decisions made concerning the content selected, made

available, how the content presented for mass consumption, and when it is disseminated.

<center>NBC, America's Olympic Network</center>

 Television has become an important part of the Olympic experience for many in

the U.S. and around the world. Meier (1984) noted the importance of television,

describing television as, "simply the most immediate, dramatic, and perhaps compelling

medium for sports coverage; indeed, watching professional and major sports broadcasts is

now a significant component to North American life" (p. 263). The popularity of sports

has only increased and become further entrenched in American life since Meier made this

evaluation in 1984. With the increase of popularity in sports, the Olympics too, became

more popular with NBC as the network broadcasting the Games to the U.S. on a regular basis.

According to Owens (2006) NBC began its first Olympic television broadcast in 1960 when they broadcast the Summer Olympics from Rome, Italy. Events were shown live via the Eurovision broadcast link and the broadcasters used videotape for the first time in its coverage (Owens, 2006). Four years later, NBC again innovated, as its broadcast by showing off new technology. NBC made history when it became the first network to broadcast a sporting event in color at the 1964 Summer Olympics from Tokyo, Japan (Owens, 2006). Highlight packages from the Olympics were seen hours after the events took place as film canisters were flown across the Pacific Ocean and were broadcast to American viewers after editing took place (Owens, 2006). NBC also broadcast the first Winter Olympic Games in 1972 from Sapporo, Japan. The time difference between Japan and the U.S. allowed most of the coverage to be broadcast live (Owens, 2006). Popular events, such as skiing and speed skating were held in the morning in Japan, which was prime time on the United States East Coast.

NBC heavily outbid the other networks and won the exclusive broadcasting rights for the 1980 Summer Olympic Games in Mascow, Russia (Guttman, 2002). However, the United States Olympic Committee followed orders from President Jimmy Carter and prevented U.S. athletes from participating in the Games (Barton, 1982; Girginov, 2010; Guttman, 2002; Hoberman, 1986). The 1980 boycott was to protest the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (Barton, 1982; Girginov, 2010; Guttman, 2002; Hoberman, 1986). The 150 hours of scheduled Olympic coverage by NBC was limited to a few hours after NBC decided to cooperate with President Carter's boycott of the Games (Barton, 1982;

Guttman, 2002; Hoberman, 1986; Owens, 2006). The result was the significant loss of revenue for NBC (Owens, 2006). Following an absence in the 1984 Olympics, NBC won the rights to broadcast the 1988 Summer Olympic Games in Seoul, Korea. Learning lessons from previous Olympic experiences, NBC network officials convinced the Olympic organizers in Seoul to schedule most of the gold medal finals in the afternoon, which was prime time in the United States (Owens, 2006). According to Billings (2008), "In the next two decades, NBC evolved to be known as the 'Olympic Network'" (p. 3).

NBC continued its Summer Olympic Games coverage with the 1992 Games in Barcelona, Spain and the 1996 Games in Atlanta, Georgia. Olympic coverage, throughout NBC's run in the 1990s changed relatively little despite the advancement of the Internet and the public's access to it. In 1992, NBC tried to team up with Cablevision, which provided three channels of pay-per-view subscription with enhanced advertising free packages on cable, but the idea failed to appeal to viewers. (Horne & Whannel, 2012; Owens, 2006). The audience did not see the appeal of paying for Olympic coverage while they could still see the bulk of the Games for free on network television (Horne & Whannel, 2012). As a result of the pay-per-view failure, NBC lost $100 million and the package was dropped (Owens, 2006). There was no supplemental coverage from Atlanta and NBC has been careful with its coverage since. NBC revisited supplemental coverage to the Sydney Olympics in 2000 by showcasing specific events on other NBC owned networks such as CNBC and MSNBC (Owens, 2006). USA, Bravo, and Telemundo were added to the supplemental stations of CNBC and MSNBC in 2004 and in 2006, Universal HD was added to the supplemental coverage of the Olympic Games (Owens, 2006). NBC paid $894 million for the 2008 Olympic broadcasting rights, more than $1 billion for the

2012 Games (Miah & Garcia, 2012; Sherman, 2012). They are also locked in as the

exclusive broadcaster of the Olympics through 2020 (Sherman, 2012).

<center>NBC and the Internet</center>

Technology does not always bring positives to an industry, however. Heuvel

(1993) described the end result of technology and information pessimistically, "As

technology has grown more sophisticated, the end product has grown more skimpy" (p.

11). Technological advancements such as the Internet, has allowed millions of people

worldwide to view television-like content beyond the confines of television (Turner &

Tay, 2009). In 2000, video wasn't available for online viewing, as technology had not yet

advanced to a point that would allow videos to be viewed in that manner. Therefore,

static websites, such as NBCOlympics.com, utilized still images from its television

network coverage. To NBC's credit, the network attempted to show a delayed video

stream of selected events through cable networks, which reached approximately 100,000

homes in 2000 (Jesdanun, 2012). Consequently, the shared experience of the Olympics

by the global audience was fairly consistent in 2000. This is likely due to the fact that the

experience remained visible only through the lens of media and static Internet, as

technology had not evolved into the dynamic, video capable web that exists today.

In 2002, the International Olympic Committee placed a tight worldwide ban on

videos, limiting Internet coverage (Jesdanun, 2012). Coverage restrictions were not as

tight in 2012; however, rivals to NBC and the BBC were only allowed to broadcast six

minutes of coverage per day (Plunkett, 2012). Live video streaming of Olympic events

began in Europe in 2004, but in the US, NBC offered online video footage only to Visa

customers who logged into the site with their account information (Jesdanun, 2012).

However, NBC did add real-time updates, scoring, and descriptions of events through

NBCOlympics.com, which were updated every 30 seconds (Jesdanun, 2012). "In Sydney

(2000) there was hardly any fast Internet; in Athens (2004) there were hardly any

smartphones; in Beijing hardly anyone had social networks," said Jackie-Brock Doyle,

communications director of London organizing committee LOCOG. "That's all changed.

Here, everyone has all that and will be consuming the games in a different way" (Wilson,

2012). From 2000 to 2008, the shared experience of the global audience was inconsistent,

because the uneven proliferation of technological advances did not allow for consistency.

Few individuals had smartphones or fast Internet in 2000 and 2004. Relatively few used

social media in 2008, to connect in the manner that the global audience did in 2012

(Bennett, 2012).

NBC made live video available for the first time in 2006, but only live-streamed

one event: a hockey game (Jesdanun, 2012). Delayed video and highlights were made

available, specifically for those viewers with cell phones that connected to the Internet

(Jesdanun, 2012). By 2008, NBC made live-streaming available in the U.S. for all events

except the most popular ones, delaying the availability to view them until after they had

been aired on television (Jesdanun, 2012). Once again, viewers had to prove that they

subscribed to a cable service in order to gain access to the streams that were mostly

broadcast quality; some of the streams failed to have commentary with the video

coverage (Jesdanun, 2012). In some cases, live chats or text updates were provided in

real-time to keep viewers up to date (Jesdanun, 2012). Marshall, Walker, Russo (2010)

found that NBC's need to ensure viewers watched the traditional NBC broadcast was too

important, however. Consequently, the NBC website offered mediated and edited

highlight packages of events more often than the live streaming (Marshall et al., in Horne & Whammel, 2012). This trend continued in 2010 when NBC limited live video coverage to only two events. Real-time coverage was provided through text updates instead, while scoring updates published online as competitors crossed timing and scoring lines (Jesdanun, 2012).

Billings (2008) noted that it wasn't until NBC created its "first ever" wireless coverage site with live streams for 24 Olympic events for the 2008 Olympics that social media and the full capabilities of the Internet were explored. This streaming website, for the Beijing Olympic Games, was the first time nbcolympics.com was dedicated to stream events live to the general public (Horne & Whannel, 2012). Not surprisingly, as the exclusive broadcaster of the Olympics in the U.S., NBC's Olympic website recorded 1.3 billion page views, 75.5 million video streams and more than 10 million hours of content consumption during the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games (Horne & Whannel, 2012). According to Horne and Whannel (2012), there was more live streaming available on the first day of the 2008 Games than there was for the entire 2004 Games in Athens.

CHAPTER III

RATIONALE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The purpose this dissertation is to compare NBC's Twitter content to that of the viewers, to see how each act as gatekeepers during the 2012 London Summer Olympics and to examine how audience gatekeeping may affect the broadcasting model in the future. To do so, the research will examine the primary and official NBC Olympic Twitter handle. Moreover, this dissertation will look more broadly to explain how social media use adds an extra layer to gatekeeping, putting previously unheld power into the hands of the audience. The research is important because much of the previous scholarship on the Olympics is quantitative, little attention has been paid to audience gatekeeping in social media, and few have examined network and audience interaction in Olympic broadcasts. The lack of attention to Olympic social media coverage can be attributed to the relative newness of social media's presence in Olympic coverage. This study can also improve understanding of that interaction, how social media allows audiences to act as gatekeepers, and what that could mean for future Olympic broadcasts. The particular interest, however, is in extending gatekeeping theory into social media scholarship through the development of an audience gatekeeping model.

This dissertation will examine the themes of NBC's Twitter usage and the value of social media use as part of its Olympic coverage. In particular, the fifth chapter will analyze how NBC used Twitter during the Olympics to extend its coverage to social media circles online. The analysis will also examine how NBC's official Twitter handle acted as a gatekeeper of Olympic information and coverage as well as the significance of acting as a gatekeeper in a post-broadcasting model. Lastly, the fifth chapter examines

NBC's interaction with its social media audience and whether or not the audience had influence on the information disseminated or if NBC's social media interaction only provided the illusion of influence to social media audiences. To help determine the significance of NBC's Twitter usage, the fifth chapter notes the themes that emerged from NBC's Olympic Twitter handle tweets in regards to the network's purpose and goals. In other words, how NBC used its Twitter account, including its engagement with the social media audience and the value of the interaction with its audience. The content that will be analyzed in this chapter will include tweets from the duration of the Olympics, opening ceremonies on July 28, 2012 to closing ceremonies on August 12, 2012.

The sixth chapter of this dissertation examines the themes from the audience's social media use regarding the Olympics. This chapter analyzes the user-generated from the audience created content including the #NBCFail hashtag as well as tweets with using the #Olympics hashtag. The purpose of the analysis is to determine what role social media played in the audience becoming a gatekeeper of Olympic coverage in response to the content NBC disseminated to the mass audience. In particular, this chapter is concerned with what ways did the Twitter audience act as gatekeepers of Olympic information, and thus, creating its own content that, at times diverged from the content of the traditional gatekeeper, NBC. Consequently, the audience provided a different account of the Games. In addition, this chapter will examine the hasthag #NBCFail and its significance to the audience acting as a gatekeeper in addition to providing a counter-narrative to NBC's coverage. With more than 150 million tweets regarding the Olympics, this chapter had a broad population to sample from to determine what themes emerged

from audience interaction with Olympic coverage. Finally this chapter addresses more than whether there is a need or a place for audience acting as gatekeepers in post-broadcasting models of important events such as the Olympics. This chapter examines the significance of the audience as a gatekeeper.

The seventh chapter of this dissertation, the discussion section, applies the findings from the previous two chapters toward the future of broadcasting in general. More specifically, this chapter examines and discusses the role social media, the audience gatekeepers, traditional gatekeepers and other online platforms will have on broadcasting as well as Olympics broadcasting. Gatekeeping and post-broadcasting significantly contribute toward the discussion of the future of NBC's Olympic broadcasting as well as the audience's role and influence of content whether its influence will continue through social media or other online platforms.

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

This dissertation uses qualitative content analysis to thematically analyze the tweets posted from the NBC Olympics Twitter handle for the 2012 London Summer Olympics and the viewer tweets including the #NBCFail posts. Bryman (2004) regards qualitative content analysis as "probably the most prevalent approach to the qualitative analysis of documents" by "searching out of underlying themes in the materials being analyzed" (p.392). This method allows the researcher to inductively derive emerging themes and categories in a context that provides the researcher an opportunity to identify significant and meaningful interpretations from the text (Bryman, 2004; Morgan, 1993). Many scholars (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Mayring, 2000; Patton, 2002) define qualitative content analysis as a method that completes analysis without the use of counting or statistical techniques. Cassell and Symon (1994) further describe qualitative research as "less likely to impose restrictive a priori classifications on the collection of data," taking the focus off very specific hypotheses and being more concerned with "emergent themes and idiographic descriptions" (p. 4).

According to Forman, Cresswell, Damschroder, Kowalski, and Krein (2008), qualitative content analysts are most interested and concerned with the information of the content and not the occurrence of items in the content. Consequently, qualitative content analysis assists in providing both detail and depth to analysis of the text rather than measuring specifics in the text (Forman et al., 2008). Qualitative research methods are often used when the field of research is yet not well understood, like that of social media's impact on broadcasting of the Olympics, while quantitative methods are

frequently used for testing hypotheses and evaluating theories (Atteslander, 2003; Mayring, 2000).

<div align="center">Data Collection</div>

Qualitative content analysis offers this study a systematic way to exploring the text—the tweets—and discovering emerging themes and the categories into which the data will be coded as outlined by previous scholars (Bryman, 2004; Mayring, 2000; Morgan, 1993). Titscher, Meyer, Wodak, and Vetter (2000) noted that "The core and central tool of any content analysis is its system of categories: every unit of analysis must be coded, that is to say, allocated to one or more categories. Categories are understood as the more or less operational definitions of variables" (p. 58).

The researcher captured tweets from NBC's Olympic social media accounts using Twitter aggregator website Topsy.com, searching for the official Twitter account @NBCOlympics. Filtering for only tweets by NBC, the search yielded more than 3,600 tweets from the @NBCOlympics Twitter account during the 2012 Olympics. The researcher systematically built a sample of 721 tweets for analysis using every fifth tweet of the available tweets from @NBCOlympics until saturation was reached; meaning new themes and categories were not emerging from the text. With more than 750,000 (Seidman, 2012) #NBCFail tweets posted by viewers from the day before the Olympic opening ceremonies, July 26, 2012 and two days after the closing ceremonies, August 14, 2012. The researcher sampled every fifth tweet until saturation was reached in the same fashion as he previously did for NBC's official Twitter handle. The #NBCFail tweets were also obtained through Twitter aggregator website Topsy.com. A search of #NBCFail, in Topsy's tweet search, yielded more than 58,000 tweets and 500 total tweets

were analyzed in this dissertation. With more than 150 million tweets with the #Olympics hashtag, the researcher sampled every fiftieth tweet of audience posts until saturation was reached at 618. These tweets were also compiled through Topsy.com from July 26, 2012 to August 14, 2012. In total, 1,839 tweets were analyzed in this study.

<div align="center">Procedure</div>

A pre-analysis data organization was completed using a three-phase process (immersion, reduction, and interpretation) as outlined by previous methodological studies by Coffey and Atkinson (1996), Miles and Huberman (1994), and Sandelowski (1995). All categories and themes are derived inductively from the data. Lauri and Kyngas (2005) recommend an inductive approach to analysis when knowledge of a phenomenon is new or fragmented as is the case with Twitter use by both broadcaster and viewer during Olympic cycle coverage. The inductive approach demands that the data move from narrow and specific to general applications "so that particular instances are observed and then combined into a larger whole or general statement" (Chinn & Kramer, 1999). This proposed dissertation will start specifically with themes from tweets and uses the results from the data analysis to broaden out conclusions to discuss audience gatekeeping and the gatekeeping of NBC.

During the analysis process, the researcher open coded the tweets to find as many themes as possible using a modified "memoing" approach as suggested by Sandelowski (1995). The first step of open coding allowed the researcher to immerse himself in data, getting familiar with the content by recording initial thoughts and analytic hunches on a comment sheet (Sandelowski, 1995) and on the text itself. The second step will include applying codes for each theme and category. Coffey and Atkinson (1996) wrote,

''attaching codes to data and generating concepts have important functions in enabling us rigorously to review what our data are saying'' (p. 27). This coding phase will allow the researcher to organize data into themes for analysis. In the final step of the three-phase analysis process, the researcher performed reduction. In reduction, the researcher condensed themes and categories together to make analysis more manageable as well as allowing for the reorganization of the data for analysis (Sandelowski, 1995). The researcher reduced and condensed the themes and categories in the analysis by grouping common thoughts expressed in the data. By condensing and grouping themes and categories together, the researcher was able to use the memos and themes as the qualitative elements in the analysis. The data was read closely and carefully as the researcher examined the relationship between gatekeeping and the data as well as the significance of the relationship. In doing so, the researcher was able to conduct the qualitative content analysis for this dissertation.

CHAPTER V

NBC, THE TWITTER GATEKEEPER

Television has become an important part of the Olympic experience for many in

the U.S. and around the world. According to Meier (1984), "Television is simply the

most immediate, dramatic, and perhaps compelling medium for sports coverage; indeed,

watching professional and major sports broadcasts is now a significant component to

North American life" (p. 263). The popularity of sports has only increased and become

further entrenched in American life since Meier made this evaluation (Meier, 1984).

More than 219 million viewers in the United States watched the 2012 Olympics

on NBC (Levine, 2012). The expanding reach of the Games aligns with the Olympic

Charter, which aspires to increase audience access to the Olympics, reaching as many

people around the world as possible (IOC Charter).

With the Internet, that reach has increased globally, allowing many to experience

the Olympics without attending the Games in person. Social media platforms such as

Twitter and Facebook have fundamentally changed the way that most people consume

media by making information available quickly and conveniently (Rashtchy, Kessler,

Bieber, Shindler, & Tzeng, 2007; Vollmer & Precourt, 2008). Many get information

instantly, for free, and with few restrictions. People no longer have to wait for the

evening news or tomorrow's newspaper. The 24-hour news cycle and technology allow

people to hear about events as they happen. Information is able to be disseminated so

quickly via social media that many often hear breaking news before professional media

organizations are able to report it (Caumont, 2013). The speed in which information can

travel, consequently, has had an effect on the coverage of sporting events. The Olympics

was not excluded from the addition of social media as an important tool in presenting coverage to audiences. Audiences around the world are able to find out the results of an Olympic event much quicker than in the past—instantaneously—making it impossible to hide from coverage online. The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the audience's role in Olympic coverage via social media and to discuss the significance of this role through a new gatekeeping model that emphasizes the audience actively contributing to the gatekeeping process.

NBC, now owned by Comcast, has to keep revenue and ratings in mind when formulating strategies about how to present the Olympics to its audience. Advertisers offset the expenditures by NBC to acquire the exclusive broadcasting rights of the Olympics in the United States, but it can recoup those costs only if there is a significant audience watching. Consequently, NBC must worry about advertisers and audience simultaneously. The company has broadcast nearly all the Summer Games to the United States since the Tokyo Olympics in 1964 (Stewart, 2012). Table 1 shows the entire broadcast history of the Olympics on network television including how much money each network paid for the broadcasting rights.

Table 1

History of Network Television Olympic Coverage 1960-2020

Year	Games	Location	Network	Hours	Rights Fees
1960	Summer	Rome	CBS	20	$394,000
	Winter	Squaw Valley	CBS	15	$50,000
1964	Summer	Tokyo	NBC	14	$1.5 million

Table 1 (continued).

	Winter	Innsbruck	ABC	17.25	$597,000
1968	Summer	Mexico City	ABC	43.75	$4.5 million
	Winter	Grenoble	ABC	27	$2.5 million
1972	Summer	Munich	ABC	62.75	$7.5 million
	Winter	Sapporo	NBC	37	$6.4 million
1976	Summer	Montreal	ABC	76.5	$25 million
	Winter	Innsbruck	ABC	43.5	$10 million
1980	Summer	Moscow	NBC	150 planned	$87 million
	Winter	Lake Placid	ABC	53.25	$15.5 million
1984	Summer	Los Angeles	ABC	180	$225 million
	Winter	Sarajevo	ABC	63	$91.5 million
1988	Summer	Seoul	NBC	179.5	$300 million
	Winter	Calgary	ABC	94.5	$309 million
1992	Summer	Barcelona	NBC	161	$401 million
	Winter	Albertville	CBS	116	$243 million
1994	Winter	Lillehammer	CBS	119.5	$300 million
1996	Summer	Atlanta	NBC	171	$465 million
1998	Winter	Nagano	CBS	123.8	$375 million
2000	Summer	Sydney	NBC	442	$705 million
2002	Winter	Salt Lake City	NBC	375.5	$545 million
2004	Summer	Athens	NBC	1,210	$793 million
2006	Winter	Torino	NBC	416	$613 million
2008	Summer	Beijing	NBC	3,600	$894 million
2010	Winter	Vancouver	NBC	835	$820 million

Table 1 (continued).

2012	Summer	London	NBC	5,535	$1.18 billion
2014	Winter	Sochi	NBC	1,000	$775 million
2016	Summer	Rio	NBC	TBA	$1.22 billion
2018	Winter	Pyeongchang	NBC	TBA	$963 million

*data acquired from the 2014 Winter Olympics media guide published by NBC

According to Owens (2006), NBC began its first Olympic television broadcast in 1960 when it broadcast the Summer Olympics from Rome. Events were shown live via the Eurovision broadcast link, and the broadcasters used videotape for the first time in their coverage (Owens, 2006). Four years later, NBC innovated, bringing new technology, color television, to its Olympic broadcasts. NBC made history with its full color broadcast of the 1964 Summer Olympics from Tokyo (Owens, 2006). Highlight packages from the Olympics were seen hours after the events took place as film canisters were flown across the Pacific Ocean, edited, and broadcast to American viewers (Owens, 2006).

The 150 hours of scheduled Olympic coverage by NBC in 1980 was limited to a few hours after the network decided to cooperate with President Jimmy Carter's boycott of the Moscow Games (Barton, 1982; Guttman, 2002; Hoberman, 1986; Owens, 2006). The result was the significant loss of revenue for NBC (Owens, 2006). Following an absence in the 1984 Olympics, broadcast by ABC, NBC won the rights to broadcast the 1988 Summer Olympic Games in Seoul, South Korea. NBC continues to hold the broadcasting rights to the Olympics through 2020 (Poggi, 2012). According to Titlow (2012), the network paid $1.18 billion for exclusive rights to air the London Games to

American viewers. Despite the massive investment and losses in 2008, when NBC lost

$228 million, the network kept much of its core broadcasting strategy in place. The only

change was an increased emphasis on advertising revenue. Consequently, NBC actually

made an undisclosed small profit in 2012 with their focus on revenue rather than

audience (Sherman, 2012).

<p style="text-align:center">NBC's Plan</p>

NBC focused on revenue by expanding the number of hours dedicated to Olympic

coverage through the addition of live video streaming options. The live streaming options

were heavily promoted by NBC, promising access to live coverage of every event. A

press release reinforced the promise, stating, "For the first time ever, NBCOlympics.com

will live stream every athletic event and sport" (Olympics Offer Unprecedented, 2012).

In short, NBC boasted that there would be more coverage of the Olympics, measured in

the number of broadcast hours, than ever before. NBC's 2012 coverage also

demonstrated network and cable television's move toward alternative forms of

broadcasting. The new post-broadcasting strategies included the use of live web

streaming of content, which NBC used during the Olympic Games via a dedicated

website, www.nbcolympics.com, and a more pronounced social media presence,

highlighted by a partnership with Twitter and a dedicated Facebook page. The

pronounced social media presence was important as 2012 was considered the first social

media Games, an important footnote in the broadcasting history of the Olympics (Ovide,

2012). Content was presented online in new ways, appealing to the millions of people

who use social media.

Digitalizing Gatekeeping

Since David Manning White's and Kurt Lewin's initial contributions to

gatekeeping theory, relatively little has changed regarding the theory's purpose and

structure despite technological advancements, such as the Internet, that have changed the

media landscape. McQuail (1994) described gatekeeping as "the process by which

selections are made in media work, especially decisions whether or not to admit a

particular news story to pass through the 'gates' of a news medium into the news

channels" (p. 213). Structurally, gatekeeping provides a hierarchical organization to the

process of disseminating information (Westerman et al., 2013). The original conceptual

model from White (1964) demonstrates the structure of traditional information flow from

the media to the audience. Media members controlled the information flow to the public

through gatekeeping the "gates" from the input stage—collection of information from

sources—to the output stage—dissemination of information.

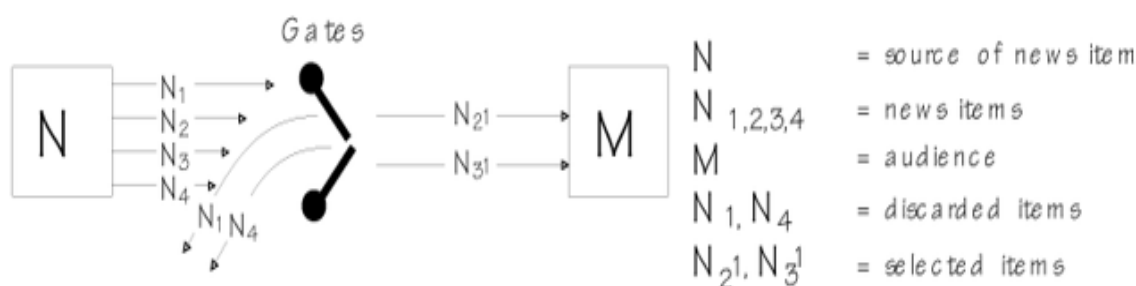*Figure 1*. David Manning White's Gatekeeping Model (1964).

According to Bruns (2005), the gatekeeping process served as filters, removing

information that was considered irrelevant for audiences. These elements, however,

describe gatekeeping in the traditional media environment and do not take into account

the digital era of communication in which social media decentralized information flow.

The online media landscape is different from traditional media environments in several ways. The most significant is that the online environment does not have a time or space restriction (Bruns, 2005). There is virtually unlimited space and airtime to disseminate information. Furthermore, the online media environment created the opportunity for the audience to provide feedback in more visible ways. Bruns (2005) noted that in the past the audience responses to a media organization's coverage traditionally were confined to small feedback sections, which took up only a fraction of the total publishing space available. The feedback also had to pass through gatekeepers, who selected specific comments to include. With social media, audience members could provide feedback easily through comments or tweeting, enabling users to become producers of content. The ability to create content and disseminate it to the masses through Twitter can make it more difficult to find accurate and credible information, however (Bruns, 2008). Consequently, the audience finds itself in a unique situation where it can produce content, gatekeep and disseminate information much like media organizations and media members. Social media has grown dramatically since Twitter was established in 2006. With more than 200 million active Twitter users, social media has become a permanent part of sports coverage because of the ability to report and interact in real-time (Clavio & Kian, 2010).

For the Olympics, however, NBC retains exclusive broadcasting rights in the U.S., keeping control of how the Games are presented. The purpose of this chapter is to thematically analyze how NBC acted as a gatekeeper through its Twitter usage in extending the network's Olympic coverage. Further, this chapter discusses the illusion of the audience's influence on Olympic coverage through Twitter and how NBC's Twitter

Olympic coverage progressed broadcasting toward a post-broadcasting model while still maintaining gatekeeping functions.

The @NBCOlympics Twitter account served as an online gatekeeper of information, often with the goal of driving the social media audience back to traditional broadcast television. To accomplish this goal, NBC adopted and established a set of standards and practices in how it would tweet information. The standards and practices, when put into motion, established a routine that made it easy for NBC Olympic social media followers to find events they wanted to view on broadcast television.

In short, NBC created a "symbolic environment" (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009, p. 62) that embodied its coverage. A symbolic environment consists of the gatekeeping functions and routines that lead to a finished product that reflects the organization disseminating information. In the case of NBC, the online symbolic environment created by the NBC Twitter account was an inviting, informal expert as opposed to the more formal television experts. The informality allowed the Twitter account to connect with the audience in ways the traditional television broadcasts could not. The tweets often included phrases such as "we." Symbolically, NBC, while in the role of gatekeeper, was able to place itself in the same position as its viewers. The account marveled at the women's gymnastics performances, providing reactions that sounded like fans. The account noted the historic accomplishments of Gabby Douglas and Michael Phelps, said farewell to the beach volleyball duo of Misty May-Treanor and Kerri Walsh Jennings, and touted the unexpected success of Missy Franklin. As much as the NBC Olympics Twitter account served as an official social media presence, expanding the traditional

broadcast presence to the digital world and serving as a gatekeeper of information, the account maintained a fan-friendly feel.

At times the account shared critical information to drive viewers to traditional television broadcast coverage in prime time by telling followers what was airing and when. Other times, it provided the online streaming links. Many of the links to online streaming were for events that were not being broadcast on television. Others were for events being broadcast on one of the many NBC-owned cable channels, such as MSNBC or Bravo. More often than not, however, the NBC Olympics Twitter account shared when and where you could find the most popular events such as beach volleyball, swimming and gymnastics events.

Social media's role in NBC's Olympic coverage was evidence of social media's significance in both broadcasting and information sharing. The inclusion of Olympic coverage on social media platforms such as Twitter was a significant moment for broadcasting, traditional broadcast television and post-broadcasting online because, for the first time, network executives took notice of an untapped resource to expand coverage (Ovide, 2012). Using Twitter and other social media as an extension of traditional television broadcasting is the first step toward a different broadcast model. A broadcast model, especially for a global event such as the Olympics, should reflect the reality in which we live, meaning live content available via traditional television broadcast or streaming online. Audience input is increasingly required as more and more broadcast television networks include Twitter feeds in its broadcasts to engage its audiences (Fixmer, Lee, & Edwards, 2014; Hutchens, 2011). Global audiences use mobile devices to stream broadcast programming and obtain information through social media

(Caumont, 2013). While the 2012 London Summer Games provided the first step toward a new broadcast model, the coverage underscored the amount of work still needed to be done to develop a model that reflects the digital culture. NBC, as a network and gatekeeper, was able to use social media as an extension of its traditional television broadcast while maintaining control of much of the content.

<div align="center">Themes</div>

NBC's Twitter use was categorized into five themes, which emerged from an open coding process that reviewed tweets until saturation was reached at 750 tweets. Each theme provided NBC with a way to connect and engage with its audience on social media. Because NBC was attempting to accomplish multiple goals with its social media presence in regard to promotion, engagement, and extension of Olympic coverage to the Internet, the posted tweets reflected these goals. The five themes that emerged were live-tweeting of ongoing events, informational tweets, interactive tweets, trivia-related tweets, and engaged promotional tweets. Gatekeeping was present in each theme as NBC carefully selected content to post and how it wanted the online audience to interact with the NBC Twitter account. In the instance of NBC's Twitter usage, their gatekeeping process did not just attempt to interact with the audience and control the information flow, but it also attempted to appeal to as many as possible to drive the audience back to the traditional television broadcast. Shoemaker and Vos (2009) noted that "Gatekeeping involves not only the selection or rejection of items, but also the process of changing them in ways to make them more appealing to the final consumer" (p. 12). By using Twitter as another source of Olympic coverage material, NBC attempted to appeal to the online audience.

Beyond connecting and engaging with the audience in different ways, the categories presented NBC with the opportunity to act as a gatekeeper, selecting which information to share or leave out of its online coverage of the Olympics. Without substantial previous experience in prior Olympic coverage, as Twitter was not as popular in 2008 and not developed for use in 2004, it was unknown how successful NBC would be able to use Twitter to extend Olympic coverage online. According to Lumme, the one thing that was known for sure was that "In four short years from Torino to Vancouver, we've witnessed the rapid growth of digital media. In fact, we now have the same amount of hours covered globally on the internet and mobile phones as we have on television" (Lumme as cited in Miah & Garcia, 2012, p. 131). That NBC extended coverage beyond its live streaming to social media meant there was another way to connect with the audience. More importantly, it was another way for NBC to act as a gatekeeper and maintain control over Olympic coverage.

The audience knew NBC was extending its coverage to Twitter because it would prove to be financially beneficial for the network. Its partnership with Twitter, creating the first social media Games, meant a way for the audience to interact with NBC content, but the audience did not know what kind of content NBC would be posting on its Twitter account for them to interact with. Whether the audience knew it until the Olympics began, Twitter would be a vehicle for NBC to drive the Twitter audience back to the traditional broadcasts during prime time with help from social media gatekeeping. NBC hoped that its social media presence would drive ratings higher as well as advertising revenue. NBC Olympics President Gary Zenkel felt there would be a correlation between social media engagement and prime time ratings (NBC Fires, 2013). According to a

Forbes article in February 2014, NBC's social media and post-broadcasting offerings did successfully drive audiences back to the traditional television broadcast (Fixmer et al., 2014).

Live-Tweeting Events

The live-tweeting category, one of the least-used strategies by NBC, was a 140-character description of events as they unfolded in real-time. These tweets were not used often because live-tweeting events would not encourage online audiences to turn to the television broadcasts. Live-tweeting events also required multiple tweets in a short period of time. More often than not, the play-by-play during live-tweeting by NBC was used in the opening and closing ceremonies. The opening and closing ceremonies were good fits for live-tweeting on Twitter because the ceremonies do not require detailed descriptions; live-tweeting is a compilation of smaller events occurring rather than focusing on the overarching scheduled event. Consequently, the NBC Twitter account could focus on general descriptions and information of the events unfolding.

> And that's a wrap! Thanks for enjoying the 2012 #Olympics with us! RT if you
> CAN'T Wait for #Sochi2014! (@NBCOlympics, August 12, 2012)
> THEN & NOW: #SpiceGirls #SpiceUpYourLife #Olympics. (@NBCOlympics,
> August 12, 2012)

What They Said

Other live tweets supplied the NBC Twitter account with short quotes from athletes who had won their events, had received their medals and were making the media rounds. These live tweets provided real-time content to the online audience following NBC's Olympic Twitter account with interviews with Olympians that did not necessarily

air on television. Consequently, NBC's Olympic Twitter account gatekeeping was able to select original content for its online audience.

> 'We didn't finish that game, & we want to prove that we can finish & win gold
>
> for our country.'- @abbywambach on 2011 World Cup, #London2012.
>
> (@NBCOlympics, August 9, 2012)
>
> I love being in the air flipping, spinning, and people looking at it and saying,
>
> 'How do you do that?' -@christinaloukas. (@NBCOlympics, August 5, 2012)

These tweets relaying what the Olympians had to say were significant to Twitter coverage by NBC. The information shared by NBC on the Twitter account had the ability to paint a picture of the outcomes of the events. According to Shoemaker and Vos (2009), the gatekeeping process determines the way in which we define our lives and the world around us, and therefore gatekeeping ultimately affects the social reality of every person. If the audience was not viewing the broadcast through the live stream or on NBC, the tweets helped to create a reality that may not have matched what really occurred.

On The Call

Live-tweeting during events, providing real-time descriptive accounts of the athletic competitions themselves, rarely occurred; NBC was more concerned with adding color and personality to its online coverage of the Olympics rather than telling the online audience about what it could see on their televisions or through live streaming. However, when NBC did live-tweet an event, it was the most popular events during prime time. Even then, the live-tweeting contained as little information as possible while remaining interesting with the goal to persuade the online audience to tune into NBC and see the competitions. The tweets were better for expressing emotion and reaction to what

happened rather than sharing information. As gatekeepers, the Twitter account attempts to drive viewers to the traditional broadcasts to watch the conclusion of the women's beach volleyball gold-medal match, the gold-medal women's soccer match, or the women's gymnastics floor finals.

It's all tied up in sets in the gold-medal women's #volleyball match: USA 1, BRA, 1! (@NBCOlympics, August 11, 2012)

#REDEMPTION #THREEPEAT #GOLD!!! #USWNT #TEAMUSA. (@NBCOlympics, August 9, 2012)

Lots of American flags waving in the stands of #HorseGuardsParade right now … #beachvolleyball. (@NBCOlympics, August 8, 2012)

The color and personality that the NBC Twitter account added to its online Olympic coverage were basic observations that even casual fans could make. These tweets fit into an overall organizational level of gatekeeping by NBC. With one voice online through the NBC Twitter account, the tweets could form an online identity based on how they chose to gatekeep information. While an organization may establish routines and policies in how to tweet and what information to select through gatekeeping, the same routines and policies also help in creating an identity and style, a symbolic identity as Shoemaker and Vos (2009) call it, as it releases information to be disseminated. Consequently, as an organization selects information from a population of available content, it "creates its own symbolic environment" (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009, p. 62). NBC created its own symbolic environment and social identity through the tweets. While the live tweets provided specifically selected information through a gatekeeping process, the tweets also had an informal tone to them. The Twitter account spoke to the Twitter

audience as fans rather than a commentator providing a play-by-play of action as it happened. While the account was an authority or expert, it did not come across as in the formal tone that broadcasters do during coverage of events.

The benefit for NBC was that social media allowed the network to share information and engage with the audience on an informal level, meaning it could sound like the audience. Simultaneously, NBC was able to remain an authority because it was maintaining control of its content through gatekeeping processes that selected the content that would be shared on Twitter. Consequently, during the time in which these tweets were posted, NBC was practicing a strict form of gatekeeping. The gatekeeping in this case was organizational gatekeeping that helped establish an identity with the Twitter audience consuming Olympic coverage. Little significant information was shared. The information that was shared by NBC was selected to persuade the Twitter audience to turn on the traditional television broadcast. Examples of the NBC using its identity to drive viewers back to the network broadcast were abundant in the vague tweets that were posted.

One would expect a large quantity of American flags on display in popular athletic events, especially when Americans are competing. Even more so, these tweets often required some degree of having watched the traditional television broadcast coverage. For instance, without having watched Aly Raisman compete on the floor exercise, viewers would not know what NBC's tweet about Raisman was really discussing. The audience could gather that Raisman accomplished something impressive, but without watching the performance, the tweet is vague. The key information, what was impressive, was not selected by the gatekeeper, NBC, to be shared with the online

audience. Consequently, the audience only had the inclination that something important or noteworthy just happened. If the audience had not viewed Raisman's performance, they could not actually talk about it. Further, the description of her floor routine in 140 characters could not do justice to what the audience witnessed on NBC. The limitation of Twitter coverage in this regard, unless a video clip of the performance was posted, drives the audience back to the traditional television broadcast, excited to see what was impressive. Thus, NBC would be able to drive ratings up and garner more interest in the television broadcast despite the network's control over when the audience would see it and how (edited or unedited).

> #WHOA #AlyRaisman #Impressive #FloorRoutine. (@NBCOlympics, August 7, 2012)

The description of the leos worn by Americans also was the subject of gatekeeping by NBC. The online description stuck to the phrase "patriotic" and nothing more. The audience may be able to generate a mental image that emphasizes the red, white, and blue colors of the American flag. However, without having tuned into the television broadcast, the information delivered by the NBC Twitter account is all but meaningless. The vague description serves as a motivator to draw viewers back to the broadcast on NBC, but also reminds the audience that NBC is the gatekeeper of information—providing only what they see as possibly profitable.

> Very #patriotic leos on @jordyn_weiber & @aly_raisman for the floor final! #teamusa #Olympics. (@NBCOlympics, August 7, 2012)

In a post-broadcasting era, in which value is placed on the audience's ability to customize content and view content online (Aslinger, 2009; Lotz, 2007), NBC's Twitter

account selected information that was interesting yet vague. The purpose, to drive online

audiences to the television broadcast, seemed to be in mind as NBC's Twitter account

carefully performed gatekeeping functions to interest and teases the audience, motivating

it to see what exactly NBC was talking about.

Trivia

Trivia tweets also engaged with the Twitter audience without NBC asking its

followers to actually respond with an answer. The trivia tweets were not interactive in

nature. The tweets had the audience thinking about Olympic and cultural facts, asking the

Twitter audience "did you know?" The trivia tweets also gave facts about athletes and

events as the relevant competitions were taking place. As a result, there was a diversity of

information relating to the Olympics and cultural history of the United Kingdom selected

and disseminated by NBC.

> At the end of a 1940 broadcast, Edward R Murrow ended his radio segment from
>
> London w/ 'good night, and good luck,' his future catchphrase. (@NBCOlympics,
>
> August 11, 2012)
>
> The now famous 'Keep Calm & Carry On' posters were distributed in Great
>
> Britain during WWII to keep public morale up. (@NBCOlympics, August 11,
>
> 2012)
>
> DID YOU KNOW: The British Flag's design combines the individual flags of
>
> England, Scotland and Northern Island? (@NBCOlympics, August 12, 2012)

These trivia tweets were not used as often as other tweets but were an important

part of NBC's cultural elements in its Olympic coverage. They were used strategically to

provide a different perspective on the people, places, and things involved with the

Olympics and London. Tweets, when they did occur, came in clusters of three to five. Tweets about Americans were a particular focus, especially in events that are traditionally popular but lacked certain levels of success.

> DID YOU KNOW? The last time an American won the men's #diving 10m platform was in 1988 when @gregLouganis won gold? (@NBCOlympics, August 11, 2012).

> DID YOU KNOW: @mistymaytreanor & @kerrileewalsh are 20-0 at the #Olympics since 2004! #thatsalotofwins. (@NBCOlympics, August 7, 2012)

> Asafa Powell (@officialasafa) & @usainbolt are friends: they play cricket together & have gone head-to-head in paintball! #trackbuddies. (@NBCOlympics, August 4, 2012).

The trivia tweets also gave information about the venues and facilities that hosted competitions in the 2012 Olympics. This informed the audience to facts it may otherwise be unaware of about what it took to put on the competition.

> DID YOU KNOW: Approximately 5,000 tons of sand were transported to the #HorseGuardsParade to accommodate #Olympic #beachvolleyball? (@NBCOlympics, August 4, 2012)

> DID YOU KNOW? The #diving platform is just over 32 feet from the surface of the water. #Olympics. (@NBCOlympics, August 9, 2012)

> DID YOU KNOW? 14,000 cubic meters of soil were imported to build the#BMX venue! #Olympics. (@NBCOlympics, August 10, 2012)

Informative

Informative tweets by NBC served multiple purposes, but the primary objective of these tweets were to provide information to the Twitter audience without promotion or advertising. The tweets were helpful whether the audience was looking for specific information or just wanted a general overview of what was happening. The informative tweets often provided links, @ mentions, and hashtags. None of the tweets were constructed in the same way as the engaged promotional tweets that insisted the audience do something. These tweets were passive, and even if links were included, NBC did not ask the audience to click or check out the information it was linking to.

The informative tweets let the audience know what events were in competition on a given day, providing a calendar of events. This helpful touch allowed viewers to learn the time that events were scheduled and where they could be viewed if they were not being broadcast on NBC in prime time.

Good morning Olympics fans! Happy Friday! Here's whats going on today: http://t.co/t4ht0rFo #BMX #USABasketball #relays. (@NBCOlympics, August 10, 2012)

PROGRAMMING CHANGE: The men's basketball game #USAvsARG will be on @MSNBC at 5:15p ET/4:15p CT. #USAB2012. (@NBCOlympics, August 6, 2012)

NBC acted as a passive gatekeeper in providing this information, like the TV guide; putting the power in the hands of its audience to select which content it wanted to view and whether to view it online or on television. The information supplied by NBC in these tweets only told the audience where and when the event was taking place. In an

active medium such as Twitter, those sharing information usually provide links, photos,

videos, or ask its audience to perform an action. In the case of NBC's informational

tweets, especially a programming alert, there is no action being performed. The tweet is

passive because the audience is not being asked to do anything and the gatekeeper—

NBC—is not doing anything. They are passive in only posting information. Giving the

audience an action to perform would make this gatekeeping process by NBC active rather

than passive.

Acting as a passive gatekeeper in this instance was a rare moment of NBC not

maintaining full control of its content. This is significant because it is the first time NBC

really took action on its social media objectives. It put into practice what it had been

saying would be a part of its social media coverage: the viewer having options in regard

to which content to view and how to view it. The viewer could customize his or her

content, as described via the post-broadcasting model by Parks (2004) and Aslinger

(2009). The power to choose was put into the viewer's hands, although the viewer still

had limited options via television broadcast because of the tape delay.

Real-time Results

The informative tweets also provided results of many of the competitions, serving

as a real-time results information center for the audience to keep up to date by the second.

The tweets especially focused on positive outcomes for the U.S. but included results from

events in which the competitors would be recognizable for the U.S. audience. As online

gatekeepers, NBC focused on content that, in the past, had been popular on its television

broadcasts. Consequently, NBC tweeted results of events and Olympians who already

had a following. Furthermore, NBC selected content that was in sync with its television broadcasts.

> THE DOUBLE! @Mo_Farah (GBR) wins GOLD in the 5,000m, after winning gold in the 10,000m at #London2012 #history #Olympics. (@NBCOlympics, August 11, 2012)

> 22 #Olympic Medals. 18 #Olympic Golds. 1 greatest #Olympian of all time. #MichaelPhelps. (@NBCOlympics, August 4, 2012)

The early tweets in this category began with "RESULTS" most frequently, but over the course of five days, the NBC Olympic Twitter account became more creative. The progression in creativity illustrated that NBC was navigating a learning curve in relation to producing content for its social media presence.

> RESULTS: Great Britain's Jessica Ennis (@j_ennis) wins GOLD in heptathlon: http://t.co/8suLdpwA #trackandfield. (@NBCOlympics, August 4, 2012)

> .@davidboudia's [sic] achieves the first #diving gold medal for #teamusa since Laura Wilkinson's 2000 gold medal in women's 10m platform! (@NBCOlympics, August 11, 2012)

As this was the first time NBC used Twitter as an extension to its traditional television broadcast coverage, there was certainly going to be room for errors and changes in direction of content. Consequently, NBC's changes to how it presented results as the Olympics unfolded demonstrated the network's desire to improve its online coverage. The Twitter account did not just report the results as it did in the first few days. Instead, it provided background information about notable performances or athletes as part of the results.

The variation did not alter what was accomplished but rather placed emphasis on the type of medal won or who was involved. Many of the live tweets were focused on what the Olympians had to say following athletic competition and not concerned with the actual results of the competition. The focus on the athletes was a significant difference between the live-tweeting posts and the informative tweets. The timing of the tweets was also different, as the live-tweeting posts often occurred before or after the events were over. Meanwhile, the real-time tweets provided information that an audience member may not be able to get from just viewing the results.

<div align="center">Interactive</div>

Interactive tweets by NBC actively engaged with the Twitter audience. These tweets asked for the audience to respond, which could be done in several ways. These tweets were opposite of the informational tweets. The informational tweets did not give the audience an action to perform, nor did they have NBC actively selecting information. The interactive tweets promoted active engagement between NBC and the audience. In this case, both NBC and the audience were actively performing a task. Depending on the engagement desired, NBC asked its audience to click a link, view a photo or video, retweet, or favorite or reply with an answer to a question or questions. In asking for a response from the audience, NBC also encouraged the audience's tweets to include hashtags, such as #Olympics, #TeamUSA and #London2012, the name of the competition, such as #beachvolleyball, #indoorvolleyball, #trackandfield, and #platformdiving, or the name of an athlete such as #MichaelPhelps or #MissyFranklin.

The interactivity between NBC and its audience was a significant moment in the broadcasting history of the Olympics. While NBC remained a gatekeeper of online

content, the network's encouragement for the audience to provide feedback and speak about the events opened a line of dialogue that was previously not available to the audience. People could now express their opinion and have it heard. The immediate feedback and ability to participate in the spectacle of the Olympics helped to make the audience feel like it was a part of NBC's coverage.

As part of the interactivity tweets, NBC asked the audience to answer questions. Many of the questions were not open-ended. For instance, there were some true or false questions, which limited the audience's response options:

TRUE OR FALSE: @usainbolt will win gold in the 100m at #London2012. (@NBCOlympics, August 4, 2012)

TRUE OR FALSE: In #volleyball the libero cannot serve or spike the ball over the net or rotate into one of the front-row positions. (@NBCOlympics, August 9, 2012)

In this regard, NBC was still a gatekeeper, not only in the sense that it was selecting the content but also how the audience would interact with NBC. Consequently, NBC retained control over content, even when placing some power in the hands of the audience.

The control over how the fans engaged with NBC did not apply only to true or false questions but rather to many other interactive tweets as well. In other cases NBC asked for simple retweets as a response from the Twitter audience. The retweets served as a vote of approval or expression of opinion by the audience. These questions are closed-ended, limiting the audience engagement to specific content.

It's the last time we'll ever see @michaelphelps compete at the #Olympics. RT

to congratulate the most decorated Olympian ever! (@NBCOlympics, August 4,

2012)

RT if 10m platform #diving makes you nervous #longwaytothepool.

(@NBCOlympics, August 8, 2012)

It's GOLD for @usainbolt with a new #Olympic Record! 9.63! RT if you're

impressed. (@NBCOlympics, August 5, 2012)

By asking for retweets only as interaction, NBC limited the type of response the

audience could give. The only audience response that NBC cared about was getting as

many retweets as possible. This type of interaction also allowed NBC to gatekeep

responses. A simple retweet does not require a user to write any original text. Thus, NBC

was able to control the content, what the audience was responding to, and how the

audience was responding while also encouraging positive responses.

Other examples of the interactive engagement between NBC's Twitter account

and the audience was through open-ended questions. These questions allowed the

audience to choose how it wanted to answer the question. It was not limited to content the

NBC Olympic Twitter account mandated. Consequently, the audience could be more

creative in its answers rather than clicking retweet or using a specific hashtag to interact

with NBC. These types of interactive tweets from NBC were far less common than the

requests for retweets or answering with a single word.

Who is the most inspirational athlete from the 2012 #Olympics?

(@NBCOlympics, August 12, 2012)

If James Bond were an Olympic athlete, he would definitely compete in ____.

#Olympics. (@NBCOlympics, August 5, 2012)

Are YOU #bolting? Tweet your photos w/hashtag #NBCBolt to be featured in a

slideshow before @usainbolt's 200m tomorrow. (@NBCOlympics, August 8,

2012)

If you could pick, which member of men's @usabasketball do you think will be

MVP of today's gold-medal final? #toomanytoochoosefrom (sic).

(@NBCOlympics, August 12, 2012)

Even with slightly more open-ended questions, NBC remains the gatekeeper on Twitter

because the audience has very few responses. The responses would be very short to begin

with because of the 140 character limit, but NBC narrowed the focus so much that the

audience could only respond in phrases.

Interactive or Illusion?

For as much as NBC had committed to the post-broadcasting model by making

live-streaming available to online viewers and adding social media to its Olympic

coverage, NBC did not make full use of the model. At times the tweets from NBC,

particularly the informational posts, were quite passive. Neither NBC nor the audience

was performing any task. The passive gatekeeping by NBC continued as the network

limited audience interaction through controlling content and how the audience could

respond to NBC tweets. Through this passive gatekeeping process, NBC kept a foot

solidly grounded in the traditional television broadcast model. Consequently, the

audience may have felt as if it was contributing something to NBC's Olympic coverage

online, but in reality, it was contributing very little. The interaction between the audience

and NBC through NBC's tweets was passive because the audience could do very little with them. The responses NBC asked for, if they asked for a response at all, was limited. The social media interaction on Twitter was so tightly controlled by NBC that the audience was not able to customize its content and certainly was not in any way shaping content that NBC produced. NBC continued to gatekeep and post content on Twitter that was created for the traditional television broadcast model to be broadcast on television or posted on its website. Content created for the Twitter account was limited.

Instead of watching the traditional television broadcast and attempting to make sense of what they were viewing through the gatekeeped broadcast, the audience interpreted for themselves. The Twitter audience did not have to rely on specially selected camera angles or commentary from announcers. NBC provided the selected information in 140 characters while Twitter provided the medium for the audience to interpret and interact with the network.

While NBC did use Twitter to extend its Olympic coverage online and into a post-broadcasting model, it was still a post-broadcasting failure for interactivity. The audience had the illusion of influence on the Olympic coverage, but in reality, NBC remained in control. Twitter helps to produce sports content beyond the stories reported by traditional media and NBC did not make use of that in its interactivity tweets. Hutchins (2011) argues that the proliferation of sports content via Twitter is forcing everyone to think about the interaction between sports and digital media. He wrote, "Twitter's importance stems from the fact that it is both a constitutive part of contemporary media experience, and a frame through which this experience is filtered and understood" (Hutchins, 2011, p. 239).

Engaged Promotion

The engaged promotion tweets yielded the most tweets of all the themes. These tweets achieved two goals: engaging the audience to make it feel as if it were a part of the coverage and promoting prime time events for the traditional television broadcasts. Consequently, these engaged promotion tweets were a little more complex to construct. The engaged promotion tweets highlighted elements of the traditional television broadcast Olympic coverage by NBC but also asked for the Twitter audience to do something, such as click a link, watch a video, view photos, or watch the live stream of an event.

Even though the construction of these tweets was more complex, the strategy remained simple for NBC: promote coverage to the Twitter audience while getting users to click a link for videos, photos, or live streams. There were two types of engaged promotion tweets: packaged and live content. The tweets that contained packaged content went through the production process and were polished, presented in the form of completed videos or photos that provided information about the athletes.

PHOTOS: @justingatlin on the track in 2012: http://t.co/7jN5i00t. (@NBCOlympics, August 4, 2012)

In case you missed it: @christinaloukas' dives from the semi-finals that advanced her into the finals: http://t.co/iGjioCtJ #Olympics. (@NBCOlympics, August 5, 2012)

VIDEO: Want to know more about the MOST DIFFICULT vault in #gymnastics? @mckaylamaroney & @jordyn_weiber tell all: http://t.co/jCbVZ5TK. (@NBCOlympics, August 5, 2012)

The other type of engaged promotional tweets, live content, was not pre-recorded and did not go through the production process. Rather, this content was produced as part of NBC's live-streaming coverage online.

> WATCH LIVE NOW on @NBCSN! Women's #soccer group play, @ussoccer_wnt vs. France! LIVESTREAM here: http://t.co/toB7yEWE #USWNT. (@NBCOlympics, July 25, 2012)

Many of the videos promoted by NBC's engaged promotional tweets were produced as part of the television broadcast. However, if the video was missed during the network television broadcast in prime time, there was no way to see it again unless NBC aired the same video a second time. This limitation of traditional broadcast coverage could hinder an audience's ability to learn about Olympians it did not recognize. The engaged promotional tweets via post-broadcasting helped to resolve this limitation of the traditional broadcast by allowing the audience to see videos that it may have missed on television or wanted to see again.

Many of the videos provided by NBC were biographical in nature to help the audience "get to know" a specific Olympian better. While NBC decided on the content that was posted for viewing online, the availability of the get to know an athlete segments and behind-the-scenes looks was a significant step forward in NBC's Olympic coverage in its development of a post-broadcasting model. By making some of these videos available online, instead of allowing the audience to view these videos through television broadcasts only, NBC demonstrated some acceptance of a post-broadcasting model that gives power to the audience to select which content they want to view, when, and how they want to view it.

While it would be counterproductive to NBC's Twitter coverage to post all the packaged content, there are many options available to NBC to further the adoption of a post-broadcasting model of coverage online. Simply creating a section on its Olympic website with all these videos accessible to the audience and then tweeting out the link to that section of the website may be one of the most efficient solutions while still allowing NBC to be a gatekeeper in selecting which videos to specifically call attention to in its tweets.

Another element to the coverage was a behind-the-scenes day in the life of an Olympian in which viewers were able to see what a typical day for an Olympian at the Olympics is like. These videos were in the same vein of the "get to know" a specific Olympian videos.

> Want to learn more about first time #Olympian Julie Culley? Get to know her here: http://t.co/qaixPA0o #Olympics #trackandfield. (@NBCOlympics, August 10, 2012)

However, the behind-the-scenes videos and photos placed the audience in the Olympic facilities without NBC commentators in complete control of the content. These behind-the-scenes tweets, while promotional in nature, still asked the audience to perform some sort of action. By asking the audience to do something, such as click a link, NBC allowed the audience to act as gatekeepers as well. The audience could decide which content to view.

> PHOTO SHOOT! Behind the scenes with the women's @usagym team! http:..t.co/YdQEUr42 #fab5 #Olympics. (@NBCOlympics, August 6, 2012)

.@sanyarichiross: I always say "look good, feel good, run good!" VIDEO: A

day in the life: http://t.co/yvlVm53j. (@NBCOlympics, August 5, 2012)

What's it like to meet @michaelphelps & @ryanlochte? Ask @jordyn_weiber,

& the rest of the women's @USAGym team: http://t.co/Yqme9IjP.

(@NBCOlympics, August 26, 2012)

Occasionally, NBC would provide highlights or slow-motion replays of

significant moments during a competition. These tweets allowed viewers to see important

developments in competitions without having to watch the event live. As gatekeepers,

NBC selected not only the most significant highlights, but it also kept a post-broadcasting

model mindset in mind in making the videos available online.

What happens when a pole snaps into three pieces mid-vault? WATCH this to

find out: http://t.coHcdpf0M9. (@NBCOlympics, August 10, 2012)

VIDEO: The science behind @OscarPistorius' carbon fiber blades:

http://t.co/hrVp6UEh #bladerunner. (@NBCOlympics, August 4, 2012)

The network selected highlights that were most likely to generate online buzz. In the

post-broadcasting model, the success of the highlight tweets would rely on the interest

each video drew from the online audience.

 HIGHLIGHT VIDEO: U.S. women's soccer wins GOLD in a 2-1 victory over

Japan: http://t.co/IbcjQy18 #USWNT @Olympics @usssoccer_wnt.

(@NBCOlympics, August 9, 2012)

This MIGHT be the best #synchro montage we've ever seen. MIGHT:

http://t.co/dRwxrAjU. (@NBCOlympics, August 7, 2012)

VIDEO: McKayla Maroney's jaw-dropping vault that helped #TeamUSA win

gold (in slo-mo!): http://t.co/PXOmKmeY #stillspeechless. (@NBCOlympics,

August 5, 2012)

Ultimately, these tweets, while specifically selected by NBC, gave power to the audience.

The audience was able to choose which content to view and pass along through retweets,

favoriting, and linking out via its own social media outlet. The next chapter will further

discuss the audience-generated content and how the audience acted as its own

gatekeepers.

Promotional Only

The NBC tweets also included strictly promotional tweets in an attempt to drive

the Twitter audience to the broadcast coverage. These tweets read like promotional

advertisements that could run on television or radio with some alterations to the language

used. The goal with the promotional tweets was to hype some element, event, or athlete

in the Olympic coverage. Each tweet was timely and could not be used on any other day.

These tweets were highly relevant to the coverage for that moment of time on that day.

Will the U.S. women's water polo team advance to gold medal match? It's 9-9 in

OT vs. AUS! TUNE IN NOW to @NBC (ET/CT). (@NBCOlympics, August 7,

2012)

With such a critical time element to these tweets, the content felt different from

the other engaged promotional tweets. The promotional tweets did not ask the audience to

do anything. The tweets were designed to hype NBC coverage to interest the audience

and drive it to the television broadcast coverage.

It's the LAST NIGHT of primetime at the #Olympics! We can't believe it! Tune

in NOW to relish in all of the glorious moments of #London2012!

(@NBCOlympics, August 12, 2012)

ON NOW: 2008 REMATCH: Women's volleyball final: #BRAvUSA!

(@NBCOlympics, August 11, 2012)

We don't know what we're enjoying more right now, the match happening at

#Wimbledon, or the crowd that's watching. #tennis. (@NBCOlympics, August 5,

2012)

<div align="center">Little Choice, Interactivity</div>

NBC's first attempt at extending its Olympic coverage online with social media

challenged the network. While much of the coverage was engaged promotion in which

NBC selected the content, tweeted a link, and suggested the audience to click the link,

NBC also attempted to be interactive. Several of the categories found NBC attempting to

include some interactivity with the audience that gave the illusion that Twitter users were

contributing to the online Olympic coverage. The Twitter audience was engaged by NBC

with trivia questions and other closed-ended questions, which asked for the audience's

input on selected topics chosen by NBC. On the surface, the interactive engagement with

the Twitter audience seems to allow for a variety of topics, ideas, and opinions to be

shared. However, the content NBC used as an engagement piece to its social media

audience was not as open-ended as it appears. The topics were carefully selected, usually

regarding traditionally popular events. The engagement also followed already established

and well-known Olympians. In addition, responses were often limited to retweeting or

writing a couple of words or a few phrases

Even with NBC engaging the Twitter audience, asking for responses, it was still acting as a gatekeeper. The NBC Twitter account still selected specific events, people, or information to discuss with its followers. Lanagan and Smeaton (2011) found that interest in sporting events can be measured by the volume of posts that centers on key moments. By limiting which events or moments it wanted to talk about, the NBC Twitter account restricted the engagement with the audience. Further, it limited the types of responses the audience could give. When restricted to a simple retweet, answering a trivia question with a name, true, or false, the information being shared has still be selected by NBC for the audience to interact with. Only in rare instances did the interactive elements of NBC's Twitter use include open-ended questions that were nonrestrictive, which allowed the Twitter audience to answer with almost anything. Consequently, NBC was not only just a gatekeeper, it was able to construct a narrative—one that was in sync with the traditional television broadcasting narrative—which served as an extension of the broadcast coverage rather than being a new way to present Olympic coverage. Further, the symbiosis between online narrative and traditional television broadcast narrative showed NBC's split broadcast model. NBC played with a post-broadcast model with its live streaming and social media coverage, but the traditional television broadcast model was what garnered the most attention. The rest of NBC's online coverage reflected this rather than focusing on customization of content for the audience, meaning everyone consumed the same content and narratives regardless of viewing online or on television.

New Medium, Same Narrative

With the exclusive broadcasting rights in hand, NBC did not have to worry about its television broadcasting competition beating them to a story. The ESPN ombudsman covered the subject of the cable sports channel's Olympic coverage, writing,

> The rights to Olympic video are restricted, more so than almost any other sporting event. Of the hours and hours of amazing video every day, NBC released only the bare-bones highlights. Much of that video was for TV only…NBC also dictated when the video was available and for how long. Video wasn't available until 3 a.m. or later, when NBC's Olympics programming was off the air on the West Coast, and there were no digital highlights available for the Web. (McBride, 2012)

Consequently, NBC was free to be the single most powerful gatekeeper of the Olympics in the U.S. Not only does NBC gatekeep coverage but it is also able to gatekeep the competition's—other networks such as FOX, ABC, CBS and ESPN— coverage through the IOC's protection. When NBC is the only network providing coverage, it is able to select the footage it wishes to show and when. The result of being the only gatekeeper was NBC having the ability to create a narrative that suited prime time drama. Part of the NBC narrative was the network's insistence that it would present the Olympics in new ways and offer "unprecedented digital and social coverage" (Olympics Offer Unprecedented, 2012). NBC boasted about the increase in the quantity of hours of live Olympic coverage through the use of cable subsidiaries and for the "first time ever" live streaming of every Olympic event, yet not every event was offered for live streaming as

many of the most popular events such as gymnastics and swimming only aired on the traditional television broadcast.

The offering of live streaming and the increase in hours of Olympics coverage, in NBC's mind, indicated improved coverage in comparison to the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing. The belief that the coverage would be better also formed the foundation to NBC's social media platform coverage of the Olympics in 2012. Further, the six-hour tape delay gave NBC extra time to create an Americanized narrative where the content is successfully edited and constructed through gatekeeping processes before any footage airs for the U.S. audience.

At the end of the day, NBC used a new platform in an old way. The network did not use the social media platform in a way to break the audience out of the old gatekeeping model where they had little say in the content they were viewing. NBC continued to maintain this gatekeeping model—White (1950)—through limiting the responses the audience could have when interacting with the tweets NBC posted. However, NBC limiting its responses in its interactions did not mean the audience allowed itself to stay in the old gatekeeping model. Rather, the audience, with the ability to speak out with the Twitter platform, could speak out without relying upon NBC's prompts. In other words, the audience created a new gatekeeping model by creating its own narrative outside the confines of NBC and the network's gatekeeping practices. The audience became gatekeepers by using Twitter to create its own content that interested them. Chapter VI will discuss this in greater detail.

What NBC's Social Media Olympic Coverage Means

NBC's social media Olympic coverage in 2012 marked the beginning of the social Games. By using social media to cover the Olympics, NBC committed to developing a post-broadcasting model for possibly innovative and reinvention of Olympic coverage. Merrin (2009) describes the post-broadcasting model as reinventing the content used in traditional television broadcasts to make Olympic coverage viewable in new ways. Hargittai (2003) noted that the Internet changed the focus of traditional gatekeeping from the information disseminated to how that information could be consumed by the audience. In some respects, NBC recognized the need to reinvent Olympic coverage in a digital environment. The network decided to extend its coverage of the Games online and include social media in addition to the live streaming options for online consumption. Turner and Tay (2009) noted that the proliferation of multiplatform broadcasting has been a boon for broadcasting companies that have embraced the technology. Turner and Tay (2009) described the biggest successes in broadcasting: "The major ratings successes of the twenty-first century have been multi-platform, multimedia events" (p. 7). NBC has done so with its traditional network broadcast of the Olympics, its cable channels and the online live stream of events. With so many platforms for viewing, the Olympics have a significant amount of opportunities for revenue and ratings success. However, had NBC not used social media as part of its coverage, it would not have taken advantage of the opportunity to expand its reach and advertising revenue.

Twitter also allowed NBC to flex its gatekeeping muscle in maintaining control over the online coverage, how it was presented, and the audience tuning into the traditional television broadcast as a result of the social media presence. The coverage was

in sync with the NBC traditional television broadcasts and, therefore, retained NBC's information dissemination routines as the exclusive broadcaster of the Olympics. However, not having control over content online, especially on Twitter, would have been a significant blow to how NBC constructed and presented narratives within its Olympic coverage. The network also maintained some control over the online conversation by creating the illusion that the audience was contributing to content when it did not.

While the live streaming and social media content pushed NBC into the early makings of a post-broadcasting model, the network did not fully commit to such a model. NBC attempted to drive the audience back to television broadcasts. The live streaming options were restricted by an authentication process in which online audience members had to provide cable or satellite subscription proof to access the streams. Consequently, while the live streaming was an option and available online, many viewers did not have access or the ability to watch the stream. In this regard, NBC was a gatekeeper of its content in an even more extreme way by preventing viewers from having access to the content streamed online. It forced audience members who were not subscribers to specific cable or satellite providers to view the tape-delayed content through the traditional television broadcasts. To fully embrace a post-broadcasting model, NBC would have to drop the live streaming authentication and allow viewers past the login gates unimpeded. Doing so would change little about NBC's online coverage or production. However, NBC was not willing to take risks and experiment with developing a post-broadcasting model of coverage.

The problem for NBC as for other media is that it is trying to preserve old business models in a new reality. To experiment with alternatives when billions

are at stake is risky. But so is not experimenting and not learning when millions of

your viewers can complain about you on Twitter…The bottom-line lesson for all

media is that business models built on imprisonment, on making us do what you

want us to do because you give us no choice, is no strategy for the future. (Jarvis,

2012a)

At the end of the day, NBC will remain in the split strategy that tries to emphasize

online coverage while maintaining a majority of coverage and resources to the television

broadcast. The lack of a developed post-broadcasting model for Olympic coverage,

especially regarding access to live-streaming, will continue to be NBC's strategy moving

forward. The Sochi 2014 Winter Olympics were presented under the same split

traditional and post-broadcasting model that NBC used for the 2012 London Summer

Olympics. The reason for this is simple. NBC made money in 2012 and made money for

the first time broadcasting the Winter Games in 2014 (Clarke, 2013). This strategy will

remain in place until NBC is forced to change how it delivers the Olympics by the

audience. The first social media Games taught NBC how to gatekeep its online content

and provide an illusion that the audience has an influence on the network's presentation

of the Olympics. This illusion of influence was a means for NBC to retain its traditional

gatekeeping processes (Bruns, 2008; Eberhard, 1982; Evensen, 1997; Hickey, 1966,

1968; Hough, 1995; Itule & Anderson, 2007; Lewin, 1947; Shoemaker & Vos, 2009;

White, 1950) it had established without addressing the social media platform as a new

tool for enhancing Olympic coverage. The post-broadcasting model, which NBC began

to adopt by using social media and live streaming of events, was quite limited, however.

The experimentation will continue to be limited until NBC is forced to fully commit to a

post-broadcasting model that involves an active audience that is on the same level as

NBC as gatekeepers. As Alzner (2012) noted, "The fact that readers and viewers don't

need to be told what to consume anymore is not news. The fact that they want to be part

of the process is not news" (n.p.). According to Soroka (2012), gatekeeping in a post-

broadcasting world with social media is more "more than just a product of an individual's

[or media organization's] preferences, whims or errors" (p. 515). Gatekeeping in this

post-broadcasting world with social media involves the selection of content by multiple

parties—traditional gatekeepers and audience gatekeepers—that create diverse coverage

that compliments the interests of each party participating in the dissemination and

consumption of coverage. The change in NBC's broadcasting decisions, however, will

likely come only as the network is able to monetize its version of the post-broadcasting

model it started to experiment with in 2012. When NBC is able to develop a significant

revenue-generating element to its post-broadcasting model, using Twitter as a means of

gatekeeping its online content, then and only then will the network place emphasis on

online coverage.

Communication technologies such as Twitter help to open gates to the audience,

but raise questions regarding changes to the gatekeeping model. Scholars must grapple

with determining how to theorize changes in gatekeeping as traditional gatekeepers find

audience members in their domain. A new model of gatekeeping in the post-broadcasting

world is created as a result of NBC's gatekeeping practices throughout its Olympic

coverage in 2012. In this new model, the audience's ability to gatekeep its own

information, content, and coverage of the Olympics, while NBC does not make full use

of its social media presence, is significant. It shifts power into the hands of the viewer to

decide what to watch, when they want to watch, and how to watch it. The new

gatekeeping model, audience gatekeeping, places the audience on the same level as media

organizations and journalists who select information for dissemination to the larger

general audience. This model is discussed and elaborated on in chapter VI as the

audience's tweets are analyzed.

CHAPTER VI

AUDIENCE GATEKEEPERS

At the time of the 2012 London Summer Olympics, there were 140 million

Twitter users and 900 million Facebook users (Bennett, 2012). The volume of tweets,

according to *The New York Times*, created 11.26 billion Twitter impressions including the

searchable hashtags #Olympics, #London2012, and #NBCFail (Pelroth & Bilton, 2012).

This amount of user generated content is significant, displaying active engagement and

interest in the Olympics. Consequently, the audience played an important role in Olympic

coverage even though it was NBC who held the exclusive broadcasting rights to the

Games. Twitter provided the audience with a voice and the ability to drive online

conversation, create content, and gatekeep its own information regarding Olympic

coverage. Dick Costolo, Twitter's CEO, argued that,

> TV has always been social and conversation-driven. It's just that in the past, the
>
> reach of that conversation was limited by the number of people in a room or who
>
> you could talk to on the phone or the next day at the watercooler. Broadcasters
>
> have come to understand that Twitter is a force multiplier for the media they've
>
> created (Bercovici, 2013, para. 7).

Twitter's relationship to television has only grown since 2008. According to Nielsen, 32

million Americans tweeted about TV in 2012 (Panja, 2013). With so many people

tweeting about what they were viewing, their voice mattered. My audience gatekeeping

model in post-broadcasting will illustrate the power of the audience in coverage of the

2012 Olympics.

The audience tweets with the hashtags of #Olympics, #Olympics2012 and #London2012 focused on similar elements to that of NBC's tweets without the promotional tone that came from NBC's Twitter usage. Instead of focusing on the most popular athletic competitions and events, however, the audience tweets were usually very patriotic—showing support for the U.S.—or showed support of a specific athlete or sport. Some events that captured the attention of the audience, such as badminton and rowing, were not included in prime time coverage. In addition, there was a large quantity of humorous and sarcastic tweets. The audience, by talking about the athletic competitions and Olympians not shown during prime time, or for that matter, that had much coverage in general by NBC, acted as gatekeepers by creating content and coverage via tweets. The tweets, via the hashtags, were then searchable for anyone around the world to find if the hashtags weren't already in the trending section of Twitter.

This chapter will first analyze the audience tweets that were about the Olympics in general, using #Olympics, #Olympics2012 and #London2012 to draw upon and discuss how the audience acted as a gatekeeper as well as the significance of the audience acting as a gatekeeper much like NBC. This chapter will also examine the audience's criticism of NBC's Olympic coverage through the #NBCFail hashtag. In particular, this examination will discuss the audience as gatekeepers and how as gatekeepers, the audience provided a counter-narrative to NBC's coverage as well as the significance of the counter-narrative in a post-broadcasting model. Finally, this chapter introduces a new model of gatekeeping, the audience gatekeeping model in post-broadcasting, which places the audience on the same level as journalists and media organizations in the gatekeeping process.

By examining the user-generated content on Twitter during NBC's Olympic coverage, it becomes apparent that a post-broadcasting model, while allowing a space for public dissent, can also be lucrative for broadcasting companies if those companies take advantage of interactive and customization elements the Internet presents. If networks do not take advantage of the post-broadcasting model, the audience will take matters in its own hands because they no longer have to rely on only one source for content anymore. In NBC's case, not even its exclusive broadcasting rights can protect them from the audience serving as its own gatekeeper of Olympic coverage.

<div align="center">The Audience and Gatekeeping</div>

Gatekeeping, traditionally defined as a process by which journalists, editors and media organizations selects relevant information to disseminate to its audience, has been well studied in regards to traditional mediums such as television, radio and newspapers (Bruns, 2005, 2008; Clayman and Reisner, 1998; Hough, 1995; Itule & Anderson, 2007; Livingston & Bennett, 2003; Shoemaker & Vos, 2009; Shoemaker et al., 2010). Traditionally, timeliness and significance of information were found to be important factors in decisions to disseminate information to an audience (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009; Shoemaker et al., 2010). However, such elements may play less of a role in information dissemination as the audience is able to make decisions about which information they want to consume.

The development of the Internet and social media has allowed this shift in focus from news organizations as the primary gatekeeper to the audience gatekeeping online (Bruns, 2005, 2008). According to Meikle (2002), the Internet allowed those who are removed from positions of power to use the Internet to make its voice heard. In short, the

Internet and social media allow users to work around traditional gatekeepers and allow them to become gatekeepers by selecting and self-publishing information they choose to disseminate. Walsh (2003) made similar observations in discussing how the Internet allows for non-experts and non-media media members to avoid the traditional gatekeeping functions of traditional media. Shoemaker and Vos (2009) argued that as a result, the audience itself must be considered a distribution channel and, therefore, a gatekeeper as well.

<div align="center">Audience Gatekeeping Model in Post-Broadcasting</div>

Prior research shows that gatekeeping lends itself to the exploration of decision-making and social aspects of the communication process (Arant & Anderson, 2001; Bruns, 2005, 2008; Cassidy, 2006; Haas & Wearden, 2003; Itule & Anderson, 2007; Kovach & Rosenstiel, 1999; Williams & Carpini, 2004). Despite the focus of scholars on the media organizations and journalists in gatekeeping, the theory is well-suited to analyze the audience's role in Olympic coverage because of the social interactions between the audience members, each other, and the media. Singer (2006) described the Internet, and subsequently social media, as a platform that "defies the whole notion of a 'gate' and challenges the idea that journalists (or anyone else) can or should limit what passes through it" (p. 265). The audience, therefore, using social media challenges the notion that the official gatekeeper—journalists and media organizations—are the only ones who can gatekeep content (Bakker & Pantti, 2009; Beard & Olsen, 1999; Singer, 2006).

In an attempt to re-envision gatekeeping in a digital environment, Chin-Fook and Simmonds (2011), proposed the multi-directional flow of information. Chin-Fook and

Simmonds' challenge to Shoemaker and Vos' (2009) unidirectional flow operated under

the findings that social media broke down gates, letting information flow in new

directions that it could not previously flow. Keen (2008) noted the shift in the

gatekeeping model with the Internet and social media breaking down long-standing gates

of official news sources. Consequently, everyone had the opportunity to become a

gatekeeper (Keen, 2008).

The audience in the role as a gatekeeper became more evident during the 2012

London Summer Olympics with its social media presence. Based on previous

scholarship, a new model of gatekeeping, the audience gatekeeping model in post-

broadcasting, was developed to help explain the gatekeeping process with the mass

audience serving as its own gatekeepers. While the audience acted as a gatekeeper of

Olympic information, it is impossible for them to speak in one voice, as NBC could.

Even though the audience could not speak in one voice, the audience as gatekeepers,

could speak about as few or many things as it wanted. While NBC was strictly

gatekeeping which information to post on Twitter, the audience could create its own

narrative.

The audience gatekeeping model in post-broadcast, Figure 1, illustrates how the

audience serves as the gatekeeper: As an event happens, such as the 2012 Olympics, both

the interested audience and journalists collect information. Through gatekeeping

processes, the audience selects information to share and information to discard, much like

the journalists and media organizations covering the Olympics. In the audience

gatekeeping model in post-broadcasting, the interested audience is on the same level as

journalists. The interested audience is not the same as the mass audience because the

mass audience may not share the same interest in the event itself. As the audience

selected information, they constructed the content they wished to share. By tweeting the

content, the interested audience, then, disseminated the information to each other,

journalists, media organizations and the mass audience. At this point, journalists, media

organizations, the mass audience, or the interested audience can then respond to the

initial information—adding to it, altering it, or changing the subject. These interactions

form the basis of the audience gatekeeping model in post-broadcasting.
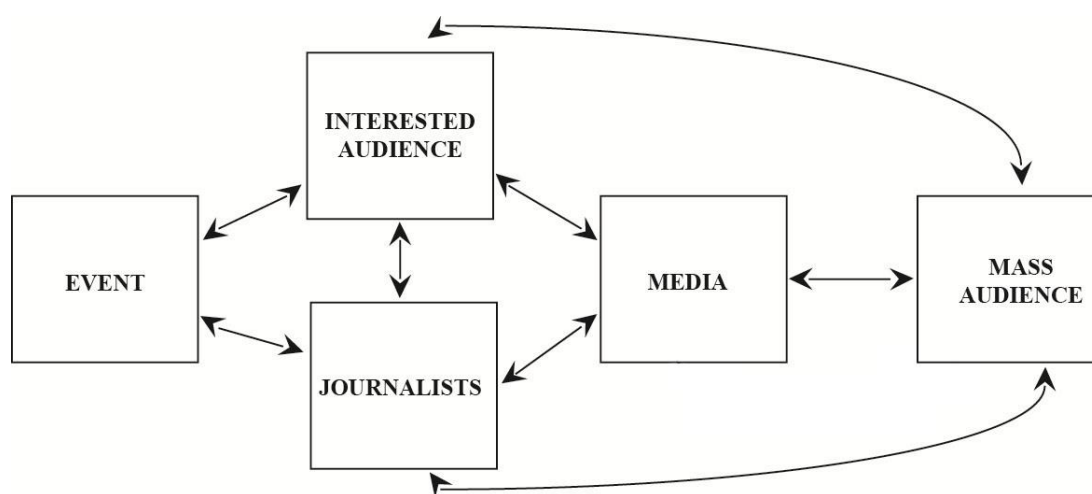
Figure 2. Audience Gatekeeping Model in Post-Broadcasting.

This new model in gatekeeping argues that the audience has power to select information,

create content, provide a counter-narrative to the content disseminated from media

organizations and can be used to hold journalists, media organizations or other audience

members accountable for the content was produced and how it was presented. Much of

the traditional gatekeeping model remained intact in the development of this new

gatekeeping model. Consequently, the model operates under the premise that, unlike in

the past, audience members now have a platform in which immediate feedback can be

given to media organizations or countless millions of other audience members around the world.

<center>Themes</center>

The audience's Twitter use was categorized into four main, broad themes which emerged from an open coding process that reviewed tweets until saturation was reached at 618. Each theme provided organization to the audience's use of Twitter as a gatekeeper of Olympic coverage. Unlike NBC, the audience did not have specifically constructed goals such as driving people to the traditional television broadcast. The audience, rather, was only concerned with what interested them and providing information about those interests. Consequently, organizing the audience's tweets was much more difficult than those of NBC. The four broad main themes that emerged from the audience's Twitter use were: diversifying interests, new information, what was that?, and #NBCFail.

Unlike the other themes, the hashtag #NBCFail provided the richest material to analyze. Consequently, that theme has multiple subheadings to make easier navigation of the analysis of that theme. Audience gatekeeping was present in each theme as the audience selected content to discuss that often NBC did not talk about. Through my audience gatekeeping model in post-broadcasting, it becomes more apparent that the audience is not just "gatewatching" as some scholars argue (Bruns, 2005; Shoemaker & Vos, 2009). Rather, the audience is creating content as a traditional gatekeeper does, disseminating that information to journalists and media organizations as well as a mass audience. By talking about their interests, the audience is gatekeeping content regarding the Olympic coverage, which was not just confined to the actual events of the Olympic coverage but to also what NBC was doing with its Olympic coverage. Consequently, the

audience as a gatekeeper is on the same plane as journalists and media organizations in my audience gatekeeping model. Further, the audience's Twitter use expanded Olympic coverage in directions that NBC, the exclusive broadcaster of the Games in the U.S., did not; that diversification of content likely helped draw the interest of many audience members who may have had limited attraction to the Olympics.

<div align="center">Diversifying Interests</div>

As opposed to NBC, which had a singular entity to communicate through, the audience was much more diverse in interests, and this was displayed in the audience tweets. The focus of the audience was far more fragmented and in cohesive when talking about the Olympics in general on Twitter. The thousands of users generating millions of tweets about the events, athletes, countries, results, and the coverage presented by NBC provided vast options of content to talk about. Bercovici (2013) described the contribution to the social aspects of television broadcasts that Twitter provided:

> To its 200 million-plus active users, Twitter is many things: a social network, a short-form messaging service, a news wire, a tool for self-expression—even, some believe, a force for global political change…This 'second screen experience' turns TV into a participatory activity, allowing Twitter users to broadcast wisecracks, critiques and theories in real-time; the networks, in turn, share the behind-the-scenes worlds of writers' rooms and dressing rooms, 140 characters at a time. (Bercovici, 2013, n.p.)

The Twitter audience spent a lot of time tweeting about popular, prime time events and athletes, which did have similarities to NBC's traditional television broadcast and social media coverage of the Olympics. However, the audience was not as focused as

NBC was on the most popular events which aired during prime time. The diverse interests of the audience demonstrated the audience's desire for more varied content than what NBC was providing. Consequently, the audience had to act as its own gatekeeper to create the coverage it wanted. As my audience gatekeeping model in post-broadcasting posited, the audience acted as a gatekeeper in selecting events, athletes, and results that were not a focal point of the NBC coverage. The result of the audience acting as its own gatekeeper not only contrasted with NBC's coverage, but also expanded Olympic coverage beyond the scope of NBC. The expansion of coverage into the audience's relam encouraged a shared experience of the global event among the Twitter users.

First Medal Ever

Audience members on Twitter discussed sports such as rowing, handball, and ping pong as well as country's and athletes that were not as visible. For instance, some audience members saw value in discussing Uganda's success in the Olympics creating more diverse coverage as noted in audience gatekeeping model in post-broadcasting.

> Kiprotich's medal elevated Uganda to 50th position on the medals table. - Talk about #Uganda at 50... woop! woop! #Olympics2012. (Evelyn Namara, @enamara, August 12, 2012)

The discussion of other countries success was a significant theme in the audience tweets about the Olympics because of the high level of patriotism normally associated with international athletic competition. Patriotic tweets were among the most common from the audience, but the audience's desire to acknowledge and discuss other countries indicated interest in a more diverse narrative than what NBC supplied in its Americanized coverage of the Olympics. In particular, audience members seemed to

enjoy noting countries that won its first medals of the Olympics or even a medal for the first time ever in a specific event.

> First ever Olympic medal for Grenada. That's brilliant. Well done Kirani James. I
> bet they are celebrating back home. #Olympics2012. (Raymond, @raubrey,
> August 6, 2012)

By noting countries with first-time success in the Olympics, the audience filled a gap in coverage. If there was not a need for coverage of results such as Grenada's first Olympic medal ever, the audience would not have been talking about it on Twitter. In this way, the audience performed its gatekeeping duty as the gatekeeping model in post-broadcasting suggested they would as the interested parties selected content to disseminate much like NBC or other media organizations would.

The audience was not limited to just lower profile countries and the success those countries were enjoying, however. The audience also discussed events that didn't garner much attention from NBC. Events such as handball, water polo, and women's trampoline were among the favorites of the Twitter audience. Many audience members found the more they learned about events not shown on NBC the more interested they were in the events. They not only discussed results of these events but passed along both knowledge of the events or promoted that an event was underway.

> Hold up, there WOMEN'S TRAMPOLINE?!? Cancel all my plans.
> #Olympics2012. (Dono-van Feuring, @donovanfeuring, August 3, 2012)

The audience sharing information, such as a women's trampoline event, demonstrates the audience gatekeeping model in post-broadcasting in action. As the event begins, the audience members aware of it and interested in the event disseminated pertinent

information regarding the event as NBC did with its programming alert tweets. The audience selected information, as a gatekeeper, disseminated information which was picked up by others and passed along to the mass audience who may not have been aware that women's trampoline even existed, let alone was being contested.

New Information

The discussing of athletes and events not covered in prime time by NBC, the audience also brought to light little known information by the casual viewer. Acting as a gatekeeper of information, the Twitter audience shared information NBC did not include in its broadcast regarding life as an Olympian. For example, some of the Twitter audience noted that many of the athletes do not actually make much money from their experiences as Olympians if they do not have endorsements from sponsors.

> Shout out to all the Athletes who do what they do not for the money or the fame
> but because they love to compete. #Olympics2012. (Phil Mackenzie, @Phister13,
> August 12, 2012)

In addition, some of the Twitter audience pointed out little known information about the price athletes pay for success in the Olympics. In particular, an obscure tax law that requires Olympians to pay taxes on the medals they win, which was not a point of emphasis when NBC discussed life after the Olympics for many of the Olympians who competed.

> Did you know? ... USA's #Olympics2012 winners must pay IRS $9,000 for every
> gold medal they earn. http://mediaite.com/a/shsaf. (Kelly Ann Collins,
> @kellyanncollins, August 1, 2012)

Such new information shared by audience gatekeepers provided the mass audience with additional information regarding what happens after the Olympics end and the cameras are done recording. In the case of the tax tweet by Collins, who acted as an audience gatekeeper, the new information came from a reputable source and was confirmed by other media sources. The multiple confirmation by other media sources in her tweet lent credence to audience gatekeepers in the audience gatekeeping model in post-broadcasting as relevant sources of information.

What Was That?

Perhaps more than anything, however, the Twitter audience was able to share its confusion regarding the events they were watching. As casual observers of athletic competitions in which they viewed only every four years, many audience members were not familiar with the operating principles of the events. Consequently, some of the audience could not fully comprehend what they were watching. As gatekeepers, even without actual knowledge of rules or scoring, the audience created a means for the mass audience to gain knowledge to understand what they were watching. In this regard, the audience as gatekeepers provided information that NBC, as gatekeepers, often did not provide or did not provide often enough for the mass audience to follow the athletic competitions.

Me: Wow, that was impressive! Announcer: ANOTHER DISASTROUS
MISTAKE! #Olympics2012. (Lauren Head, @LHead17, August 3, 2012)
The Twitter audience, then, focused on the complexity of the rules, scoring and officiating they witnessed during Olympic coverage. Oftentimes the audience had difficulty telling the difference between a good or a bad outcome.

I honestly cant (sic) tell the difference between a good dive and a bad one

#Olympics2012. (Lauren Milligan, @LaurenMilligan6, August 11, 2012)

Audience members also found out about elements of events they did not know existed. In

one instance an audience member, who also happened to be a NBC News contributor—as

noted in his Twitter profile, learned that not only was there judging in the event, but the

rules to compete were beyond comprehension.

Things I did not know about racewalking: There are judges. And the rules are

very complicated. http://aj.vg/O90JZm #Olympics2012. (M. Alex Johnson,

@MAlexJohnson, August 10, 2012)

The inability to decipher important elements to the Olympics, such as scoring and rules,

frustrated viewers. Twitter linked the audience together, allowing may people to learn

about the rules and scoring to make sense of Olympic events they could not comprehend

or had not ever witnessed before. This gatekeeping process, in which some acted as

experts, taking the place of NBC, taught others something to fill a void in NBC's online

coverage of the Olympics, which did not focus on explaining rules or scoring. With the

Twitter audience filling the void and acting as a gatekeeper as the audience gatekeeper

model in post-broadcasting posits, the audience became a valuable source of information

as they watched coverage of events they could not understand. The value in the

gatekeeping function performed by the audience during the Olympics, therefore, was on

the same level as the exclusive broadcaster, NBC.

Eventually, though, the Twitter viewers had enough of the confusion and limited

explanations of scoring and rules, and moved from attempting to make sense of the rules

to using the medium for its own purpose: critiquing NBC.

The Audience has Enough: #NBCFail is Born

The audience's tweets regarding the Olympics in general provided insight into its interests that NBC did not cover as well as how audience members acted as gatekeepers of information that interested them as discussed. More importantly, these tweets demonstrated room for growth in NBC's coverage without a severe criticism of NBC's decisions. The #NBCFail hashtag, however, provided more direct critiques of NBC's coverage, a more focused audience discussion of the Olympics and demonstrated the audience acting as gatekeepers in a post-broadcasting model. The audience was able to select content they wanted to talk about, including how NBC was presenting the Olympics to the U.S. In a post-broadcasting model, the audience's opinion and influence is particularly important because of its ability to customize. Media convergence and social media, especially Twitter in 2012, allowed the audience some opportunities to tell NBC what content they wanted and how they wanted the content presented to them.

The convergence of media, providing audiences with access to virtually unlimited combinations of videos, photos, and text, immediately has created higher expectations from audiences. People expect to have access to information and coverage 24-hours a day, every day. When this does not happen, people get impatient, upset, and speak out using new media, such as Twitter, which allows their voices to be heard by those making decisions about programming.

Those concerned, annoyed, frustrated, and angry voices began expressing their feelings about NBC's Olympic coverage even before the London opening ceremonies began in July 2012. According to *The New York Times* (Laird, 2012; Sandomir, 2012), the most significant and prominent tweet, credited with launching a social media

phenomenon critiquing NBC, which became part of the social media conversation almost immediately, came from Steven Marx on July 26, the day before the opening ceremonies. Marx, a resident of Peoria, Ill., ended a Twitter post concerning NBC's live streaming with the hashtag, #NBCfail. A hashtag is a way to categorize posts on Twitter, make them searchable and easier to become salient (Blaszka, Burch, Fredrick, Clavio, & Walsh, 2012; Kwak et al., 2010). Marx tweeted about how NBC did not explain that to gain access to the live stream viewers had to login through a cable or satellite provider. His tweet read,

> Interesting how NBC never mentions you need a cable/satellite subscription w/ MSNBC/CNBC to view any coverage online. We're screwed. #NBCfail. (Steven Marx, @stevenmarx, July 26, 2012)

This tweet from Marx not only alerted the Twitter audience to a significant problem regarding the ability to access the NBC live stream, but also critiqued NBC for misleading the general public. Marx's tweet also provided a foundation for other audience members to build and focus their critiques of NBC's coverage. The #NBCFail hashtag, then, became a place where audience members could provide serious critiques or make humorous comments about NBC's decision making in regards to how the Games were presented.

As the #NBCfail hashtag caught on, Twitter became a venue for viewers' frustrations about content they were not seeing and information they were not receiving. Critiquing NBC's online streaming strategy wasn't the only topic discussed with the #NBCfail hashtag. Many Twitter users conveyed their disbelief in regards to NBC's six-hour tape delay, editing practices that presented an Americanized version of the

Olympics, advertising strategies, and the frustration with NBC spoiling the outcome of events moments prior to the airing of those events.

The audience, which was promised "unprecedented coverage" from NBC, did not end up with what was expected as a result of many NBC decisions related to the online live streaming of events. Logging into the live streaming website with proof of cable or satellite subscription, not all the events being live streamed in real-time, and the large quantity of commercial interruptions led many to voice their opinions via Twitter. Former media executive turned media critic and professor of journalism Jeff Jarvis summed up the power of Twitter as a means to create change and voice dissent to hold networks to the promises they make:

> It [Twitter] is a platform that has been used by revolutionaries to communicate and coordinate and conspire and change the world. It is a platform that is used by journalists to learn and spread the news. If it is a platform it should be used by anyone for any purpose, none prescribed or prohibited by Twitter. That is the definition of a platform (Jarvis, 2012b).

The audience gatekeeping model in post-broadcasting suggests that the audience did what Jarvis argues Twitter should do. The audience, acting as a gatekeeper, used Twitter to learn information about the athletic events, athletes, rules, scoring, and countries involved. The audience as gatekeepers then spread the news, results, rules, scoring policies, and other information regarding the athletic events. Finally, the audience sought to create change, through the #NBCFail hashtag, as Jarvis argued was the purpose of a social media platform.

Audience Gatekeeping as Counter-Narrative

Counter-narratives argue against the narrative provided, and in the case of the 2012 Olympics, Twitter provided a user-generated counter-narrative to NBC's coverage. Lindemann-Nelson (1996, 1997, 2001) coined the term ''counter-narrative'' to describe a cluster of histories, anecdotes, and other fragments woven together to disrupt stories. With 750,000 #NBCFail tweets posted throughout the Olympics, the audience was able to act as gatekeepers of content by providing a counter-narrative to NBC with what they were talking about. Stanley (2007) said, "Counter-narratives act to deconstruct the master narratives, and they offer alternatives to the dominant discourse" (p. 14). Counter-narratives are more than alternative perspectives that just deconstruct narratives from those in power, however, but they reconstruct the story and tell it in a different way. In the case of the 2012 Olympics, Twitter and social media allowed those not involved with the NBC production, the audience, to deconstruct and rebuild the narrative. This challenged the NBC narrative and provided a counter-narrative for those unsatisfied with NBC's version of the Olympics. According to Cover (2006), the "digital media environment promotes are convenient and comfortable ways of altering a text: to co-participate, re-sequence or interactively transform" (p. 141). The audience was able to alter the text, provided by NBC, and transform the content into a new narrative about the events, athletes, production problems, and results that the audience wanted but was not presented by NBC. In short, the #NBCFail hashtag gave the audience the opportunity to customize its Olympic content outside NBC's control and revenue model.

#NBCFail

The six-hour tape delay was just the beginning of the controversy that would engulf NBC's coverage of the Olympics. On the heels of heavy promotion of the network's Olympic coverage, many began to realize the promotions and promises of NBC didn't quite match reality. Many viewers did not realize that the free live streaming, which was promoted by NBC, required cable or satellite subscription information to log in to gain access. Social media gave audience members a way to speak up and critique what NBC presented to them throughout the Olympics. Even more so, social media— Twitter in particular—gave the audience a way to critique NBC that did not exist previously. In the past, if an audience member wanted to advocate for a change in the broadcast they would have to write a letter, email, or call the network. In 2012, Twitter allowed the audience to have an instantaneous medium to make its voice heard. Further, as audience gatekeepers on Twitter, the audience was able to select the most poignant critiques of NBC's Olympic coverage and amplify them through retweets to spread the information in a visible way.

Sports leagues, network broadcast companies, cable companies, and other media entities in the past 20 years have attempted to integrate new technologies to reap the financial benefits of the public's love of sports (Grant, Leadley, & Zygmont, 2008). As new platforms and technologies have increased the reach of sports, the media has gained control over the new platforms. Television brought the Olympics into the homes of millions while the Internet further expanded the influence of media over daily life around the world. Consequently, the media organizations are able to frame events, creating a false construction of a narrative for financial gain (Hutson, 2009). NBC attempted to do

the same with the newest technological advancement that they were able to integrate into its coverage. NBC attempted to use partnerships with a variety of social media platforms to integrate the feeling of interaction into its American Olympic narrative.

In 2008, when Beijing hosted the last Summer Olympics, Twitter had only 6 million users and Facebook only 100 million. In 2012, more than 140 million people use Twitter and Facebook users number approximately 900 million (Bennett, 2012), an astounding growth in social media. There were more than 744 million unique views of NBC's Olympic website in the first week, four times greater than the number of views during the first week of the 2008 Beijing Olympics (Rubio, 2012). There were more than 140 million Twitter users who tweeted more than 50 million comments about the Olympics from July 27 to August 12 (Bennett, 2012). The astounding volume of output clearly indicates that social media connected the world to the Olympics in 2012 as it had never been connected before.

Requiring viewers to provide cable or satellite subscription to view live-streams of content, normally available for free on network television, was a severe act of NBC restricting access to Olympic coverage to its audience. The restriction of access appeared to be a financial decision by a network owned by a cable and Internet provider that wanted to only allow those to view the live stream if they are paying cable or satellite customers. It would also serve as a means to drive viewers back to the traditional television broadcast. If an audience member could not access the live stream because they did not have a cable or satellite subscription, their only other legal option for viewing Olympic coverage was to watch NBC. John Titlow noted that many audience members

who wanted to view the Olympic coverage but did not have cable or satellite

subscriptions were downloading software to watch BBC coverage:

> Meanwhile, Salesforce CEO Mark Benioff openly advocated watching pirated
>
> streams of the games in lieu of dealing with NBC's restrictions. "Think about that
>
> for a second," wrote Ryan Lawler on Techcrunch. "You've got a titan of industry
>
> telling viewers to ignore the local broadcast rights and pay attention to an illegal
>
> copy of the event instead." (Titlow, 2012, n.p.)

That NBC went so far to limit and restrict access to a global sporting event that has

provisions in its charter stating that coverage should reach as many people as possible

speaks volumes about the network's perceived role in the gatekeeping process. The

network, attempting to protect a billion dollar investment for broadcasting rights, tried to

maintain gatekeeping control of the Olympic content as well as how it was presented.

However, the audience did not accept NBC's decision to restrict access. As audience

gatekeepers, many used the #NBCFail hashtag to discuss the ways in which NBC did not

deliver on promises it announced as part of its coverage.

> NBC's hype about how great its coverage will be was a classic bait and switch.
>
> #NBCfail. (Chez Suze, @SuzyVMc, July 28, 2012)

With no alternatives, the audience would have to rely upon NBC for American coverage

of the Olympics. Consequently, when viewers found that they did not have access to the

live stream without cable subscription authentication, their expectations were shattered.

The audience members were not expecting the restriction of access, nor were they

accustomed to the restriction of access for prime time content on network broadcast

stations.

NBC = Not Broadcasting Conveniently #NBCFail cc @jeffjarvis. (Kieran

Hannon, @kieranhannon), July 28, 2012)

Audience members expected free, unlimited access to information and streaming as they

have had in the past and as had been described by NBC. This is not what the audience

received, however. The tweets regarding the issue of access often faced scrutiny laced

with humor to make the audience's critique stronger. Therefore, Twitter also gave the

audience the ability as a gatekeeper to choose to talk about NBC, its decisions regarding

the presentation of the Olympics, and the coverage the audience was receiving compared

to what was promised.

Twitter as a Critical Counter-Narrative

With many of the Twitter audience voicing their opinion regarding NBC's

failings as the exclusive broadcaster of the Olympics, the #NBCFail hashtag started by

Marx took on a more humorous meaning. Many tweets included sarcasm. Parody Twitter

accounts such as @nbclivefail and @nbcdelayed also were created to entertain as well as

critique NBC's coverage, which only further encouraged the Twitter audience to

participate in the critiques (Georges, 2012). These tweets served as a gatekeeping

function for the audience, addressing information that was not being addressed by NBC.

Further, as the audience served as a gatekeeper through the #NBCFail tweets, other

audience members were able to compare coverage of Olympics past with the 2012

presentation to add historical perspective in addition to humorous critiques. While parody

and sarcasm were pervasive in tweets with the #NBCFail hashtag, other audience

members used subtle humor as their weapon of choice as a means of providing genuine

critiques. The historical perspectives combined with humor put into context how badly NBC was failing in their eyes in 2012:

> In 1964, daily Olympics film was flown to the U.S. & broadcast in B/W. Morning events shown in the evening. In 2012, we got color. #NBCFail. (Steve Tanner, @Tannerman, July 29, 2012)

Audience gatekeeping such as Tanners, using historical context to compare coverage of the Olympics in 1964 to that of the tape-delayed coverage in 2012, let the audience vent its frustration. More importantly, tweets comparing Olympic coverage of the past to the digital era allowed the audience to have a voice in providing feedback.

While U.S. viewers were left frustrated and critiquing NBC's coverage, viewers from the United Kingdom described the BBC's coverage of the Games. One BBC viewer highlighted the biggest difference between NBC and the BBC's coverage:

> Don't want to rub it in for @NBC viewers but BBC has 26HD channels showing all LIVE Olympics events simultaneously #NBCFail. (Suzanne Kelleher, @SuzanneWJGB, July 28, 2012)

Critical comments such as these aimed at NBC's coverage provided the audience members with their own narrative to the narrative presented by NBC. While the NBC narrative focused on the promised and hyped unprecedented coverage, the audience was able to find out that the BBC was allowing UK viewers to watch every event live regardless of how popular an event was. Consequently, the audience could not only talk to each other about the coverage, express its frustration, displeasure to NBC, but they could share information about the coverage other countries were watching. Social interactions such as these expand the gatekeeping model to the audience gatekeeping

model in post-broadcasting because of the audience's ability to give the immediate feedback to the traditional gatekeeper, NBC, and each other. Bruns (2005) refers to the audience consuming and passing along information, such as the Kelleher tweet regarding BBC Olympic coverage, as gatewatching. However, the audience was doing more than just watching. They were creating content and a counter-narrative through their tweeting. The audience could create interest surrounding athletes or events that NBC paid little interest to through the traditional television broadcast, and even less interest to online.

Many of the tweets critiquing NBC's coverage focus on the amount of hype and lack of content. The tweets point out the marketing and promotion of events by NBC without actually providing depth in the coverage.

So @NBC could give live broadcast of Royal Wedding but not Olympics? #nbcfail. (Suzanne Kelleher, @SuzanneWJGB, July 28, 2012)

In the audience gatekeeping model in post-broadcasting, the audience played an important role: going beyond surface level information and interpretation that NBC provided in its coverage. In this case, audience gatekeepers recognized that NBC gave its United States audience hype over content. Much of the NBC strategy in 2012 revolved around pitching the Olympics as a must see television event, and then the network hyped the Olympics accordingly. Former media executive, media critic and professor at City University of New York, Jeff Jarvis, who was particularly outspoken during the Olympics tweeted, "We want Bolt. We get Blitz." The blitz was one of the flaws in how the Olympics were covered that disenchanted the audience, leading people to speak out on Twitter.

@NBC, profits strategy v PR disaster, brand hit? Short term v long term. You're

risking too much when you don't listen to viewers. #nbcfail. (Bea Sharif,

@beasharif, July 28, 2012)

The hype NBC produced about its coverage and the schedule for what the

audience could see each night produced a circus-like atmosphere that disrupted the

audience's experience of the Games. NBC Sports Group Chairman Mark Lazarus said in

one press release, "The decision to live stream every athletic competition—more than

3,500 hours, including all 32 sports and 302 medals—on NBCOlympics.com and, for the

first time, on NBC Olympics Live Extra app for both mobile devices and tablets,

significantly contributed to NBCU's ability to reach $1 billion" (NBC Universal

Surpasses, 2012, para. 2). Lazarus emphasized live coverage and technology as well as

the promotional success of the Olympics through social media and interaction between

the audience, NBC, the IOC, and athletes throughout the games:

NBC Olympics has also partnered with Facebook, Twitter, Youtube and Shazam

to extend its coverage onto these popular social media platforms for the 2012

London Olympics. The social media partnerships allow the NBC Sports Group to

communicate directly with fans of the Olympics and celebrate the Games with

viewers in new and unique ways." (Olympics Offer Unprecedented, 2012, para.4)

Call for a Post-Broadcasting Model via Sarcasm

Just days before the 2012 Olympics began NASA successfully landed a new

rover, named Curiosity, on the surface of Mars. The timeliness of Curiosity beginning to

explore Mars supplied the audience with material to critique NBC. Many of the tweets

concentrated on the six-hour tape-delay coverage compared NASA's coverage of the

Mars landing to that of NBC's of the Olympics. Tweets ranged from commenting on how

NASA was able to show a live feed from Mars to NBC's factitious delaying of images

released by NASA. One tweet posted read,

> So NASA can send us high res [sic] images from Mars in minutes but it takes
>
> NBC 6 hours to get the Olympics on tv [sic] to the USA from London? #nbcfail
>
> (Tony Pierce, @busblog, August 6, 2012).

Numerous critics emphasized NBC's failure to use available technology and implied the

network's refusal to air events live and implied the network was behind the times. These

critiques, calling out NBC for not using the available technology to broadcast the

Olympics live, further reinforced the audience's desire to customize its content as well.

Tweets like the following emphasized, sometimes through humor, the general consensus

about the time delay in general with Olympic coverage:

> BREAKING: Jesse Owens wins gold in 100m sprint #NBCFail. (@nbcdelayed,
>
> July 29, 2012)

Owens won his gold medal in the 100 meter sprint at the 1936 Olympics, making the

critique all that much more biting. Simultaneously, critiques such as these focused the

audience discussion of NBC's broadcasting model and how useful it really was for those

watching coverage of the Games.

> Proof our tape delayed broadcasting model is working? Over 3,000 new twitter
>
> followers in an hour #NBCFail. (@nbcdelayed, July 29, 2012)
>
> If you were planning to record that Olympics event you were going to miss, never
>
> mind, NBC is doing it for you #nbcfail. (Manish Srivastava, @min2, July 28,
>
> 2012)

Many other tweets cited NBC's airing of a human-interest piece on World War II before the closing ceremonies in its critique of the networks tape delay and perceived absence from modern times. The segment designed to provide cultural and historical knowledge or reflection of the past, wound up the target of the venting audience. Some of the tweets even took on the tone of NBC's marketing to mock the promotion and hype of events that would air during prime time.

NBC: Will Pearl Harbor be attacked? Find out tonight in primetime #nbcfail.

(Will Bunch, @will_bunch, July, 28, 2012)

The tweets, while strong critiques, poked fun at the segment but mostly used the piece as hyperbole to exaggerate the tape delay of Olympic coverage. The audience did not see the documentary as educational but rather, as NBC failing to provide Olympic coverage when it was supposed to be broadcasting athletic competitions:

It was one matter to watch a doc about the dream team. But now WWII is delaying the tape-delayed races of the day? #nbcfail. (Jeff Jarvis, @jeffjarvis, August 11, 2012)

As Churchill would say, this is our longest hour. #nbcfail. (Steve Buttry, @stevebuttry, August 11, 2012)

Tried to watch Olympics. Tom Brokaw talking about the Blitz for some reason. Turned off the not-Olympics. #nbcfail. (Jim Smith, @meprogrammerguy, August 11, 2012)

Tweets such as these by the audience underscored problematic areas of the NBC broadcast in prime time. The audience was not interested and wanted to choose other content; however, no other content was available at the time. Consequently, the audience

shifted its attention and selected its own content—acting as its own gatekeeper as outlined by the audience gatekeeping model in post-broadcasting. Not only did the audience select its own content, it created content critiquing NBC's broadcasts as well as talking about content NBC was not broadcasting.

Revising Historic Events

Sarcasm was not the only tool used to criticize NBC's coverage. Many critics accused NBC and its tape delay of ruining historic Olympic moments by not airing the events live. Events like Gabby Douglas' gold medal performance or Michael Phelp's last Olympic race were shown in prime time, well after results and coverage from other media organizations had been discussed by the audience. The delay also allowed NBC to edit events before airing to the public, which also became part of the critique of the broadcast. Many of the critiques reproached NBC for delaying the broadcast to edit in order to create more drama, which in turn created more suspense, viewership and advertising revenue. For example, several tweets criticized editors for not showing a Russian gymnast's poor performance in the women's team competition in chronological order with the rest of the event. The poor performance was shown after the U.S. women finished all their routines to create drama and suspense as to who would win gold. In real time, the U.S. women had already seen the performance before their final performance and knew it would take a huge error to cost them the gold.

Other critics attacked NBC's Olympic broadcast for depriving the American viewing public of its own history. One tweet addressed the significance of being unable to see Phelps add to his medal count as the most decorated American Olympian in history:

Phelps swims for the USA in the 4x100 relay in 1 hour or so...seen everywhere

but here in the USA on #NBCfail. (Steve Weinstein, @steveweinstein, July 29,

2012)

Other Twitter users shared disappointment that many young women would not be up late

enough to see Gabby Douglas make history in the women's gymnastics all-around title as

the competition concluded late in the prime time schedule with no ability to view live via

NBC's website earlier in the day because gymnastics are a "protected" event, purposely

saved for prime time broadcast (Yoder, 2012). Events such as gymnastics are saved for

prime time broadcast because of their popularity with the traditional television broadcast

audience and the advertising revenue they generate for NBC. The critiques from the

Twitter audience also included complaints about a perceived over-abundance of

commercial breaks during televised and online streaming events, which not only delayed

but shortened the content broadcasted. The perception of too much advertising also made

the audience feel NBC was not serving them and that they needed to go find coverage of

the Olympics in other ways, such as on Twitter.

Spoilers

Commercial breaks also spawned other controversies and critiques of the tape

delayed Olympic coverage—spoilers. NBC's airing of a Today show promotion spot for

an interview with gold medalist Missy Franklin only minutes before airing her gold-

medal race. This oversight in programming ignited a storm of tweets proclaiming that the

spoiler was unforgivable to viewers due to the spot revealing Franklin's win. The

audience was furious and tweets reflected its anger:

Wow. NBC just ran a commercial for the today show tomorrow re Missy

Franklin's gold RIGHT BEFORE THEY AIR HER RACE #nbcfail. (Dan

Feldman, @dfeldman53, July 30, 2012)

The Franklin spoiler was not the only time NBC spoiled the results of events it had not

aired yet, much to the agitation of viewers. Other spoilers included the outcome of a race

that featured American swimmers Ryan Lochte and Michael Phelps competing against

each other.

Good lord. NBC nightly news is reporting that Lochte beat Phelps. AND

THEY HAVEN'T SHOWN IT YET. #nbcfail. (Laura Seay, @texasinafrica, July

28, 2012).

Another Twitter audience member turned critic blasted the network for not being more

sensitive to its own time delay especially for those spending time away from the Internet

avoiding coverage that would tell the results from other media outlets:

It's one thing for NBC to tape the big events for primetime (sic), but for them to

announce the results ON NBC before they air is lunacy. #NBCfail. (Will Devlin,

@wdevlin, July 28, 2012)

The audience, enraged by multiple spoilers over the course of the Olympics, increased

the intensity of scrutiny they placed on NBC's coverage. Acting as the audience

gatekeepers, the audience compared NBC to other struggling media platforms, such as

print, in saying NBC was behind the times.

In this age of social media, @nytimes posts tomorrow's stories today but @NBC

broadcasts today's Olympic events tomorrow! #NBCfail. (Luc Herlitz,

@lucherlitz, July 30, 2012)

The audience gatekeepers, in dealing with the spoilers, made it clear with their critiques of NBC: the network, for all its promoting and touting of its digital and social media coverage, was inept—unable to provide the audience with the coverage that was desired. Consequently, the audience gatekeeped the Olympics themselves and critiqued NBC simultaneously.

<div align="center">NBC's Response</div>

With the audience critiquing NBC on Twitter as well as focusing on Olympic events and athletes not covered by NBC, some attention was placed on the negative aspects of the network's decisions. NBC, however, never directly addressed the concerns and interests of the Twitter audience. With NBC ignoring the negative critiques surrounding its coverage of the Olympics, the network missed an opportunity to engage the audience in the social media platform they had partnered with as the "official narrator of the Olympics" (Ovide, 2012). Instead of addressing the Twitter audience in the platform where critiques were coming from and where the audience was acting as a gatekeeper, NBC was busy constructing a one-sided review of its coverage that focused on the record level ratings and revenue numbers, which was what NBC used to define success.

While it appears that the audience had no power as NBC generally ignored the critiques, the audience did indeed have power. As audience gatekeepers, the audience is able to reach mass audiences on social media. Just because one media entity ignored the audience does not mean other media organizations did. Social media opened the "gates," presenting the audience with the opportunity to have a voice immediately and in meaningful, visible fashion. When the audience spoke up, using the #NBCFail hashtag,

countless media organizations such as *Deadspin*, *Slate*, and *The New York Times* picked up on the audience feedback (Crupi, 2012; Jarvis, 2012a; Poggi, 2012; Sandomir, 2012; Sherman, 2012; Titlow, 2012). In this way, the audience was a gatekeeper of the traditional gatekeepers. The traditional gatekeepers started covering NBC's coverage because of the popularity of the audience's counter-narrative through the #NBCFail hashtag. Despite NBC attempting to gatekeep, the narrative changed from NBC's hype and glitz to the audience's critique. Information—a different narrative—created by the audience got out beyond the gates of NBC. Consequently, the NBC response only further solidified audience gatekeeping in post-broadcasting.

Instead of engaging and responding to the critiques of the Twitter audience as well as addressing its varied interests, NBC relied on multiple press releases as its response. These press releases emphasized the record ratings, revenue earned from the ratings as well as showing which markets were the strongest in the Nielsen ratings. Consequently, the focus was not on the content and the interests of the audience, whom NBC was ultimately serving. Rather, the focus of NBC's response was on high ratings and the level of revenue earned through. Further, NBC lost focus of its goal of creating a social media Olympics in these press releases, indicating its dedication to a post-broadcasting model was not as strong as it had been before the Olympics began.

NBC's response via the press releases, while built on the record Nielson ratings, website hits, streaming users and, application users, NBC was afforded the opportunity to build its case as to why its Olympic coverage was the best ever despite the Twitter audience's critiques. The only information cited in the network's efforts came from the official gates, which NBC controlled. NBC did not attempt to use what the audience was

talking about on Twitter, even the positive feedback, as part of its response. To support the network's claims, NBC bragged that the 2012 Olympics were one of the "Most watched US TV event ever" (Thompson, 2012). Through this argumentation in the press releases, NBC attempted to convince people that its decisions on the broadcasts were more in line with what the audience wanted than the Twitter audience was discussing. Even before the opening ceremonies, NBC Sports Group Chairman Mark Lazarus stressed the live streaming of "every athletic event," ignoring that some events are saved for prime time. Further, Lazarus emphasized the 3,500 hours of content NBC planned to broadcast, including all 32 sports and 302 medals (NBC Universal Surpasses, 2012). The focus, while playing up the online presence of coverage and the post-broadcasting model that NBC was experimenting with, was on the revenue, not the audience experience with the online presence and its ability to customize the content to its interests rather than the network's.

In many of NBC's press releases (NBC Universal Surpasses, 2012; Olympics Offer Unprecedented, 2012), Lazarus boasted about the plan in place to bring the most coverage of the Olympics in the history of U.S. broadcasting. He emphasized live coverage and technology as well as the promotional success of the Olympics through social media and interaction between the audience, NBC, the IOC, and athletes throughout the Games:

> NBC Olympics has also partnered with Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Shazam
> to extend its coverage onto these popular social media platforms for the 2012
> London Olympics. The social media partnerships allow the NBC Sports Group to

communicate directly with the fans of the Olympics and celebrate the Games with

the viewers in new and unique ways. (NBC Airs Most Watched, 2012)

Yet, even with the apparent interest in the post-broadcasting model and allowing the

audience to customize its Olympic coverage, NBC was most concerned about prime time

on the traditional broadcast network channel. Lazarus stated that NBC's plan to give the

audience options in choosing how it wanted to watch the Olympics was working (NBC

Airs Most Watched, 2012; NBC Through First Week, 2012). In an early press release,

Lazarus said, "The audience number for the London Opening Ceremony is a great early

sign that our strategy of driving people to watch NBC in primetime is working" (NBC

Airs Most Watched, 2012, para.1). According to Lazarus, the plan was to drive the

audience back to NBC in prime time, not use the post-broadcasting model and use the

Internet or social media to drive NBC into a new era of Olympic coverage as the network

had previously indicated. Consequently, NBC paid for this decision with the Twitter

audience providing critiques and acting as its own gatekeepers by discussing content they

wanted to see.

<center>Did NBC Fail?</center>

Despite NBC's use of Twitter and offering online streaming of Olympic events,

the audience's critiques and general discussion of the coverage indicated room for

improvement. With the critiques, particularly #NBCFail, a popular trend on Twitter

throughout the Olympics, from the audience, NBC's success or failure comes into

question.

From the audience perspective, NBC failed to provide the coverage that was

expected and promised. Open access to the live stream through NBC's website was not

available. Viewers had to log-in with their cable or satellite account to watch the live stream. Without the live stream, viewers essentially had to wait until prime time to view events that NBC decided the audience wanted to see. Consequently, the audience acted as its own gatekeepers when it came to athletes, events, and coverage regarding non U.S. countries. Twitter served as a forum for the audience to consume the content they wanted and was not provided or was accessible from NBC.

In addition, Twitter allowed the audience to have a voice in the process of producing Olympic coverage. The audience critiques gave NBC immediate feedback about what was working in its broadcasts, what was not working, and what the audience wanted to see. However, NBC did not utilize the connection with the Twitter audience and adjust how the network presented the Olympics through its online and traditional television broadcasts to fit the post-broadcasting model previously promised to the audience. In 2011, Lazarus sounded on board with a post-broadcasting model that allowed the audience control of the gates by selecting which content to select: "We have a smart plan to let the superfan watch events live and not detract from prime time," Lazarus said. "We don't think that streaming will affect the shared experience of families watching together at night" (Sandomir, 2011). By 2012, however, Lazarus was not engaged with that "superfan" audience that seemed so important in 2011.

Instead, NBC ignored the audience critiques and left the audience to gatekeep Olympic coverage on its own according to its own interests. When Lazarus did respond to critiques of decisions he made, and NBC's coverage, he issued statements via press releases. Rather than using social media, the originating source of criticism, Lazarus and NBC used traditional means to control the gate. Consequently, NBC was gatekeeping the

wrong gate. By gatekeeping the wrong gate, NBC demonstrated its inability to fully

comprehend how to use new media and social media as gatekeepers. Only a few days into

the Olympics, Lazarus told *The New York Times* on August 2 that NBC was aware of the

complaints on Twitter and monitoring the conversation by the "very vocal minority"

about NBC's live streaming and tape-delay programming strategy (Crupi, 2012). Lazarus

also said, "The overwhelming majority of users are voting with their clickers and mouses.

The silent majority has been with us [emphasis added]" (Crupi, 2012). In a digital world,

however, what does a silent majority truly say about any content offered by NBC? The

minority is the one who does not get heard, so a silent majority is not something to brag

about. In fact, a silent majority speaks ill of NBC's response.

For NBC, its coverage of the Olympics was a complete success. Not only did the

network make money, but it also set ratings records. Beyond the ratings and the revenue,

however, NBC also achieved its goal of navigating social media for the first time. The

addition of social media platforms into the network's Olympic coverage made the

audience feel they were more active participants in the coverage presented to them.

However, this feeling was more an illusion of engagement rather than real engagement as

a post-broadcasting model would support.

<div align="center">A Place for Audience Gatekeepers</div>

The audience's ability to gatekeep content is an important one as more and more

people watch television online and use social media. Consequently, the ability to

customize content and broadcast the way an audience wants to is an important element to

broadcasting live sporting events, and in the future it will play an even more important

role. The audience gatekeeping model in post-broadcasting outlines how the audience can

customize its Olympic coverage through creating its own content and talking to other audience members through social media.

In the case of the 2012 Olympics, social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook demonstrated how they have fundamentally changed the way that most people consume media by making information available quickly and conveniently. Many get information instantly, for free, and with few restrictions. People no longer have to wait for the evening news or tomorrow's newspaper. The 24-hour news cycle and technology allows people to hear about the news as it happens. In the Olympics people find out the results of an event much quicker than they used to. Because of social media this kind of information is almost impossible to hide from—it is instantaneously disseminated globally. NBC did not fully comprehend the importance of utilizing a post-broadcasting model to allow the audience to make decisions about how to view the broadcast. Consequently, the US received mostly tape delayed events despite the promise of live video streaming options and even with the live streaming options, viewers had to log in through cable and satellite provider accounts. Even with multiple channels such as CNBC, MSNBC and BRAVO, there were essentially no significant live events broadcast by NBC. This was one of the big complaints, prompting the #NBCFail tweets.

People expected more in 2012. Technology allowed for rapid communication and dissemination of information. It can also open access to information to the masses and allow the audience to decide what they want to watch and when. In a digital world where instant updates in real time are the norm, coverage of the Olympics should be the same. The audience made that clear through its tweets during the 2012 Olympics. The audience wanted to have more options and be able to view events, athletes and, coverage of a

variety of countries. In short, Twitter allowed the audience to act as gatekeepers of content they wanted to see but also advocated for even more influence over content. The audience, consequently, gained control of a gate and the gatekeeping function in the process. Despite being largely ignored by NBC, the audience gatekeepers were not ignored by other media sources which supported the counter-narrative the audience provided to the NBC Olympic coverage. While Bruns (2005) argues that the audience gatekeepers only watch the gates and publicize existent content, the 2012 Olympics demonstrate otherwise. The audience gatekeepers not only create content, but it also influences traditional gatekeeper's content.

The audience gatekeepers affected content through its social media presence. Traditional gatekeepers such as *The New York Times* and *The Atlantic* as well as *Deadspin*, *Mashable*, and other online gatekeepers, covered the audience's tweets. Consequently, the information the audience was attempting to disseminate on Twitter— its counter-narrative to NBC's coverage—was further disseminated through traditional gatekeepers. In this sense, the audience gatekeepers were successful in gatekeeping the traditional gatekeepers. The traditional gatekeeper's coverage of the audience's counter-narrative to NBC's Olympic content was a significant event for applying gatekeeping theory to social media as well as post-broadcasting. Traditional gatekeepers covering the audience's Olympic content was significant because it demonstrated the credibility and influence audience gatekeepers can have on traditional gatekeepers even when one ignores the audience.

The audience gatekeeping model in post-broadcasting was supported in the analysis of the audience's tweets during the 2012 Olympics. Interested audience members

acted as gatekeepers in similar fashion to journalists and media organizations covering the Olympics. The audience created content through the selection of information and then disseminated it through social media—Twitter being the platform analyzed in this chapter—to other audience members, journalists and media organizations. Simultaneously, the audience created a counter-narrative through its tweets—especially #NBCFail—to that of the traditional gatekeeper, NBC, which was relying upon traditional gatekeeping methods and not engaging with the audience via social media. While the audience may not have as much power as the traditional gatekeepers, who maintain firm control of many more gates, the 2012 Olympics displayed the power the audience does have. Without the resources that NBC invested in the Olympics, which was in excess of $1 billion for the exclusive broadcasting rights alone, the audience was able to advance gatekeeping online. Previously, audience members could only talk about events and information with those in the room or those they could call or email. Social media increased the reach of the audience and enhanced its voice in the feedback loop by making people's opinions visible on Twitter. Goode (2009) argued that information no longer remains scarce with the online environment and that gatekeeping was a matter of publicizing and obtaining both attention as well as visibility. Twitter helped the audience gatekeepers overcome problems of attention and visibility that traditional gatekeeping models create. In 2012, the audience created its own coverage and had attention and visibility brought to it by traditional gatekeepers covering the audience gatekeepers (Laird, 2012; Poggi, 2012; Stewart, 2012; Titlow, 2012; Yoder, 2012). The Olympic coverage of the audience gatekeepers varied in interest and provided a diverse alternative narrative of coverage on Twitter compared to that of NBC.

As the exclusive broadcaster of the Olympics in the U.S., it is NBC's duty to provide the best coverage it can to its audience. People often have choices in television providers, buying cable or satellite subscriptions, but they had little choice in the decisions made by NBC executives concerning the coverage they viewed. While the audience did not have a choice in whom the traditional gatekeeper was and how NBC broadcast the Olympics, the audience did have the ability to gatekeep the Games on social media. In gatekeeping the social Games, the audience diluted NBC's illusion of interactivity and customization of content the network had promised the audience. The audience had its influence regarding how the Games were presented in its own coverage through Twitter, acting as its own gatekeeper of coverage through discussion of the events, athletes and countries that interested them. However, people have higher expectations because of access to information that technology has brought. Jarvis argued this point on his blog: "That is precisely why they're [the audience] so mad that NBC is not showing the hottest contests live, because that's what they expect a great channel to give them: the best, right now" (Jarvis, 2012b). By not showing events live and not subscribing to the post-broadcasting model they promised to the audience, NBC forced the audience to become even more active in the coverage process through the social media platforms. The result of NBC forcing the audience to become more active in the coverage process was the development of the audience in the gatekeeping role. As social media usage continues to grow and the desire for a post-broadcasting model that gives the audience the full ability to choose which content it wants to view the role audience gatekeepers will continue to grow.

Gatekeeping has been transformed by social media as well as the 2012 Olympic coverage by NBC. Information no longer only passes through official gatekeepers such as NBC. The audience has a gate and demands for customizable content. If official gatekeepers recognize the desire for customizable content and the audience's ability to gatekeep, creating a new post-broadcasting model for coverage of events such as the Olympics, it could be a financial windfall. The continuation to ignore the audience gatekeepers could spell doom in the form of being completely replaced by someone who simply gatekeeps information in a better way that gives the audience what they want.

CHAPTER VII

THE FUTURE OF OLYMPICS (POST)-BROADCASTING

In the traditional model of gatekeeping, the power over who controlled information was concentrated in a small number of media owners and their organizations (Bagidikian, 2004). The structure and process of producing information as well as the dissemination of that information for public consumption changed little over the course of many decades. Information flowed down a hierarchy of editors, journalists, and other staff who selected and produced the information audiences would consume (Bruns, 2008; Eberhard, 1982; Evensen, 1997; Hickey, 1966, 1968; Hough, 1995; Itule & Anderson, 2007; Lewin, 1947; Shoemaker & Vos, 2009; White, 1950). However, the resistance to change has been challenged by the Internet. Traditional gatekeeping, in which journalists and media organizations control the selection of information and how it is disseminated, is not exempt from the influence of both social media platforms such as Twitter and a shift toward post-broadcasting. The latest technological advancements, including the development of social media platforms on the Internet, are still on-going. Many people, audiences to journalists and media organizations, have continued to find ways to include the social media platforms in information dissemination processes. Consequently, the use of social media platforms and post-broadcasting models in the dissemination of information are still in flux. However, social media's influence is significantly shaping who is a gatekeeper, how information is disseminated, to whom and when the information is consumed. The social media influence has given the audience the ability to act as a traditional gatekeeper in selecting information to disseminate as well as the capacity to deliver whatever content they selected.

Previous research by scholars attempted to theorize the role of audiences in the gatekeeping process and have found that audiences play an important role in setting public agendas that are distinct from the role played by professional journalists (Barzilai-Nahon, 2008; Shoemaker & Vos, 2009). This chapter builds on the previous two chapters in discussing gatekeeping in a post-broadcasting television world, especially the audience's role as a gatekeeper. With NBC and the audience's role as gatekeepers in mind, this chapter places audience gatekeeping and post-broadcasting into a larger context. A significant focus of this discussion links audience gatekeeping and post-broadcasting in describing what future broadcasting models may look like with the audience acting as gatekeepers. This discussion could not take place without considering the importance of interactivity and audience involvement in broadcasts through social media platforms. Social media platforms such as Twitter are included in the discussion of post-broadcasting efforts by media organizations as they experiment with the platforms. The examples of post-broadcasting endeavors are also compared to NBC's strategy for broadcasting the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics. Consequently, the focus of this chapter is on the future of (post-) broadcasting, the relationship between the audience and broadcasters moving forward and how social media helps both the broadcaster and the audience gatekeepers.

<div align="center">Protecting an Asset</div>

In a digital age where audience members are able to act as its own gatekeepers, on the same level as traditional gatekeepers, many questions arise surrounding traditional gatekeepers, information, the gatekeeping process, and what traditional gatekeepers are actually protecting by not adapting to a new model of gatekeeping that embraces social

media and audience interaction. Traditional gatekeepers may seek to control both gatekeeping processes as well as information, but the gatekeeping process is merely a vehicle toward turning a profit. Information is similar to food as it sustains both the audience and traditional gatekeepers alike (Lewin, 1947). Everyone from traditional gatekeepers to audience members rely on information. Traditional gatekeepers require control of information to ensure the finished product, information that is disseminated to the mass audience, is paid for. Media organizations and the products they produce, selling information to the public, then, are important elements to local, state, and national economies (McCombs, 1972). Therefore, it is natural for traditional gatekeepers to attempt to protect its investment in information dissemination by earning revenue.

Simultaneously, the information disseminated by the traditional gatekeepers is critical to the public because people cannot live without information. According to McKee (2003), information helps people to make sense of the world. Much like food keeps people alive, information helps to keep the public alive by assisting people in making decisions on how to live its daily lives. Therefore, social media such as Twitter allows the public to have the means to share information with each other for free and instantly. Without having to pay for information in which audiences traditionally received from the media, the public is then potentially able to compete with the traditional gatekeepers on equal footing.

With the audience having the capability to perform the same tasks, gatekeeper, as the traditional gatekeepers a problem arises. Media scholar Henry Jenkins (2002) noted this problem in discussing the need for media organizations to protect its assets: "It would be naïve to assume that powerful conglomerates will not protect their own interests as

they enter this new media marketplace, but at the same time, audiences are gaining greater power and autonomy as they enter into the new knowledge culture" (Jenkins, 2002, pp. 80-81). The new autonomy in the knowledge culture, as Jenkins describes, changes the financial dynamic between traditional gatekeepers, revenue, and the mass audience. In many ways, the traditional gatekeeping process, in which journalists and media organizations hold control over the gates and dissemination of information to a mass audience, remains intact despite coming under fire from social media and the Internet. Traditional gatekeeping functions still occur, but the context surrounding the performance of traditional gatekeeping functions has changed. Information must still be selected and work its way through a hierarchy before dissemination to the mass audience.

Social media and the Internet has not changed that process much for traditional gatekeepers—journalists and media organizations. Social media may have sped up the timeline in how quickly the gatekeeping process occurs and the audience consumes the information, but gatekeeping and consumption remain. Now, however, traditional gatekeepers are in competition with audience members who also have social media accounts and are able to disseminate information to the mass audience. Social media has changed the consumption habits of the mass audience, particularly how often information is consumed. According to Jones (2010), "In an era of media convergence, including social networking, streaming video, email, blogging, and so forth, the conception that television is synonymous with passivity is no longer tenable" (p. 25). The audience is active and media organizations must adapt to the audience being a part of the process; new ways of disseminating information means new dynamics between audiences, information and gatekeepers. The change in the relationship between audience and

information consequently dictates a change in how media organizations profit from information.

The Audience Gatekeepers

The media, especially television and the Internet, as cultural entities, represent many things to different people. Social media certainly can be a teacher, a companion, or a babysitter, but it can be much more. Politicians noted social media as an instantaneous focus group during the 2014 State of the Union address by President Obama (Parker, 2014). As the president addressed the nation, other politicians used Twitter as a direct link to their audience. Through tweeting during the speech, politicians were able to engage with the audience and read what the audience wanted to talk about in regards to what was being said. The use of Twitter by politicians removed the gates between political leaders and the audience. As outlined by the audience gatekeeping model in post-broadcasting, the audience was on the same level as traditional gatekeepers because they were able to decide which pieces of information to talk about with Congress members who they may not necessarily have access to normally. Twitter provided the audience with a space to have its voice heard. In some cases they were able to select the information they wanted to talk about with members of Congress even if those Congress members using Twitter did not respond to specific interests. The audience during the State of the Union, much like the audience during the Olympics, consequently, became gatekeepers. The audience was not just a passive viewer of the Olympics or the State of the Union. Audiences are active and gatekeep on its own in a post-broadcasting world as evidenced by the 2012 Olympics and the 2014 State of the Union address.

Today, traditional television broadcasts—those on network or cable and satellite— can be described as a pervasive medium on which content and information is accessed (Faber, 2011). Audience members are able to access the content after paying a subscription fee to the cable company, and since there is virtually no limit to the amount of television programming the audience can consume, traditional television remains different from mediums such as newspapers or movies, which generally are paid for on a pay per use basis (Lotz, 2007). Television had certain limitations, however, forcing the audience to consume content at certain time slots as dictated by the network airing the programming. Technological advancements since the early days of television in the 1950s, including the VCR and pay-per-view, allowed for more power in the audience's hands by creating niche content (Faber, 2011). The creation of niche content helped to diversify programming but also challenged television networks to maintain its connection and relevance with the audience (Caldwell, 2004). The addition of DVR in combination, video-on-demand, and live streaming technologies further provided easy access customizable television content for many viewers. Social media furthered the premise of customizable content by creating opportunities for the audience to gatekeep.

According to Lotz (2007), these technological advancements have changed the viewing behavior of many audience members. Among the audience behaviors that have changed is the involvement and engagement in the broadcast of content. The audience, during the 2012 Olympics, demonstrated that they are no longer just passive viewers of the content NBC chose to present. Instead, the audience played a role in the narrative of the Games by tweeting about information they cared about. The audience also played a role in the narrative of the Olympic coverage through the #NBCFail hashtag which

critiqued NBC's coverage and created a counter-narrative to the network's coverage. By tweeting, its method of dissemination, about the things that interested them and challenging NBC's narrative, the audience added to the information available. This was critical because some of the audience's content was not covered by NBC. The addition of information from members of the audience was a significant moment for social media and the audience gatekeeping model in post-broadcasting because many more people were able to learn about athletes, events, results, and countries that NBC did not focus on. The active participation in Olympic coverage by the audience highlighted the change in gatekeeping models from the traditional gatekeeping model that has the audience passively consuming information to my audience gatekeeping model in post-broadcasting where the audience is active in selecting information, creating content, and disseminating that customized content to the mass audience.

Post-broadcast is driven by innovation and reinvention of existing broadcasting platforms with the assistance of new technology (Merrin, 2009). According to Aslinger (2009), post-broadcasting makes the broadcast of content possible across multiple distribution channels. A major tenant of post-broadcasting is the audience's ability to customize content to their preferences. Aslinger (2009) noted that it was this capability of content customization that could reduce the power of traditional broadcast television, and thereby extension, traditional gatekeepers. The potential to reduce the power of the traditional gatekeepers occurs when the audience becomes a gatekeeper and able to make decisions regarding content that they have not had before. When the audience became a gatekeeper during the 2012 Olympics, it gained control on a large scale over coverage it had not had before.

The Internet and social media are vehicles that make post-broadcasting possible. For example, the Internet combines traditional television broadcasts with social media platforms for people to live stream content. Further, people are able to select the content to view, giving them the flexibility to personalize content to match individual tastes. Post-broadcasting becomes connected with audience gatekeeping as a result of the individual customization of content. With the capability to select which content to view, when to view it, and which platform, online or via traditional television broadcast, the audience becomes a gatekeeper. Having the ability to customize content and acting as a gatekeeper also changes the media consumption habits of the audience. The audience is able to view what they want, when they want, and how they want which was not the case previously.

With changes in viewers' television consumption habits, television networks must adapt to the viewing preferences of the audience. The audience is concerned with choices: what to consume, when to consume content, and where to watch (Chamberlain, 2011; Lotz, 2007). The audience wanted Olympic content live, more diverse coverage, and more options beyond traditional television broadcasts on NBC. The audience wanted to make decisions about what they were viewing, when, and how they were viewing it. Uricchio (2009) noted the need to recognize the power in audience decision making: "There is a significant shift in agency (producer-controlled flow as distinct from user-generated flow), and a shift from flow as default to flow as a condition that requires active selection" (Uricchio, 2009, p. 33). It is the audience's desire and ability to actively select content, acting as its own gatekeepers that should have many networks concerned about broadcasting's landscape changes.

The networks should be concerned about landscape changes because of the addition of the audience as gatekeepers. Media scholar Jay Rosen (2006) described the person consuming information and using dissemination skills via the Internet and social media just like traditional gatekeepers have done for decades as "the people formerly known as the audience" (n.p.). This distinction is important to the audience gatekeeping model in post-broadcasting from the previous chapter in establishing the audience as more than just an audience. Anyone who uses social media and the Internet can now perform "random acts of journalism" (Lasica, 2003, p. 71). Further, anyone can now become an audience gatekeeper based on their selection of information and disseminating the information selected. This process allows the audience to create its own narrative. In this way, social media provides the audience a vehicle to act as a gatekeeper. Rosen (2006) noted that the audience performing these tasks was a vital addition to news coverage. More significantly, the audience's ability to act as a gatekeeper challenges the traditional hierarchy of the media industry. The audience creating a counter-narrative to NBC's Olympic coverage through its tweets, the #NBCFail hashtag for example, challenged the hierarchy established by traditional gatekeepers. A challenge of this sort, where the audience gains control of gatekeeping processes, not only changes the gatekeeping model to include the audience on the same level as the journalists and media organizations, but it also applies pressure to traditional gatekeepers to adjust to the new environment by giving the audience more ability to participate and customize content. Such a challenge could also result in a significant change to the traditional gatekeeper's revenue stream.

NBC, Advertising and Post-Broadcasting

Networks are concerned about revenue and the shift from the traditional broadcast model to a post-broadcasting model that emphasizes the audience's ability to customize the content they consume by selecting when, where and how to consume the content of their choosing. At the end of the day, all content contains information, which is what broadcasters are selling. The concern of broadcasters, in large part, is over ratings, which are often tied to revenue. Revenue produced from advertising dramatically increases during significant events such as Presidential election years or the Olympics when there are more viewers, driving the ratings higher (Downey, 2002; Television Bureau, 2002). According to Downey (2002), advertising was responsible for $1.27 billion in revenue for the 2002 Olympics. In 2012 advertising was a significant factor for NBC. The network sold more than $1 billion in advertisements, including more than $60 million of advertising for the online video streaming (Svensson, 2012). Consequently, the network made a small profit after losing more than $200 million in 2010 (Clarke, 2013). However, NBC Sports chairman Mark Lazarus did not think it was possible to maintain ratings, and therefore the revenue, by airing content live; rather, he insisted NBC must tape-delay Olympic coverage until prime time when ratings will be the highest (Panja, 2013; Sandomir, 2011). Many other NBC executives disagree with Lazarus. The network's own research conflicts with Lazarus' statements, indicating airing content liveand giving content customization abilities to the audience actually increased viewership in prime time Olympic coverage for the 2012 London Games. These increase in viewership occurred despite NBC's online limitations on content access, requiring a cable or satellite subscription to log into live streams. The broadcasting strategy for the 2014 Sochi Winter

Olympics has not changed any for NBC. In fact, NBC will actually earn a profit as they did in 2012.

The 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics also netted NBC enough advertising revenue—expecting a sellout of advertising space— that the network made money from the Winter Games for the first time (Clarke, 2013). The anticipated sell-out of advertising spots for the Winter Olympics for the first time because of the Internet coverage NBC provided, underscored the strength and power that online content holds. Online content can be customized to fit the interest of the audience, placing the audience as gatekeepers of its own coverage, rather than NBC dictating what the audience will watch, when, and how they will watch it.

The Internet played a significant role in the presentation of content. The Internet, according to Bellante, Vilardi, and Rossi (2013), has been increasingly used as a platform to distribute content to mass audiences. Consequently, the online platform provides networks and media companies another way to generate advertising revenue as well to boost profits in a post-broadcasting world. Turner and Tay (2009) noted that the use of multiplatform broadcasting in which content is broadcasted in several ways at the same time—such as live streaming and traditional television broadcasts—has been a significant financial windfall. For this form of post-broadcasting to work, however, broadcasting companies must embrace the technology that allows for multiple ways to view content. Further, the multiple ways for the audience to view content, open up more advertising opportunities for broadcasters to earn revenue from.

By using online advertising to supplement the traditional television broadcast advertising, NBC would be able to harness the growing post-broadcasting model

presentation of the Games for profit. The growth of such advertisement should only continue to increase as more people choose to consume content on its smartphones, computers, and other digital devices. Advertisement revenue would not be the only way NBC would be able to earn revenue, however. In 2011, a PEW Research study found 71% of adults were using video sharing websites such as YouTube (Moore, 2011). By 2013, audience members were spending more than $1.5 billion in subscription fees to online video streaming services such as Netflix and Amazon for access to content 24 hours a day (Gottfried, 2013). The amount of money audience members are expected to spend on online video streaming services in the next several years is estimated to increase to more than $4 billion (Gottfried, 2013), providing even more revenue to those who offer streaming of its content.

However, the path is a dangerous one. Both NBC and ABC attempted to create a website portal similar to AOL in which the audience, seeking content, would be exposed to advertising (Motavilli, 2002). The efforts failed, much like NBC's previous attempt at broadcasting the Olympics on a pay-per-view channel (Horne & Whannel, 2012; Owens, 2006). According to Motavilli (2002), the networks did not fully understand that the usual content distribution system at the time did not translate well to the web portals they designed. The audience was more concerned with the user experience and not the content itself (Motavalli, 2002). In other words, there are many audiences or user groups with different sets of media consumption preferences. The development of social media can help separate past attempts by NBC and ABC to create a portal where audience members can view video content online. According to a 2013 PEW Research study, social media was the main force in the increase in online video streaming (Purcell, 2013).

Consequently, social media has clout in shaping the future of post-broadcasting of sporting events such as the Olympics.

<div align="center">How Twitter Helps NBC Olympic Coverage</div>

Social media helped NBC's Olympic coverage in several ways. As the network gains more experience in working with Twitter during Olympic coverage, the more effective their post-broadcasting strategy will be executed. To begin with, Twitter allowed NBC to be an online gatekeeper of Olympic information. The social media presence, consequently, allowed NBC to expand its traditional broadcast coverage to the digital world with little risk of losing focus from the traditional television broadcast narrative. Rather, NBC was able to use social media, its Twitter account, to appeal to as many as possible. By appealing to as many people as possible, NBC was able to attempt to drive the audience back to the traditional television broadcast.

In addition, the social media presence gave NBC another vehicle to convince audience members to view the traditional television broadcast coverage in prime time. NBC research indicates a significant success rate in online audience members consuming nearly twice the amount of Olympic coverage than those who only watched the traditional television broadcast (Fixmer et al., 2014). If the traditional television broadcast did not appeal to the audience, there were other options that NBC could promote. The network's Twitter account provided online streaming links, photos, and real-time results. The multiple social media, online and traditional broadcast television options for coverage benefitted NBC because at least some amount of content could appeal to audience members regardless of their media consumption preferences. It appears that NBC researchers feel the relationship between traditional television

broadcasts of Olympic coverage and online Olympic coverage consumption fed off each other (Fixmer et al., 2014). In this way, Twitter helped NBC's coverage by appealing to both online audiences, traditional television broadcast audiences and those who consumed Olympic content via both platforms.

However, it is impossible to assume that the audience will be relatively homogenous in regards to interests and preferences in how media or information is consumed. NBC realized this in constructing content to appeal to as many people as possible. Simultaneously, designing content that appeals to as wide of an audience as possible has its flaws. Albarran (2004) argued that the media must anticipate an ever-changing and evolving audience, particularly as lifestyles change from generation to generation: "As people live longer and obtain more discretionary income, spending on media will likely rise. These shifts in audience composition and makeup will present new pressures on media firms to develop content that will appeal to these unique and differing audiences" (Albarran, 2004, p. 299). NBC used its prime time Olympic coverage to appeal to the widest range of audience members as possible. While the 2012 London Summer Olympics were the most watched in history, the online content—where viewership growth was significant—remained underdeveloped and underappreciated. The under appreciation becomes more apparent when considering NBC's emphasis on traditional television broadcast ratings. The network focused on touting the record traditional television broadcast ratings, barely mentioning the online streaming numbers in press releases, if at all (200 million, August 7, 2012; Through 16 days, August 12, 2012; Through the first week, August 4, 2012). Further, NBC did not publicly take any note of the online numbers from 2012 until the network was promoting the Winter

Olympics the week before the opening ceremonies in Sochi, two years after the London Games.

Even though NBC benefited from the social media and online platforms—boosting ratings, revenue, and profits and providing promotional material to hype about previous as well as upcoming online Olympic coverage—the focus remained on the traditional television broadcast. NBC was not the only one who benefitted, however. Twitter also benefitted the audience.

<div align="center">How Twitter Helps the Audience</div>

Twitter and other social media platforms help the audience in many ways. The most important way is that the audience is able to become its own gatekeeper. Alzner (2012) noted that the audience has reached the point that they do not want to be told what content to consume, when to consume it, or how to consume the content. As Alzner noted, the audience wants to be a part of the process of covering events such as the Olympics, and Twitter allows the audience to participate in the process as gatekeepers.

With the audience gaining more access to content and the ability to choose which content they consume and when, post-broadcasting models have taken root for television programming, movies, and sports. The Internet offered media companies and sports leagues another way to connect audiences and advertisers, as well. Albarran (2004) noted that the Internet was a significant way to "build and enhance brand development" (p. 298) through the content offered to the audience before many were concerned with online presence. By 2005, however, audience interest in online content and the ability to act as its own gatekeeper grew. With media companies developing social media platforms for

the audience to create content on, the audience was able to take control of some of the gates.

More than taking control of some gates in the gatekeeping process, Twitter made it possible for the audience to share in an active, engaged mass viewing of content. Deller (2011) noted the significance of Twitter in creating an active, shared viewing of content by millions of people: "One of the interesting features of tweeting during television watching is that it largely requires TV must be watched at the time of broadcast, in the presence of other Twitter users" (p. 222). It is this shared, active experience of tweeting as an event unfolds live that entrenches the audience as a gatekeeper. During the 2012 Olympics, the audience tweeted about an array of topics in which they were the gatekeepers. The audience talked about athletes, countries, events, and information that NBC did not spend much time on, if at all. In this way, Twitter helped the audience. The audience not only became an audience but also gained enriched Olympic coverage. The audience was also able to consume more diverse content and share in the experience with many others who were not in the same room as them. Unlike Deller's (2011) argument, however, the audience does not need to have a television to be a gatekeeper. Whether the audience is viewing content via traditional television platforms or online, Twitter connects people, allows them to share information as well as create content to discuss the event in real time as it unfolds. Twitter was not the only Internet-based platform to contribute to the audience taking control of gates, however. Other post-broadcasting and socially-based websites helped put the audience in position to act as its own gatekeeper and shape the future of media coverage of events.

Linking the Audience and Post-Broadcasting

YouTube, a video sharing platform in which the audience becomes the content provider by posting videos, is free to use and access. YouTube was also one of the first post-broadcasting websites to become popular in the mid-2000s. The audience is not only the gatekeeper by creating the content but also is the gatekeeper by having the ability to choose which content to view and when without limitation. Established in 2005, YouTube quickly became one of the fastest growing websites and most trafficked website (Cheng, Dale, & Liu, 2007). In a short period of time, YouTube helped to change the landscape of broadcasting by placing all the power in the hands of the audience rather than the traditional distribution system (Terry, 2006). While traditional gatekeepers produce content on YouTube, they are on the same level as the audience because of the ability of the audience to select which content to view and when. The post-broadcasting model present in YouTube, which allows the audience to act as gatekeepers, presents the opportunity to the audience to find content that satisfies their interests (Baluja et al., 2008). Consequently, the post-broadcasting model makes sense for both mass audiences as well as niche audiences simultaneously. The post-broadcasting model makes sense because content can be created to appeal to everyone in the audience or a select few in a specific demographic. However, the individual choice—the gatekeeping function employed by the audience—determines the content selected to view. Twitter is similar to YouTube in these ways where content can appeal to mass audiences as well as niche audiences simultaneously. The audience is able to select content it's interested in on both mediums, customizing what they want to watch, when they watch it, and how they watch the content.

Others joined YouTube in the post-broadcasting world by opening up catalogs of content for the audience to choose from when they wish to view. Some of these companies maintained a free to access model like YouTube, while others maintained a subscription based version of the model much like cable and satellite providers.

Netflix, a DVD rental company, turned to online streaming of its large catalog of movies and television programs while maintaining its subscription based model created competition with the user-generated content on YouTube. Not to be outdone, another site, Hulu, which was free to access but supported by advertising gave the audience another option for streaming content online. Both Netflix and Hulu offered the audience the ability to choose content to view when they wanted, but the audience had to decide whether a subscription fee to gain access to the content on Netflix—much like the fees associated with cable or satellite providers—was worth it. In either case, the audience, though, had the ability to choose the content it wanted. The content was not presented on a schedule that the providers choose as in the case with cable or satellite service. The only restriction was what content was available to the audience to view. Further, Amazon and Apple entered the market and offered video streaming of content from television and movies to the audience for a set price on each program or movie the audience chooses to watch.

Post-Broadcasting in Sports Coverage

Other forms of post-broadcasting broadcasts have been successful in the sporting world. The NFL Redzone, a subscriber fee-based package with cable and satellite providers, jump to games as teams move into scoring position. The emphasis is on

showing the audience every opportunity each team has to score throughout games every week.

The most recent and possibly influential experiment in post-broadcasting comes from World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE), a professional wrestling company. In February 2014, the company launched their own online streaming network. According to their announcement, covered by the Associated Press, the WWE Network allows the audience to stream content 24 hours a day, seven days a week through their computers, smartphones and other digital devices (Gelston, 2014). For only a dollar more than the Netflix subscription fee, $9.99, the WWE Network offers the audience most of the WWE catalog of matches and other related programming as well as access to live streams of all 12 of the company's pay-per-view events (Geltson, 2014). The network is a combination of the Netflix revenue model while adding in a significantly cheaper audience access to the pay-per-view events. This is significant because it not only challenges the pay-per-view model of revenue but also cable and satellite providers control over content. Michelle Wilson, WWE chief revenue and marketing officer, said the WWE believed its post-broadcasting model was the future: "I'm just not convinced the pay-per-view platform is in it for the long term…It's not the best consumer experience" (Geltson, 2014). Wilson also said that the audience does not think of fond things when talking about cable or satellite providers and that the WWE Network would conjure positive thoughts. More importantly, the WWE thought its post-broadcasting model would change the way they do business.

The WWE's post-broadcasting model, combining subscription based fees with audience ability to select nearly any content in the entire WWE catalog including its pay-

per-view events, signals a change in the broadcasting world as much as the audience's adoption of Netflix, YouTube, or other online streaming video services. The audience gains control—acting as its own gatekeeper—of the content. The WWE Network, if successful, also provides the opportunity for other networks to offer content in the same way. NBC could follow with or without the subscription fee and eliminate the controversy over editing practices, lack of live streaming, profits, and more.

CBS and Turner Sports, who already use a post-broadcasting model in its NCAA men's basketball tournament coverage by allowing free access to live streams of each game online, will be experimenting in expanding its post-broadcasting reach. In 2014, Turner will broadcast each of the final four games on three separate network channels (TBS, TNT, and truTV), each specifically dedicated to a team (Ourand, 2013). Each broadcast will have unique elements to each, such as commentators and camera angles, according to Ourand (2013). Turner's executive vice president and COO Lenny Daniels said the venture was about the fan experience: "This is really about giving fans alternate viewing options," he said. "Ratings are always a consideration, but we're not worried about them. We're looking for innovative, forward-thinking ways to present these games" (Ourand, 2013). By offering three distinctly different broadcasts to the audience, viewers can customize their viewing experience by selecting the broadcast that is the most appealing. This style of broadcast also provides a flash of coverage that can be provided on other media platforms.

Twitter's Role in Post-Broadcasting Olympic Coverage

Many broadcasters have partnered with Twitter to provide content and coverage via the social network (Bennett, 2012; Bercovici, 2013). NBC was one such network to

partner with Twitter for the 2012 Olympics (Bennett, 2012; Perlroth & Bilton, 2012; Wilson, 2012). In 2014, more than 35 networks had partnered with Twitter to distribute short video clips via Twitter (Bercovici, 2013). The deals are having a significant impact on Twitter, turning the social media platform into more than just a social media website. Twitter is becoming a free to use and free to view premium short video content service. Twitter CEO Dick Costolo felt that Twitter complimented television because both mediums are socially based and engage the audience with the content they are consuming (Bercovici, 2013). Even further, Twitter is offering the short video content while keeping users connected to each other, information, and content. Now that Twitter is a part of media consumption habits, it has the potential to influence content for both audience gatekeepers and traditional gatekeepers. Twitter revenue chief thinks Twitter is a part of a self-sustaining cycle in a post-broadcasting environment where both traditional gatekeepers and audience gatekeepers disseminate content that builds viewership for both (Bercovici, 2013). The involvement in broadcasting is significant because it furthers placing the audience on the same level as traditional gatekeepers in a new gatekeeping model.

<div align="center">The Future? Subscription-Based Post-Broadcasting Models</div>

Audience gatekeeping will continue moving into the future with live media coverage of events such as the Olympics. A PEW Research study found that 1 in 3 (33%) of Millennials were watching content online without watching hardly any traditional broadcast television (Beaujon, 2013). The same study further found that 1 in 5 (20%) of Gen X watch content online without watching hardly any traditional broadcast television (Beaujon, 2013). With so many already watching programming online, and consequently

acting as gatekeepers, the process will continue into the future. Twitter's involvement, along with other social media platforms, ensures that the audience remains relevant in gatekeeping models. How the audience gatekeeps may be altered as the social media and post-broadcasting environment grows.

The subscription-based post-broadcasting model used by Netflix will most likely be the most popular revenue generating model used by broadcasters. This model allows for audience gatekeeping on some levels with the audience having the ability to choose content to view, when they want. However, traditional gatekeepers will still maintain its control over content as they will be able to decide which content is available for the audience to consume. Consequently, through the subscription-based post-broadcasting models, networks will be able to make content more profitable. Albarran (2004) argued that technology and media are linked economically: "Because media industries are heavily dependent on technology for the creation, distribution, and exhibition of various forms of media content, changes in technology affect economic processes between and within the media industries (p. 297). The economic element as described by Albarran is also a significant flaw in post-broadcasting the future in broadcasting. The subscription-based model could end up being more costly for audiences, trumping audience gatekeeping and content customizability. Gaustad (2000) discussed the problem with subscription-based content:

> Subscription television broadcasters focus their activity on programmes that attract sufficient viewers willing to pay to watch. This does not necessarily correspond with mass audiences…the development where market forces move

such events away from free-to-air to subscription television channels reduces the amount of goods that belong to the public domain. (Gaustad, 2000, p.104).

Content has been removed from the free-to-air network broadcast channels to cable and satellite provided channels for years. Monday Night Football, for example, which had been on the ABC network for decades, was moved to the ESPN cable station. Moving content from the network broadcast stations, or even from prime time during NBC Olympic coverage, to subscription-based online platforms could be a profitable move. In order to provide more of the Games, NBC has already moved coverage of some events to its cable stations, which removed content from the free-to-access network television station. Further migration of content, especially online with its live stream and social media platforms, would be the next logical step once NBC finishes its current contract with the International Olympic Committee in 2020. More than 30 million people subscribe to Netflix on a monthly basis, paying for access to content (Edwards, 2014). Consequently, NBC would have to ask why people would not pay a subscription, like they do for Netflix, to see Olympic coverage in the same fashion.

NBC, Olympic Revenue and Future (Post-)Broadcasting Efforts

Even though the amount of Internet users was growing in the mid-1990s and 2000s, NBC was focused on its network broadcasts of the Olympics. In the summer of 1995, NBC paid $1.2 billion for the exclusive U.S. broadcasting rights to both the 2000 Games in Sydney and the 2002 Olympic Winter Games in Salt Lake City. Despite the large sum, NBC still generated more than $50 million in profits for the coverage of the 2000 Sydney Summer Games (NBC media guide, 2014).

However, the price that NBC was willing to pay for each subsequent Olympics only increased, putting a strain on its bottom line. In December 1995, NBC bought the exclusive broadcasting rights to the 2004, 2006, and 2008 Olympics in the U.S. for $2.3 billion (NBC media guide, 2014). NBC would also go on to pay $2 billion for the exclusive U.S. media rights to the 2010 Vancouver Winter Games and the 2012 London Summer Olympics (NBC media guide, 2014). The exclusive broadcasting rights in the U.S. through 2020 cost NBC an additional $4.38 billion (NBC media guide, 2014).

It was not until 2004 that NBC began experimenting beyond its traditional television broadcasts. In 2004, for the Athens Summer Olympics, NBC introduced its first live streaming video coverage (Jesdanun, 2012; NBC media guide, 2014). According to NBC, the addition of live streaming of events more than doubled the web traffic its website received (NBC media guide, 2014). The popularity of live streaming grew as technology allowed the audience to access the live streams on smartphones, laptops, kindles, iPads, and other devices. The popularity increased so much that there were a total of 159.3 video streams and 20.4 million hours of total video streamed by the audience during the 2012 London Summer Olympics, which was more than double the entire 2008 Beijing Olympics (NBC media guide, 2014).

With help from the revenue the live video streaming brought to NBC, the trend of significant losses—$233 million in the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics—was reversed in 2012 (Clarke, 2013; Frawley, & Adair, 2013). The power of the post-broadcasting model was noted by Forbes in an article from October 2013 debating if Twitter could save television. The article claims, "Audiences are increasingly watching TV with computers, smartphones or tablets rather than with their actual TV" (Bercovici, 2013). In

February 2014, Forbes ran another story about online coverage increasing traditional

television broadcast viewership, backed by NBC's own research department (Fixmer et

al., 2014). Yet, NBC Sports chairman Mark Lazarus remained adamant that NBC's

financial success in 2012 was because of a strong advertising market "[our profitability]

is really indicative of the strength of the market. Sponsors are supporting it because of the

ratings and the family viewing" (Clarke, 2013).The strong support that Lazarus spoke

about was evident in the ratings—and not just in prime time. According to NBC, its five

weekday daytime broadcasts in the first week of the Olympics averaged 7.7 million

viewers (NBC Airs Most Watched, 2012). This was the most viewers ever for a non-U.S.

Summer Olympics (NBC Most Watched, 2012). Further, the daytime afternoon show,

which ran from noon to 6 p.m. ET, averaged 15.4 million viewers and the late night

broadcasts averaged 6.9 million viewers (NBC Airs Most Watched, 2012).

     Even though Lazarus has not gotten onboard with post-broadcasting models, other

NBC executives have. Gary Zenkel, the President of NBC Olympics, touted the

profitability of NBC's post-broadcasting model in 2012 and suggested that it would be a

positive, heavy influence on viewership for the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics. Zenkel said

via press release, "As we proved in London, there is a correlation between digital and

social engagement and television audiences, and we again expect this massive digital

offering to bolster primetime viewership" (NBC Fires Up Olympics Website, 2013, para.

3). Alan Wurtzel, president of research at NBC noted that the post-broadcasting

coverage, including live streaming and social media, had a significant impact on viewing

of the prime time audience. Wurtzel said: "Streaming added TV viewers, and that was the

most important finding. It was a pleasant surprise" (Fixmer et al., 2014, para. 6). Wurtzel

also noted that those who watched Olympic coverage on multiple devices consumed nearly twice the amount of content. The active audience viewed an average of 8 hours and 29 minutes of Olympic coverage a day, compared to 4 hours and 19 minutes for TV-only viewers (Fixmer et al., 2014). In other words, NBC's own research team is finding that regardless of when audience members watched Olympic coverage, the social media and live streaming post-broadcasting offerings increased viewership. The expectation by Zenkel that social engagement between audiences and traditional gatekeepers would drive ratings higher was matched by CNN International's executive vice president Tony Maddox. By including the audience in broadcasts through social media Maddox felt CNN International was creating a "sense of involvement and putting them [the audience] right in the moment" (Shin & Yim, 2011, n.p.). The audience having a role beyond consuming content in media coverage of an event is critical to the success of broadcasters in the future. NBC's lack of touting the success of its online coverage speaks volumes about what the network really thought of the new broadcast model with its social media and live streaming platforms.

By attempting to use old broadcast models, assuming the audience is a passive viewer or consumer; broadcasters will place its revenue and future in danger. The audience is no longer just a passive consumer of information who will watch content when broadcasters say they will. Broadcasters need to adapt to a changing media environment and develop content that supports a new broadcast model that includes the audience as the audience gatekeeping model in post-broadcasting does.

Conclusion

Broadcasting is in the process of changing. Digital media and social media have broken down some of the walls that separated the audience from controlling gatekeeping functions like traditional gatekeepers. The audience and traditional gatekeepers now perform the same functions in selecting content for consumption by the mass audience as outlined by the audience gatekeeping model in post-broadcasting. Barzilai-Nahon (2008) noted the recipients of the processed information, which she calls the "gated" (p.1496), were not the last stop for information. Instead, the audience, or gated, intervened in the gatekeeping process. Barazilai-Nahon (2008) argued that the intervention in the traditional gatekeeping process varied depending on the level of the audience's ability to relate to the production of information, its relationship with traditional gatekeepers, and the ability to find and choose alternatives as substitutes for content controlled by traditional gatekeepers. Social media usage during the 2012 Olympics, the audience using Twitter in particular, embodies Barazilia-Nahon's findings. The audience's relationship with traditional gatekeepers, NBC, and the information they were selecting was changed by the audience seeking alternative information that was not covered by NBC.

However, some walls may still exist for the audience to break through in regard to gatekeeping. One such wall in particular is that traditional gatekeepers generally maintain control over the production process (contracts to broadcast events, movies or television programs, cameras and editing, advertising and the construction of narratives within the broadcasted content).Without the ability to run productions like traditional gatekeepers, the audience is unable to break through all the walls to gain the same amount of control in gatekeeping processes. This may not be a problem, however. The audience is now able

to act as its own gatekeeper and that is significant. The audience acting as its own gatekeeper allows for diverse perspectives and more varied content. It also provides the audience with a means to counter the narrative of traditional gatekeepers. The role of countering the traditional gatekeepers' narrative is critical because people are given the opportunity to compare the two presentations of information and decide which reflects reality most closely for them. Consequently, the audience can hold broadcasters accountable for the decisions, popular or unpopular, they make. Harrington, Highfield, and Bruns (2013) described the audience's role in post-broadcasting as engaged and influential:

> Twitter and services alike become a kind of virtual loungeroom, connecting the active audiences of specific TV shows at an unprecedented scale and thereby amplifying audience activities even further. This is the case especially for live television (from first run drama and reality TV screenings to politics and sports), where the shared sense of watching a show together is especially heightened; here, Twitter becomes a metaphorical 'watercooler' in the cloud, but one where the watercooler conversations take place instantly, rather than at work the following morning. (pp. 405-406)

It is this watercooler talk that encourages the audience to explore the differences in traditional gatekeeper narrative and the counter-narrative presented by other audience members.

Further, the audience is able to become more engaged with the content broadcasted, whether online or through traditional broadcast television platforms. Netflix, Hulu, and WWE Network all provide examples in which the audience is able to become

audience gatekeepers of recorded broadcasts, and sometimes live content. Regardless of live content or previously recorded content, the audience has proven it will tweet about the content (Harrington et al., 2013). Further, research by NBC has found that allowing the audience to customize content through social media and post-broadcasting platforms increases viewership.

While the goals remain the same for broadcasters to generate the highest ratings and profits possible, how they accomplish this is not the same. The value of social media, especially Twitter, and post-broadcasting cannot be ignored when constructing plans to broadcast an event like the Olympics. Traditional gatekeepers—the networks like NBC— are no longer the sole keepers of information. Some in decision-making positions refuse to accept the changing media environment where the audience serves as gatekeepers. Lazarus told *The New York Times* in 2011 that NBC was capable of presenting the Olympics in other ways that were profitable (Sandomir, 2011).In the lead up to the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics, Lazarus said, "I can't create a primetime event live if it's in the middle of the night where the event is taking place…There's no events at four in the morning to do live in Sochi. We have to do it taped in primetime. We have no choice." (Panja, 2013, para. 3). With statements like these, it becomes more apparent that Lazarus and NBC misunderstand the point of its social media and live streaming options for Olympic coverage even with its own research teams providing evidence to the contrary.

The old gatekeeping model focused on prime time viewing and NBC controlling all the gates. However, in 2014, not only has the gatekeeping model changed. Society has changed as well. The audience is not content with waiting until prime time to watch what

happened. Technology allows the audience to view it live, with or without NBC as the gatekeeper.

The audience can, and will produce content in the new audience gatekeeping model in post-broadcasting as well; they have been doing so on websites like YouTube for years. The audience will act as a gatekeeper in ways that compliment traditional gatekeepers, not harm them. However, if the audience's expectations are not met by traditional gatekeeper's coverage, the audience has the means to speak out loudly to ensure its interests are met. Social media will hold the networks accountable for its decisions, what they present to its audience, how they present it, and why they presented it to the audience in that way. They are no longer able to gatekeep in the traditional way that the old gatekeeping model illustrates. Social media and post-broadcasting put the audience in control of content as much as the media. Some traditional television broadcasts have already adapted to incorporate social media into the content by including hashtags on screen as well as a ticker of audience tweets (Fixmer et al., 2014; Harrington et al., 2013). The interactive elements of Twitter add a new layer to sports, sports media, coverage of sports, and the interconnected relationship broadcasters have with society (Hutchins, 2011).

As in the case of NBC's 2012 Olympic coverage, the traditional television broadcast did not measure up to audience expectations. The audience, then, took to social media to discuss the failures of NBC in providing content the audience was interested in and through platforms that were desired. If the audience's interests and desires are not met, they are able to have its needs met from other sources. In a digital and social media world, where the masses can talk to each other instantly and select their own content and

produce customizable content, the audience is the new gatekeeper. The audience

gatekeeping model in post-broadcasting presented and discussed in the previous chapter

illustrates that the audience is on the same ground as journalists, editors, and media

organizations in this regard. Social media and other digital media allows the audience to

bypass traditional gatekeepers en route to content they want. In some cases the media

relies upon the audience, as we saw in the first chapter where NBC tried to engage the

audience on Twitter. The audience, as content producers, will not be a fading trend

because of advertising dollars. Advertisers will not stick with the traditional gatekeepers

or its broadcasting model when the audience is able to produce content that others want

to see. Advertisers became a part of the post-broadcasting models at YouTube and Hulu

and will continue to go where there are eyes.

The traditional media will have to adapt to the post-broadcasting model and

embrace audiences as fellow gatekeepers. With companies such as Turner and WWE

experimenting with post-broadcasting models that embrace audiences as gatekeepers and

not just passive consumers, post-broadcasting will continue to evolve as will how

audiences watch television. Deller (2011) argued that social media during live events that

engaged audience's responses to the events added new information to the broadcasts:

> Of course, it is worth remembering here that those producing the shows still
>
> maintain editorial control over the tweets used, as they do with phone-ins and text
>
> messaging, thus giving an impression of 'interaction' that may be exaggerated to
>
> enhance the feeling of participation and communality. (p. 230)

Even in engaging the audience and recognizing the audience as gatekeepers, traditional

gatekeepers remain in control of more gates. Much like as discussed in the NBC chapter,

having control over the most gates, the broadcasters can then provide the illusion of

influence without there actually being any influence from the audience. Despite this, the

audience is still able to gatekeep and that is something the broadcasters need to come to

terms with. There is plenty of room for broadcasters to take advantage of post-

broadcasting models. Audience members will still be able to use social media to gatekeep

but traditional gatekeepers will still control the contracts to broadcasting rights.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

This dissertation examined the Twitter use of both NBC and the audience during the 2012 Olympics. In doing so, this study introduced and applied a new gatekeeping model in the analysis of audience Twitter use. With much of the previous Olympic research focusing on the event's history and representation of athletes, there was a gap in the scholarship to fill. That gap was filled by this study's inclusion of Olympic coverage via social media platforms. Further, the addition of this study to Olympic scholarship accounts for a significant moment in broadcasting history in which traditional broadcast television, social media, and post-broadcasting changed the dynamics between the audience and traditional gatekeepers.

Chapter V discussed NBC's Twitter usage and examined how the network acted as online gatekeepers. The NBC Olympics Twitter account, (@NBCOlympics), served as an official social media gatekeeper by expanding the traditional broadcast presence to social media. The network's social media presence, while a gatekeeper of information, also provided a fan-friendly feel to connect with the audience. As a gatekeeper, NBC's Twitter account interacted with the audience but still controlled the how coverage was presented and attempted to drive the audience back to the traditional television broadcast. The coverage was in sync with the NBC traditional television broadcasts and, therefore, retained NBC's information dissemination routines as the exclusive broadcaster of the Olympics.

The first attempt by NBC to cover the Olympics via social media challenged the network. NBC appeared to be interactive with the online audience with engaged

promotional content. As a gatekeeper, NBC selected the content, tweeted a link or suggested what the audience should be doing. Consequently, the appearance of interactivity between NBC and the social media audience gave the illusion that Twitter users were contributing to the online Olympic coverage. The Twitter audience was engaged by NBC with trivia questions and other closed-ended questions, which asked for the audience's input on selected topics chosen by NBC.

The first social media Games taught NBC how to better gatekeep its online content and provide an illusion that the audience has an influence on the network's presentation of the Olympics. Not only were the audience's interaction and influence on NBC's content limited, but so were the live streaming options. The post-broadcasting offerings were restricted by an authentication process in which online audience members had to provide cable or satellite subscription proof to access the streams. While the live streaming was an option for viewing Olympic content, many audience members did not have access or the ability to watch the stream. In this regard, NBC was a gatekeeper of its content in an even more extreme way by preventing viewers from having access to the content streamed online. It forced audience members who were not subscribers to specific cable or satellite providers to view the tape-delayed content through the traditional television broadcasts. However, NBC was not the only gatekeeper of Olympic coverage during the 2012 London Summer Olympics.

Twitter allowed the audience to act as gatekeepers of content they wanted to see, but also advocate for even more influence over content. The social media platform gave the audience a way to have its voices heard, giving the audience control of a gate and the gatekeeping function in the process. The audience gatekeeping model in post-

broadcasting was introduced and applied in the analysis of the audiences tweets in chapter VI of this dissertation. The audience gatekeeping model in post-broadcasting, a new version of the gatekeeping model, posits the audience on the same level as journalists and media organizations in the gatekeeping process. The interested audience members created content through the selection of information and then disseminated it through social media—Twitter being the platform—to other audience members, journalists, and media organizations. The audience gatekeepers often selected information that was not covered by NBC, creating a counter-narrative through their tweets, especially #NBCFail. The audience's relationship with traditional gatekeepers, NBC, and the information they were selecting was changed by the audience seeking alternative information that was not covered by NBC. Despite being largely ignored by NBC, the audience gatekeepers were not ignored by other media sources, which supported the counter-narrative the audience provided to the NBC Olympic coverage.

The audience's ability to gatekeep content was an important finding in this study, particularly as more and more people watch television online and use social media. The Olympic coverage of the audience gatekeepers varied in interest and provided a diverse alternative narrative of coverage on Twitter compared to that of NBC. Gatekeeping was transformed by social media as well as the 2012 Olympic coverage. Information no longer only passes through official gatekeepers such as NBC. The audience has a gate and demands for customizable content. The Internet and social media offers the audience the ability to customize content and broadcasts to fit what they want to view. Audience gatekeeping and the ability to customize content will play an even more important role in

broadcasting's future as the audience is able to become more engaged with the content broadcasted, whether online or through traditional broadcast television platforms. The new audience gatekeeping model in post-broadcasting focuses on the audience's active role in the selection and dissemination of content while the old gatekeeping model focused on traditional gatekeepers controlling all the gates and information flow. Chapter seven applied the findings from chapter five and six into a discussion of post-broadcasting's link to the new audience gatekeeping model. Further, chapter seven examined the future of broadcasting in which the audience will play a significant role in producing content as gatekeepers. They have been doing so since 2005 on socially-based websites like YouTube and Twitter. Most importantly, the audience will act as a gatekeeper in ways that compliment traditional gatekeepers, not harm them by offering counter-narratives with content not covered by the traditional gatekeepers. The counter-narratives support the traditional gatekeeper's content while providing customizable content for the audience members who wish to a variety of content. The traditional gatekeepers will have to adapt to the changes that social media and post-broadcasting has brought to broadcasting. Traditional gatekeepers have to embrace audiences as fellow gatekeepers and work toward producing content that can be complimented by audience gatekeepers. With companies such as Turner and WWE experimenting with post-broadcasting models that embrace audiences as gatekeepers and not just passive consumers, the relationship between audience gatekeepers and traditional gatekeepers will continue to evolve.

At the time of writing the final section of this dissertation, the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics were unfolding on NBC. In following the same procedures for data collection

as described in the methodology section of this dissertation, it became apparent that many of the themes discussed in this study applied to the Sochi Winter Olympic coverage. NBC as well as the audience were tweeting in the same way as they did for 2012. While #NBCFail was not as popular as it was in 2012, the way NBC and the audience were using Twitter reinforces the findings of this study. Despite #NBCFail not retaining its popularity, another hashtag, #Sochiproblems, has risen to significance. This hashtag, started by a journalism student from Toronto, collected the horror stories that spectators and journalists were telling about their experiences in Sochi, Russia. Many media organizations such as *USA Today*, *Deadspin*, *Bloomberg*, *Mashable* and *The Washington Post* have covered the new hashtag. Consequently, #Sochiproblems reinforces the findings in this study: Social media provides a means for the audience to become gatekeepers, even allowing the audience to gatekeep the traditional gatekeepers through the creation of content. That content, such as #NBCFail and #Sochiproblems, has had traditional gatekeepers covering stories that were not previously part of Olympic coverage. Coverage of audience generated content supports the relevance of the audience as a gatekeeper.

<div align="center">Limitations and Future Research</div>

While much of the research about Twitter utilized quantitative methods surrounding a single news event, this study had a wider scope than many studies that focused on a singular event. This study encompassed the coverage and audience response during the entire length of the Olympics. While the Olympics are one event, it is much more complex than a single news event to cover. There are hundreds of countries involved, thousands of athletes competing in hundreds of events and countless pieces of

information that can be used in media coverage. In reality, the Olympics are thousands of

singular news events happening in the same place and sometimes at the same time.

This study focused primarily on the content of the tweets posted by NBC and the

audience. A total of 1,839 tweets were analyzed in this exploratory study. As an

exploratory study, this dissertation sought to use qualitative methods to evaluate elements

of social media Olympic coverage in hopes of establishing a foundation for future

research to further explore. Qualitative methods were the most suitable to establish a

foundation for future research because the context of the tweets would be taken into

consideration as part of the analysis. Future research should continue to be examined

carefully to compare the narratives between traditional gatekeepers and the audience

gatekeepers to determine if the narratives continue to diverge.

This study did not directly address audience member's conversations with each

other. The focus of the analysis in the audience chapter primarily focused on the narrative

of the audience tweets about events, athletes, countries, and NBC. Including the audience

interaction in this study would have widened the scope significantly and detracted from

the significant findings that the audience is its own gatekeeper on the same level as

traditional journalists. Widening the scope of this exploratory study by including the

interaction between audience members should be included in future research, but did not

fit well with the research questions. The audience gatekeeping model in post-

broadcasting puts forward the idea that the audience acts as a gatekeeper on the same

level as traditional gatekeepers, supplying counter-narrative as well as challenging

traditional gatekeepers to be accountable for their decisions in presenting information.

The audience gatekeeping model in post-broadcasting needs to be examined closer in

future Olympic coverage as well as other live sports coverage. A comparison study can be done to see how NBC uses the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio. By comparing the social media usage of the 2012 and 2016 Olympics, changes in how both the audience and NBC used Twitter may become more apparent. Further, the comparison would present the opportunity to test the audience gatekeeping model in post-broadcasting to see if it holds up multiple times.

This dissertation opened up many avenues to explore social media usage, gatekeeping, and Olympic coverage through the qualitative methods employed. The thematic analysis was useful in revealing how both the audience and NBC used Twitter and what each said. However, the researcher did not have access to NBC officials such as Mark Lazarus to fully explain comments made in press releases. Future research should include interviews with NBC representatives, much like Billings (2008), which had in-depth interviews with NBC officials to provide insight to decision-making processes in regard to the narratives presented to the audience. The addition of such interviews would allow the analysis of NBC's social media usage, post-broadcasting model, and response to the audience critiques to be placed in a more complete context.

Significance of Audience Gatekeeping

This study set out to address a gap in scholarship regarding the relationship between Olympic media coverage and social media. The research questions ensured that each chapter accomplished what it set out to do. Chapter V addressed how NBC used Twitter to extend its Olympic coverage online, acted as a gatekeeper and provided an illusion of influence to social media audiences. The sixth chapter answered research questions regarding how social media allowed audiences to act as gatekeepers. In

addition, the sixth chapter discussed the significance to the audience acting as a

gatekeeper as well as audience members' relationship with NBC and traditional

gatekeepers. The seventh chapter addressed research questions regarding what audience

gatekeeping and post-broadcasting could mean for future Olympic broadcasts. In

particular, the chapter discusses the subscription model employed by successful video

streaming services such as Netflix and how NBC appears to be heading towards the

subscription-based model in future Olympic coverage.

Most importantly, this dissertation sought to extend gatekeeping theory by

including social media as well as the audience's role in gatekeeping processes. Based in

previous gatekeeping scholarship, particularly of Bruns (2005, 2008) and Shoemaker and

Vos (2009) (Shoemaker et al., 2010), this study argued the important role the audience

plays in gatekeeping theory through social media platforms. The significance of audience

gatekeeping was discussed throughout this dissertation and was found to be an important

influencer in post-broadcasting.

APPENDIX A

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 12). And that's a wrap! Thanks for enjoying the 2012

   #Olympics with us! RT if you CAN'T Wait for #Sochi2014 [Tweet]. Retrieved

   from https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/234846568036061185

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 12). THEN & NOW: #SpiceGirls #SpiceUpYourLife

   #Olympics pic.twitter.com/GCGJ89Kp [Tweet]. Retrieved from

   https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/234831466352238592

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 12). DID YOU KNOW: The British Flag's design

   combines the individual flags of England, Scotland and Northern Island? [Tweet].

   Retrieved from https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/234808606585942017

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 12). Who is the most inspirational athlete from the 2012

   #Olympics? [Tweet]. Retrieved from

   https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/234758363030908928

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 12). If you could pick, which member of men's

   @usabasketball do you think will be MVP of today's gold-medal final?

   #toomanytoochoosefrom [Tweet]. Retrieved from

   https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/234640494200778752

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 12). It's the LAST NIGHT of primetime at the #Olympics!

   We can't believe it! Tune in NOW to relish in all of the glorious moments of

   #London2012![Tweet]. Retrieved from

   https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/234787305406230528

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 11). It's all tied up in sets in the gold-medal women's

   #volleyball match: USA 1, BRA, 1! Watch LIVE here:

http://nbco.ly/PMt5WX #Olympics [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/234355100934610944

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 11). At the end of a 1940 broadcast, Edward R Murrow

ended his radio segment from London w/ "good night, and good luck," his future

catchphrase. [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/234450309706022912

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 11). The now famous "Keep Calm & Carry On" posters

were distributed in Great Britain during WWII to keep public morale up.

pic.twitter.com/6qHd6TjI [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/234446364824723457

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 11). DID YOU KNOW? The last time an American won

the men's #diving 10m platform was in 1988 when @GregLouganis won gold?

[Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/234455317390438400

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 11). @davidboudia's achieves the first #diving gold medal

for #teamusa since Laura Wilkinson's 2000 gold medal in women's 10m

platform! [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/234480068951408643

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 11). THE DOUBLE! @Mo_Farah (GBR) wins GOLD in

the 5,000m, after winning gold in the 10,000m at #London2012! #history

#Olympics [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/234360666612453376

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 11). ON NOW: 2008 REMATCH: Women's volleyball

final: #BRAvUSA! [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/234491315855974400

NBCOlympics (2012, August 10). DID YOU KNOW? 14,000 cubic meters of soil were

imported to build the #BMX venue! #Olympics [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/234128290586185728

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 10). Good morning Olympics fans! Happy Friday! Here's

what's going on today: http://nbco.ly/O8SRdm #BMX #USABasketball #relays

[Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/233900943035494400

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 10). Want to learn more about first time #Olympian Julie

Culley? Get to know her here: http://nbco.ly/N062ZN #Olympics #trackandfield

[Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/234108450282557441

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 10). What happens when a pole snaps into three pieces

mid-vault? WATCH this to find out: http://nbco.ly/PHvxOe [Tweet]. Retrieved

from https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/234115489675223040

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 9). "We didn't finish that game, & we want to prove that

we can finish & win gold for our country."- @abbywambach on 2011 World Cup,

#London2012 [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/233629862538137600

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 9). #REDEMPTION #THREEPEAT #GOLD!!!

#USWNT#TEAMUSA [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/233662485025153024

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 9). DID YOU KNOW? The #diving platform is just over

32 feet from the surface of the water. #Olympics [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/233753900069568513

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 9). TRUE OR FALSE: In #volleyball the libero cannot

serve or spike the ball over the net or rotate into one of the front-row positions.

[Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/233734910102368256

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 9). HIGHLIGHT VIDEO: U.S. women's soccer wins

GOLD in a 2-1 victory over Japan: http://nbco.ly/PHUoBJ #USWNT #Olympics

@usssoccer_wnt [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/233693473868505088

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 8). Lots of American flags waving in the stands of

#HorseGuardsParade right now ... #beachvolleyball [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/233296557145997312

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 8). RT if 10m platform #diving makes you nervous.

#longwaytothepool [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/233356622842449921

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 8). Are YOU #bolting? Tweet your photos w/hashtag

#NBCBolt to be featured in a slideshow before @usainbolt's 200m tomorrow!

pic.twitter.com/AdPaId2h [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/233255683875803136

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 7). #WHOA. #AlyRaisman. #Impressive. #FloorRoutine.

[Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/233033994755792897

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 7). Very #patriotic leos on @jordyn_wieber &

@aly_raisman for the floor final! #teamusa #Olympics [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/233031798924382208

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 7). DID YOU KNOW: @mistymaytreanor &

@kerrileewalsh are 20-0 at the #Olympics since 2004! #thatsalotofwins [Tweet].

Retrieved from https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/233005139479371776

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 7). This MIGHT be the best #synchro montage we've ever

seen. MIGHT: http://nbco.ly/NbvlKY #teamwork [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/232967388340027392

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 7). Will the U.S. women's water polo team advance to

gold medal match? It's 9-9 in OT vs. AUS! TUNE IN NOW to @NBC (ET/CT):

http://nbco.ly/MtEyjz [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/232864133106790401

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 6). PROGRAMMING CHANGE: The men's basketball

game #USAvsARG will be on @MSNBC at 5:15p ET/ 4:15p CT. #USAB2012

[Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/232584536825929730

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 6). PHOTO SHOOT! Behind the scenes with the women's

@usagym team! http://nbco.ly/R38CRP #fab5 #Olympics [Tweet]. Retrieved

from https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/232466421551099904

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 5). It's GOLD for @usainbolt with a new #Olympic

Record! 9.63! RT if you're impressed! pic.twitter.com/q4p0EsxY [Tweet].

Retrieved from https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/232314283244011522

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 5). If James #Bond were an Olympic athlete, he would

definitely compete in _____. #Olympics [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/232282798277402624

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 5). VIDEO: Want to know more about the MOST

DIFFICULT vault in #gymnastics? @mckaylamaroney & @jordyn_wieber tell

all: http://nbco.ly/TaeRnd [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/232301324904058880

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 5). In case you missed it: @christinaloukas' dives from the

semi finals that advanced her into the finals: http://t.co/iGjioCtJ #Olympics

[Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/232259881036566530

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 5). .@sanyarichiross: "I always say 'look good, feel good,

run good!" VIDEO: A day in the life: http://nbco.ly/Nivrgm [Tweet]. Retrieved

from https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/232310775966994433

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 5). VIDEO: McKayla Maroney's jaw-dropping vault that

helped #TeamUSA win gold (in slo-mo!):

http://nbco.ly/NqMCM3 #stillspeechless [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/232298588821151744

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 5). We don't know what we're enjoying more right now,

the match happening at #Wimbledon, or the crowd that's watching. #tennis

[Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/232169434947678208

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 5). "I love being in the air flipping, spinning, and people

looking at it and saying, 'How do you do that?'" - @christinaloukas [Tweet].

Retrieved from https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/232258492759678976

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 4). Asafa Powell (@officialasafa) & @usainbolt are

friends: they play cricket together & have gone head-to-head in paintball!

#trackbuddies [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/231910249467084801

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 4). DID YOU KNOW: Approximately 5,000 tons of sand

were transported to the #HorseGuardsParade to accommodate #Olympic

#beachvolleyball? [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/231919683404693504

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 4). RESULTS: Great Britain's Jessica Ennis (@j_ennis)

wins GOLD in heptathlon: http://nbco.ly/Rmty8k #trackandfield [Tweet].

Retrieved from https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/231843387832164352

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 4). 22 #Olympic Medals. 18 #Olympic Golds. 1 greatest

#Olympian of all time. #MichaelPhelps [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/231950581210705920

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 4). TRUE or FALSE: @usainbolt will win gold in the

100m at #London2012.[Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/231909341496766464

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 4). It's the last time we'll ever see @michaelphelps

compete at the #Olympics. RT to congratulate the most decorated Olympian ever!

[Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/231947373910306817

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 4). PHOTOS: @justingatlin on the track in 2012:

http://nbco.ly/MFQme4 [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/231906873459240961

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 4). VIDEO: The science behind @OscarPistorius' carbon

fiber blades: http://nbco.ly/MFOstG #bladerunner [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/231913014729768960

NBCOlympics. (2012, July 26). What's it like to meet @michaelphelps & @ryanlochte?

Ask @jordyn_wieber, & the rest of the women's @USAGym team:

http://t.co/Yqme9IjP   [Tweet]. URL unavailable.

NBCOlympics. (2012, July 25). WATCH LIVE NOW on @NBCSN! Women's #soccer

group play, @ussoccer_wnt vs. France! LIVESTREAM here:

http://nbco.ly/N2oVt6 #USWNT [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/228157898667225090

APPENDIX B

Bunch, W. (July 28, 2012). NBC: Will Pearl Harbor be attacked? Find out tonight in

primetime #nbcfail. [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/Will_Bunch/status/229380795498889217

Buttry, S. (August 11, 2012). As Churchill would say, this is our longest hour.

#nbcfail [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/stevebuttry/status/234452397542486017

Collins, K. A. (August 1, 2012). Did you know? ... USA's #Olympics2012 winners

must pay IRS $9,000 for every gold medal they earn.

http://mediaite.com/a/shsaf" [Tweet].Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/kellyanncollins/status/230763704453591040

Devlin, W. (July 28, 2012). It's one thing for NBC to tape the big events for primetime,

but for them to announce the results ON NBC before they air is lunacy. #NBCfail.

[Tweet]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/wdevlin/status/229354592469676032

Feldman, D. (July 30, 2012). Wow. NBC just ran a commercial for the today show

tomorrow re Missy Franklin's gold RIGHT BEFORE THEY AIR HER RACE

#nbcfail. [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/dfeldman53/status/230116912422596608

Feuring, D. (August 3, 2012). Hold up, there WOMEN'S TRAMPOLINE?!? Cancel

all my plans. #Olympics2012. [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/donovanfeuring/status/231404361920696320

Hannon, K. (July 28, 2012). NBC = Not Broadcasting Conveniently #NBCFail cc

   @jeffjarvis. [Tweet]. Retrieved from

   https://twitter.com/kieranhannon/status/229365043278528512

Head, L. (August 3, 2012). Me: Wow, that was impressive! Announcer: ANOTHER

   DISASTROUS MISTAKE! #Olympics2012. [Tweet]. Retrieved from

   https://twitter.com/LHeadrick2/status/231408970273792000

Herlitz, L. (July 30, 2012). In this age of social media, @nytimes posts tomorrow's

   stories today but @NBC broadcasts today's Olympic events tomorrow!

   #NBCfail. [Tweet]. Retrieved from

   https://twitter.com/lucherlitz/status/230030690505330689

Jarvis, J. (August 11, 2012). nbcfail RT @Dbright21: @jeffjarvis they've actually figured

   a way to tape delay WWII? [Tweet]. Retrieved from

   https://twitter.com/jeffjarvis/status/234440645790531585

Johnson, A. M. (August 10, 2012). Things I did not know about racewalking: There are

   judges. And the rules are *very* complicated.

   http://aj.vg/O90JZm #Olympics2012. [Tweet]. Retrieved from

   https://twitter.com/MAlexJohnson/status/233986832814182400

Kelleher, S. (July 28, 2012). Don't want to rub it in for @NBC viewers but BBC has

   26HD channels showing all LIVE Olympics events simultaneously #NBCFail.

   [Tweet]. URL unavailable.

Kelleher, S. (July 28, 2012). So @NBC could give live broadcast of Royal Wedding

   but not Olympics? #nbcfail. [Tweet]. Retrieved from

   https://twitter.com/SuzanneKelleher/status/229364684543901696

Mackenzie, P. (August 12, 2012). Shout out to all the Athletes who do what they do not

    for the money or the fame but because they love to compete. #Olympics2012.

    [Tweet]. Retrieved from

    https://twitter.com/Phister13/status/234673948330188800

Marx, S. (July 26, 2012). Interesting how NBC never mentions you need a cable/satellite

    subscription w/ MSNBC/CNBC to view any coverage online. We're screwed.

    #NBCfail. [Tweet]. Retrieved from http://mashable.com/2012/07/30/nbc-fail-guy/

Milligan, L. (August 11, 2012). I honestly cant (sic) tell the difference between a good

    dive and a bad one #Olympics2012. [Tweet]. Retrieved from

    https://twitter.com/LaurenMilligan6/status/234236736434212865

Namara, E. (August 12, 2012). Kiprotich's medal elevated Uganda to 50th position

    on the medals table. - Talk about #Uganda at 50... woop! woop! #Olympics2012

    [Tweet]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/enamara/status/234677535726776321

NBC Delayed (July 29, 2012). BREAKING: Jesse Owens wins gold in 100m spring

    #NBCFail. [Tweet]. Retrieved from

    https://twitter.com/NBCDelayed/status/229682945059852290

NBC Delayed (July 29, 2012). Proof our tape delayed broadcasting model is working?

    Over 3,000 new twitter followers in an hour #NBCFail. [Tweet]. Retrieved from

    https://twitter.com/NBCDelayed/status/229699610778685440

Pierce, T. (August 6, 2012). So NASA can send us high res [sic] images from Mars in

    minutes but it takes NBC 6 hours to get the Olympics on tv [sic] to the USA from

    London? #nbcfail. [Tweet]. Retrieved from

    https://twitter.com/busblog/status/232352333453991936

Raymond, R. (August 6, 2012). First ever Olympic medal for Grenada. That's brilliant. Well done Kirani James. I bet they are celebrating back home. #Olympics2012 [Tweet]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/raubrey/status/232575648781176833

Seay, L. (July 28, 2012). Good lord. NBC nightly news is reporting that Lochte beat Phelps. AND THEY HAVEN'T SHOWN IT YET. #nbcfail. [Tweet]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/texasinafrica/status/229346280625815552

Sharif, B. (July 28, 2012). @NBC, profits strategy v PR disaster, brand hit? Short term v long term. You're risking too much when you don't listen to viewers. #nbcfail. [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/beasharif/status/229364910210048000

Smith, J. (August 11, 2012). @texasinafrica: Tried to watch Olympics. Tom Brokaw talking about the Blitz for some reason. Turned off the not-Olympics. #nbcfail. [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/meprogrammerguy/status/234446536736636928

Srivastava, M. (July 28, 2012). If you were planning to record that Olympics event you were going to miss, never mind, NBC is doing it for you #nbcfail. [Tweet]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/min2/status/229360682389340160

Suze, C. (July 28, 2012). NBC's hype about how great their coverage will be was a classic bait and switch. #NBCfail. [Tweet]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/SuzyVMc/status/229365552391544833

Tanner, S. (July 29, 2012). In 1964, daily Olympics film was flown to the U.S. & broadcast in B/W. Morning events shown in the evening. In 2012, we got color.

#NBCFail. [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/Tannerman/status/229754988367323136

Weinstein, S. (July 29, 2012). Phelps swims for the USA in the 4x100 relay in 1 hour

or so...seen everywhere but here in the USA on #NBCfail. [Tweet]. Retrieved

from https://twitter.com/steveweinstein/status/229647715938729985

REFERENCES

Albarran, A.B. (2004). Media Economies. In *The SAGE handbook of media studies.* Ed. J. Downing. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Alexander, A. (2004). *Media economics: theory and practice* (3rd ed.). Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Alzner, B. (2012). #NBCfail at the 'social media games' indicative of big media's struggle in new landscape. *The Canadian Journalism Project*. Retrieved from http://j source.ca/article/nbcfail-social-media-games-indicative-big-medias-struggle-new landscape.

Arant, M.D., & Anderson, J.Q. (2001). Newspaper online editors support traditional standards. *Newspaper Research Journal*, *22*(4), 57-69.

Aslinger, B. (2009). Creating a network for queer audiences at Logo TV. *Popular Communication*, *7*, 107-121.

Atteslander, P. (2003). Methoden der empirischen Sozialforschung (10th ed.). Berlin, Germany: Walter de Gruyter.

Bagdikian, B.H. (1984). The media monopoly. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Bagdikian, B. H. (2004). The new media monopoly. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Bakker, P., & Pantti, M. (2009). Misfortunes, memories, and sunsets nonprofessional images in Dutch news media. *International Journal of Cultural Studies, 12*(5), 471-489.

Baluja, S., Seth, R., Sivakumar, D., Jing, Y., Yagnik, J., Kumar, S., Ravichandran, D., & Aly, M. (2008). Video suggestion and discovery for YouTube: Taking random walks through the view graph, *Proceedings of WWW-2008*

Barzilai-Nahon, K. (2008). Toward a theory of network gatekeeping: A framework for exploring information control, *The Journal of the American Society of Information Science and Technology,* 59(9), 1493-1512.

Barton, L. (1982). The American Olympic boycott of 1980: the amalgam of diplomacy and propaganda in influencing public opinion. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Boston University, Boston Massachusetts.

Bass, A. (2002). Not the triumph but the struggle: The 1968 Olympics and the making of the Black athlete. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Beard, F., & Olsen, R.L. (1999). Webmasters as mass media gatekeeprs: A qualitative exploratory study, *Internet Research, 9*(3), 200-211.

Beamish, R., & Ritchie, I. (2006). Fastest, highest, strongest: a critique of high performance sport. New York, NY: Routledge.

Beaujon, A. (2013, October 10). Third of millennials watch mostly online video or no broadcast TV. *Poynter*. Retrieved from http://www.poynter.org/latest news/mediawire/225528/third-of-millennials-watch-no-broadcast-tv/

Bellante, W., Vilardi, R., & Rossi, D. (2013). On Netflix catalog dynamics and caching performance. In *Computer Aided Modeling and Design of Communication Links and Networks (CAMAD), 2013 IEEE 18th International Workshop* (pp. 89-93). IEEE.

Bennett, S. (2012). The first social games. *Mediabistro*. Retrieved from http://www.mediabistro.com/alltwitter/social-olympic-games_b21498

Bercovici, J. (2013, October 7). Can Twitter save TV? (and can TV save Twitter?). *Forbes*. Retrieved from

http://www.forbes.com/sites/jeffbercovici/2013/10/07/can-twitter-save-tv-and
can-tv-save-twitter/

Berlin 1936 Summer Olympics. (n.d.). Olympic.org. Retrieved from
http://www.olympic.org/berlin-1936-summer-olympics

Billings, A. C. (2008). Olympic media: inside the biggest show on television. London,
UK: Routledge.

Blaszka, M., Burch, L.M., Fredrick, E.L., Clavio, G., & Walsh, P. (2012). #WorldSeries:
An empirical examination of a Twitter hashtag during a major sporting event.
International Journal of Sport Communication, 5, 435-453.

Boyd, T. (1997). *Anatomy of a murder: O.J. Simpson and the imperative of sports in
cultural studies*. In A. Baker and T. Boyd (eds), Out of Bounds: Sports, Media,
and the Politics of Identity. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Bruns, A. (2005). *Gatewatching: Collaborative Online News Production*, New York,
NY: Peter Lang.

Bruns, A. (2008) Gatewatching, gatecrashing: Futures for tactical news media. In *Digital
media and democracy tactics in hard times*, (pp. 247-270). Cambridge, MA: MIT
Press.

Bryman, A. (2004). *Social research methods* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Oxford
University Press.

Bunch, W. (July 28, 2012). NBC: Will Pearl Harbor be attacked? Find out tonight in
primetime #nbcfail. [Tweet]. Retrieved from
https://twitter.com/Will_Bunch/status/229380795498889217

Buttry, S. (August 11, 2012). As Churchill would say, this is our longest hour.

    #nbcfail [Tweet]. Retrieved from

    https://twitter.com/stevebuttry/status/234452397542486017

Caldwell, J. (2004). Convergence television: Aggregating form and repurposing content

    in the culture of conglomeration. In: Lyn Spigel, Jan Olsson, ed. *Television after*

    TV: on a medium in transition. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 41-74.

Cassell, C., & Symon, G. (1994). *Qualitative research in work contexts*. In Catherine

    Cassell & Gillian Symon (Eds.), Qualitative methods in organizational research, a

    practical guide, 1-13. London, UK: Sage.

Cassidy, W.P. (2006). Gatekeeping similar for online, print journalists. *Newspaper*

    Research Journal, 27(2), 6-23.

Castells, M. (2004). *Informationalism, networks and the network society: A theoretical*

    blueprint. In Castells, M. (Ed.), The network society: A cross cultural perspective,

    3-48. Northampton, MA: Edward Elger.

Caumont, A. (2013, October 16). 12 trends shaping digital news. *Pew Research Center*.

    Retrieved from http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2013/10/16/12-trends

    -shaping-digital-news/

Chamberlain, D. (2011). Media interfaces, networked media spaces, and the mass

    customization of everyday space. In: Michael Kackman, et al., ed. *Flow TV:*

    Television in the age of media convergence. New York, NY: Routeledge, 13-29.

Cheng, X., Cameron, D., & Jiangchuan, L. (2007). Understanding the characteristics of

    Internet short video sharing: YouTube as a case study. *ArXiv e-prints*, *July*, n.p.

Chibnall, S. (1977). Law-and-order news: An analysis of crime reporting in the British Press. London, UK: Tavistock.

Chin-Fook, L. & Simmonds, H. (2011). Redefining Gatekeeping Theory for a digital generation. *McMaster Journal of Communication, 8(7)* 9-33.

Chinn P.L., & Kramer M.K. (1999). *Theory and nursing a systematic approach*. St. Louis, MO: Mosby Year Book.

Clarke, J. (2013). NBC expects profit on Sochi Olympics. *Forbes*. Retrieved from http://www.forbes.com/sites/johnclarke/2013/11/05/nbc-expects-profit-on-sochi-olympics/

Clavio, G., & Kian, T.M. (2010). Uses and gratifications of a retired female athlete's Twitter followers. *International Journal of Sport Communication*, *3*, 485-500.

Clayman, S.E. & Reisner, A. (1998). Gatekeeping in action: Editorial conferences and assessments of newsworthiness. *American Sociological Review, 63(2)*, 178-199.

Coffey, A., & Atkinson, P. (1996). *Concepts and coding*. In A. Coffey & P. Atkinson, Making sense of qualitative data, (pp. 26-53). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Collins, K. A. (August 1, 2012). Did you know? ... USA's #Olympics2012 winners must pay IRS $9,000 for every gold medal they earn. http://mediaite.com/a/shsaf" [Tweet].Retrieved from https://twitter.com/kellyanncollins/status/230763704453591040

Cover, R. (2006). Interactive media, narrative control and reconceiving audience history. *New Media Society*, *8*, 139-158.

Crupi, A. (2012, July 30). Despite agita over NBC's coverage of 2012 London Olympic Games, network smashes ratings records. *AdWeek*. Retrieved from

http://www.adweek.com/news/television/london-2012-nbc-record-ratings-pace-142297

Dawson, M. (2007). Little players, big shows: Format, narration, and style on television's new smaller screen. *Convergence*, *13*(3), 231-250.

Dayan, D., & Katz, E. (1992). *Media events: The live broadcasting of history*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard.

Deller, R. (2011). Twittering on: Audience research and participation using Twitter. *Journal of Audience and Reception Studies*, *8*(1), 216-245.

Devlin, W. (July 28, 2012). It's one thing for NBC to tape the big events for primetime, but for them to announce the results ON NBC before they air is lunacy. #NBCfail. [Tweet]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/wdevlin/status/229354592469676032

Downey, K. (2002, February 14). Olympics a modest ad $ boon for NBC. *Media Life*. Retrieved from http://209.61.190.23/news2002/feb02/feb11/4_thurs/ news1thursday.html

Eastman, S.T., Newton, G.D., & Pack, L. (1996). Promoting primetime programs in megasporting events. *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, *40*, 366-388.

Eberhard, W.B. (1982). 'News value' treatments are from consistent among newswriting texts. *Journalism Educator*, *37*(1), 9-11, 50.

Edwards, C. (2014, January 22). Netflix seen reporting U.S. web users reach 33.1 million. *Bloomberg*. Retrieved from http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2014-01 22/netflix-seen-reporting-u-s-web-users-reach-33-1-million.html

Ellul, J. (1964). *The technological society* (1st American ed.). New York, NY: Knopf.

Espy, R. (1979). *The politics of the Olympic Games*. Berkeley, CA: University of
   California Press.

Evensen, B.J. (1997). *The responsible reporter* (2nd ed.). Northport, AL: Vision Press.

Faber, G. (2011). *Shifting power: How Google TV entered the living room*. (Unpublished
   bachelor's thesis). University of Amsterdam.

Farhi, P. (2009). The Twitter explosion. *American Journalism Review*, *31*(3), 26-31.

Feldman, D. (July 30, 2012). Wow. NBC just ran a commercial for the today show
   tomorrow re Missy Franklin's gold RIGHT BEFORE THEY AIR HER RACE
   #nbcfail. [Tweet]. Retrieved from
   https://twitter.com/dfeldman53/status/230116912422596608

Feuring, D. (August 3, 2012). Hold up, there WOMEN'S TRAMPOLINE?!? Cancel
   all my plans. #Olympics2012. [Tweet]. Retrieved from
   https://twitter.com/donovanfeuring/status/231404361920696320

Fishbein, M., & Ajzen, I. (1981). Acceptance, yielding and impact: Cognitive processes
   in persuasion. In R.E. Petty, T.M. Ostrom & T.C. Brock (Eds.), Cognitive
   responses in persuasion, 339-359. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Fisher, E. (2009, June 1). Flight of fancy? *Sports Business Journal*. Retrieved from
   http://www.sportsbusinessjournal.com/article/62656

Fixmer, A., Lee, E., & Edwards, C. (2014, February 6). NBC said poised for Sochi profit
   with Twitter-infused Olympics. *Bloomberg*. Retrieved from
   http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2014-02-06/nbc-said-poised-for-sochi-profit
   withtwitter-infused-olympics.html

Forman, J., Creswell, J. W., Damschroder, L., Kowalski, C. P., & Krein, S. L. (2008). Qualitative research methods: key features and insights gained from use in infection prevention research. *American Journal of Infection Control*, *36*(10), 764-771.

Frawley, S., & Adair, D. (2013). *Managing the Olympics* (Online-Ausg. ed.). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Gaustad, T. (2000). The economics of sport broadcasting. *Nordicom Review*, *21*(2), 101-113.

Gelston, D. (2014, January 8). WWE set to launch own 24/7 network in February. *Associated Press*. Retrieved from http://bigstory.ap.org/article/wwe-set-launch own-247-network-february

Georges, M. (2012, July 29). Spoilers: Angry Olympics fans tweet their protests, NBC responds. *Mashable*. Retrieved from http://mashable.com/2012/07/29/nbc olympics-response/

Girginov, V. (2010). *The Olympics: a critical reader*. Abingdon, UK: Routledge.

Golbeck, J. (2012). In Proceedings of the 2012 annual conference on Human factors in computing systems in Austin, TX, 2755-2758.

Goode, L. (2009). Social news, citizen journalism and democracy. *New Media Society*, *11*(8), 1287-1305.

Gottfried, M. (2013). Streaming video could water down TV profits. *The Wall Street Journal*. Retrieved from http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424127887324392804578360241036 33074

Grant, R. R., Leadley, J., & Zygmont, Z. X. (2008). The media and intercollegiate sports. *The economics of intercollegiate sports* (pp. 329-380). Singapore: World Scientific.

Gruneau, R. (1989). *Making spectacle: a case study in television sports production*. In L. Wenner (ed.), Media, Sports and Society, 134-154. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Gruzd, A., Doiron, S., & Mai, P. (2011). Is happiness contagious online? A case of Twitter and the 2010 Winter Olympics. In System Sciences (HICSS), 2011 44th Hawaii International Conference, 1-9.

Guttmann, A. (2002). *The Olympics, a history of the modern games* (2nd ed.). Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.

Halloran, J.D., Elliot, P., & Murdock, G. (1970). *Demonstrations and communication: A case study*. Baltimore, MD: Penguin.

Hambrick, M., Simmons, J., Greenhalgh, G., & Greenwell, C.T. (2010). Understanding athletes' use of Twitter: A content analysis of athlete tweets. Presented June 4, 2010 at the North American Society for Sports Management Conference in Tampa, Florida.

Hannon, K. (July 28, 2012). NBC = Not Broadcasting Conveniently #NBCFail cc @jeffjarvis. [Tweet]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/kieranhannon/status/229365043278528512

Hargittai, E. (2003). The digital divide and what to do about it. In D.C. Jones (Ed.). *New economy handbook*. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

Harrington, S., Highfield, T., & Bruns, A. (2013). More than a backchannel: Twitter and television. *Journal of Audience and Reception Studies*, *10*(1), 405-409.

Haas, C., &Wearden, S. T. (2003). E-credibility: Building common ground inWeb environments. *Educational Studies in Language and Literature*, *3*, 169–184.

Head, L. (August 3, 2012). Me: Wow, that was impressive! Announcer: ANOTHER DISASTROUS MISTAKE! #Olympics2012. [Tweet]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/LHeadrick2/status/231408970273792000

Herlitz, L. (July 30, 2012). In this age of social media, @nytimes posts tomorrow's stories today but @NBC broadcasts today's Olympic events tomorrow! #NBCfail. [Tweet]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/lucherlitz/status/230030690505330689

Heuvel, J. (1993). For the media, a brave [and scary] new world. *Media Studies Journal*, *7*(4), 11-20.

Hickey, J.R. (1966). The effects of information control on perceptions of centrality. Unpublished Dissertation, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Hickey, J.R. (1968). The effects of information control on perceptions of centrality. *Journalism Quarterly*, *45*, 49-54.

Hirsch, P.M. (1970). *The structure of the popular music industry*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan, Institute for Social Research.

Hoberman, J. M. (1986). *The Olympic crisis: sport, politics, and the moral order*. New Rochelle, NY: A.D. Caratzas.

Horne, J., & Whannel, G. (2012). *Understanding the Olympics*. Abingdon, UK: Routledge.

Hough, G.A. (1995). *News writing* (5th ed.). Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

Howard, T. (2006, Jan. 6). Ad sales boom for Super Bowl, Olympics. *USA Today*, p.1B.

Hsieh, H. F., & Shannon, S. E. (2005). Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qualitative Health Research*, *15*(9), 127–128.

Hughes, R., & Coakley, J. (1984). Mass society and the commercialization of sport. *Sociology of Sport*, *1*, 57-63.

Hutchins, B. (2011). The acceleration of media sport culture. *Information, Communication & Society*, *14*(2), 237-257.

Hutson, D. (2009). Paying the price for sports TV: Preventing the strategic misuse of the FCC's carriage regulations. *Federal Communications Law Journal*, *61*, 407-430.

International Olympic Committee: About. (n.d.). Olympic.org. Retrieved from http://www.olympic.org/about-ioc-institution

Itule, B.D., & Anderson, D.A. (1997). Newswriting and reporting for today's media (7th ed.). Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.

Jarvis, J. (2012a). #NBCfail economics. *BuzzMachine*. Retrieved from, http://buzzmachine.com/2012/07/29/nbcfail/

Jarvis, J. (2012b). Jeff Jarvis: #NBCfail Economics. *The Huffington Post*. Retrieved from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jeff-jarvis/nbcfail-economics_b_1718379.html

Jarvis, J. (August 11, 2012). nbcfail RT @Dbright21: @jeffjarvis they've actually figured a way to tape delay WWII? [Tweet]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/jeffjarvis/status/234440645790531585

Jenkins, H. (2002). 'Interactve audences?' in Harries, Dan (ed.), *The New Media Book*, London, UK: BFI.

Jesdanun, A. (2012). From Sydney to London: How online Olympics coverage evolved. *Tulsa World*. Retrieved from

http://www.tulsaworld.com/business/article.aspx?subjectid=52&articleid=20120
01_52_E3_NEWYOR28021

Johnson, A. M. (August 10, 2012). Things I did not know about racewalking: There are judges. And the rules are *very* complicated. http://aj.vg/O90JZm #Olympics2012. [Tweet]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/MAlexJohnson/status/233986832814182400

Jones, J. P. (2010). *Entertaining Politics: Satiric Television and Political Engagement*. (2nd Eds). Lanham, UK: Rowman & Littlefield.

Keen, A. (2008). *The cult of the amateur: How blogs, myspace, youtube, and the rest of today's user-generated media are destroying our economy, our culture, and our values*. New York, NY: Doubleday.

Kelleher, S. (July 28, 2012). Don't want to rub it in for @NBC viewers but BBC has 26HD channels showing all LIVE Olympics events simultaneously #NBCFail. [Tweet]. URL unavailable.

Kelleher, S. (July 28, 2012). So @NBC could give live broadcast of Royal Wedding but not Olympics? #nbcfail. [Tweet]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/SuzanneKelleher/status/229364684543901696

Kellner, D. (2003). *Media spectacle*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Kovach, B. & Rosenstiel, T. (1999). *Warp speed: America in the age of mixed media*. New York, NY: Century Foundation Press.

Kwak, H., Lee, C., Park, H., & Moon, S. (2010). What is Twitter, a social network or a news media? In Proceedings of the 19th international conference on World Wide Web, 591-600. ACM.

Laird, S. (2012). #NBCFail Guy: Hashtag Came 'Off the Top of My Head.' Retrieved from http://mashable.com/2012/07/31/nbcfail-guy-2/

Lanagan, J., & Smeaton, A. F. (2011, July). Using twitter to detect and tag important events in live sports. In *Proceedings of AAAI*.

Larson, J.F., & Park, H.S. (1993). *Global television and the politics of the Seoul Olympics*. Boulder, CO: Westview.

Lasica, J.D. (2003, 12 March). Random Acts of Journalism: Beyond 'Is It or Isn't It Journalism?': How Blogs and Journalism Need Each Other. *JD's Blog: New Media Musings*. http://www.jdlasica.com/blog/archives/2003_03_12.html

Lauri, S., & Kyngas, H. (2005). *Developing nursing theories*. Vantaa, UK: Werner Soderstrom.

Lenskyj, H. (2000). *Inside the Olympic industry: Power, politics and activism.* Albany, NY: SUNY.

Lenskyj, H. (2008). *Olympic industry resistance: Challenging Olympic power and propaganda.* Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Lewin, K. (1947). Frontiers in group dynamics: Concept, method and reality in science; social equilibria and social change. *Human Relations*, *1*, 5-40.

Lewin, K. (1951). *Field theory in social science: Selected theoretical papers*. New York, NY: Harper.

Levine, S. (2012). Olympics draw 219 million viewers for NBC. *Variety*. Retrieved from http://www.variety.com/article/VR1118057782

Lindemman-Nelson, H. (1996). Sophia doesn't. *Hypatia, 11,* 91-104.

Lindemman-Nelson, H. (1997). *How to do things with stories*. In H. Lindemann-Nelson (Ed.), Stories and limits: Narrative approaches to bioethics, vvii-xx. New York: Routledge.

Lindemann-Nelson, H. (2001). *Damaged identities: Narrative repair*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Lippmann, W. (1922). *Public Opinion*. New York, NY: Harcourt Brace and Company.

Livingston, S. & Bennett, L. (2003). Gatekeeping, indexing and live-event news: Is technology altering the construction of news? *Political Communication, 20*, 363-380.

London Olympics on NBC is most-watched television event in U.S. history (2012, August 14). *NBC Sports Pressbox*. Retrieved from http://nbcsportsgrouppressbox.com/2012/08/14/ondon-olympics-on-nbc-is-most-watched-television-event-in-u-s-history/

Lotz, A. (2007). The television will be revolutionized. New York, NY: New York University Press.

MacAloon, J. (2010). Olympic Games and the theory of spectacle in modern societies. In *The Olympics: A critical reader* (pp.80-107). Abingdon, UK: Routledge.

Mackenzie, P. (August 12, 2012). Shout out to all the Athletes who do what they do not for the money or the fame but because they love to compete. #Olympics2012. [Tweet]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/Phister13/status/234673948330188800

Marshall, P.D., Walker, B., & Russo, N. (2010). Mediating the Olympics. *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into new Media Technologies*, Special Issue on Sport in New Media Cultures, *16*(3), 263-278.

Marx, S. (July 26, 2012). Interesting how NBC never mentions you need a cable/satellite subscription w/ MSNBC/CNBC to view any coverage online. We're screwed. #NBCfail. [Tweet]. Retrieved from http://mashable.com/2012/07/30/nbc-fail-guy/

Mayring, P. (2000). Qualitative content analysis. *Forum on Qualitative Social Research*, *1*(2).

McBride, K. (2012, August 20). Olympics coverage varied across platforms. *Poynter Review Project Blog*. Retrieved from http://espn.go.com/blog/poynterreview/post/_/id/431/espnsolympic-coverage spotty-depending-on-platform

McClusky, M. (2010, February 5). Athletes confused by Olympic social media rules. *Wired Magazine*. Retrieved from http://www.wired.com/business/2010/02/athletes-confused-byolympic-social media-rules/

McCombs, M. (1972). Mass media in the marketplace. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. *Journalism Monograph*, *24*.

McKee, A. (2003). *Textual analysis: A beginner's guide.* London, UK: Sage.

McNelly, J.T. (1959). Intermediary communicators in the international flow of news. *Journalism Quarterly*, *36*(1), 23-26.

McQuail, D., 1994, *Mass communication theory: An introduction*, 3rd ed. London, UK: Sage.

Meier, K. (1984). Much ado about nothing: The television broadcast packaging of team sport championship games. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, *1*, 263-279.

Meikle, G. (2002). *Future active: Media activism and the Internet*. London, UK: Pluto Press.

Merrin, W. (2009). Media studies 2.0: Upgrading and open-sourcing the discipline. *Interactions: Studies in Communication and Culture*, *1*(1), 17-34.

Miah, A., & Garcia, B. (2012). *The Olympics: the basics*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: A sourcebook* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Milligan, L. (August 11, 2012). I honestly cant (sic) tell the difference between a good dive and a bad one #Olympics2012. [Tweet]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/LaurenMilligan6/status/234236736434212865

Moore, K. (2011, July 26). 71% of online adults now use video-sharing sites. *Pew Research Centers Internet American Life Project*. Retrieved from http://www.pewinternet.org/2011/07/26/71-of-online-adults-now-use-video sharing-sites/

Morgan, D.L. (1993) Qualitative content analysis: a guide to paths not taken. *Qualitative Health Research, 1*, 112-121.

Motavalli, J. (2002). *Bamboozled at the revolution: How big media lost billions in the battle for the Internet*. New York, NY: Viking Press.

Namara, E. (August 12, 2012). Kiprotich's medal elevated Uganda to 50th position on the medals table. - Talk about #Uganda at 50... woop! woop! #Olympics2012 [Tweet]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/enamara/status/234677535726776321

NBC airs most-watched summer Games opening ceremony on record. (2012, July 28).

NBC Sports Pressbox. Retrieved from

http://nbcsportsgrouppressbox.com/2012/08/14/ondon-olympics-on-nbc-is-most

watched-television-event-in-u-s-history/

NBC Delayed (July 29, 2012). BREAKING: Jesse Owens wins gold in 100m spring

#NBCFail. [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/NBCDelayed/status/229682945059852290

NBC Delayed (July 29, 2012). Proof our tape delayed broadcasting model is working?

Over 3,000 new twitter followers in an hour #NBCFail. [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/NBCDelayed/status/229699610778685440

NBC fires up Olympic website. (2013, October 29). *TVTechnology*. Retrieved from

http://www.tvtechnology.com/article/nbc-fires-up-olympics-website/222067

NBC media guide. (2014, January 6). *NBC Sports Pressbox*. 2014 Sochi Olympic Media

Guide PDF Comments. Retrieved from

http://nbcsportsgrouppressbox.com/2014/01/06/2014-sochi-olympic-media-guide

pdf/

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 12). And that's a wrap! Thanks for enjoying the 2012

#Olympics with us! RT if you CAN'T Wait for #Sochi2014 [Tweet]. Retrieved

from https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/234846568036061185

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 12). THEN & NOW: #SpiceGirls #SpiceUpYourLife

#Olympics pic.twitter.com/GCGJ89Kp [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/234831466352238592

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 12). DID YOU KNOW: The British Flag's design

    combines the individual flags of England, Scotland and Northern Island? [Tweet].

    Retrieved from https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/234808606585942017

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 12). Who is the most inspirational athlete from the 2012

    #Olympics? [Tweet]. Retrieved from

    https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/234758363030908928

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 12). If you could pick, which member of men's

    @usabasketball do you think will be MVP of today's gold-medal final?

    #toomanytoochoosefrom [Tweet]. Retrieved from

    https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/234640494200778752

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 12). It's the LAST NIGHT of primetime at the #Olympics!

    We can't believe it! Tune in NOW to relish in all of the glorious moments of

    #London2012![Tweet]. Retrieved from

    https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/234787305406230528

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 11). It's all tied up in sets in the gold-medal women's

    #volleyball match: USA 1, BRA, 1! Watch LIVE here:

    http://nbco.ly/PMt5WX #Olympics [Tweet]. Retrieved from

    https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/234355100934610944

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 11). At the end of a 1940 broadcast, Edward R Murrow

    ended his radio segment from London w/ "good night, and good luck," his future

    catchphrase. [Tweet]. Retrieved from

    https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/234450309706022912

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 11). The now famous "Keep Calm & Carry On" posters

were distributed in Great Britain during WWII to keep public morale up.

pic.twitter.com/6qHd6TjI [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/234446364824723457

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 11). DID YOU KNOW? The last time an American won

the men's #diving 10m platform was in 1988 when @GregLouganis won gold?

[Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/234455317390438400

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 11). @davidboudia's achieves the first #diving gold medal

for #teamusa since Laura Wilkinson's 2000 gold medal in women's 10m

platform! [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/234480068951408643

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 11). THE DOUBLE! @Mo_Farah (GBR) wins GOLD in

the 5,000m, after winning gold in the 10,000m at #London2012! #history

#Olympics [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/234360666612453376

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 11). ON NOW: 2008 REMATCH: Women's volleyball

final: #BRAvUSA! [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/234491315855974400

NBCOlympics (2012, August 10). DID YOU KNOW? 14,000 cubic meters of soil were

imported to build the #BMX venue! #Olympics [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/234128290586185728

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 10). Good morning Olympics fans! Happy Friday! Here's

    what's going on today: http://nbco.ly/O8SRdm #BMX #USABasketball #relays

    [Tweet]. Retrieved from

    https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/233900943035494400

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 10). Want to learn more about first time #Olympian Julie

    Culley? Get to know her here: http://nbco.ly/N062ZN #Olympics #trackandfield

    [Tweet]. Retrieved from

    https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/234108450282557441

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 10). What happens when a pole snaps into three pieces

    mid-vault? WATCH this to find out: http://nbco.ly/PHvxOe [Tweet]. Retrieved

    from https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/234115489675223040

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 9). "We didn't finish that game, & we want to prove that

    we can finish & win gold for our country."- @abbywambach on 2011 World Cup,

    #London2012 [Tweet]. Retrieved from

    https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/233629862538137600

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 9). #REDEMPTION #THREEPEAT #GOLD!!!

    #USWNT#TEAMUSA [Tweet]. Retrieved from

    https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/233662485025153024

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 9). DID YOU KNOW? The #diving platform is just over

    32 feet from the surface of the water. #Olympics [Tweet]. Retrieved from

    https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/233753900069568513

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 9). TRUE OR FALSE: In #volleyball the libero cannot

    serve or spike the ball over the net or rotate into one of the front-row positions.

[Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/233734910102368256

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 9). HIGHLIGHT VIDEO: U.S. women's soccer wins

GOLD in a 2-1 victory over Japan: http://nbco.ly/PHUoBJ #USWNT #Olympics

@usssoccer_wnt [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/233693473868505088

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 8). Lots of American flags waving in the stands of

#HorseGuardsParade right now ... #beachvolleyball [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/233296557145997312

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 8). RT if 10m platform #diving makes you nervous.

#longwaytothepool [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/233356622842449921

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 8). Are YOU #bolting? Tweet your photos w/hashtag

#NBCBolt to be featured in a slideshow before @usainbolt's 200m tomorrow!

pic.twitter.com/AdPaId2h [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/233255683875803136

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 7). #WHOA. #AlyRaisman. #Impressive. #FloorRoutine.

[Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/233033994755792897

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 7). Very #patriotic leos on @jordyn_wieber &

@aly_raisman for the floor final! #teamusa #Olympics [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/233031798924382208

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 7). DID YOU KNOW: @mistymaytreanor &

    @kerrileewalsh are 20-0 at the #Olympics since 2004! #thatsalotofwins [Tweet].

    Retrieved from https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/233005139479371776

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 7). This MIGHT be the best #synchro montage we've ever

    seen. MIGHT: http://nbco.ly/NbvlKY #teamwork [Tweet]. Retrieved from

    https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/232967388340027392

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 7). Will the U.S. women's water polo team advance to

    gold medal match? It's 9-9 in OT vs. AUS! TUNE IN NOW to @NBC (ET/CT):

    http://nbco.ly/MtEyjz [Tweet]. Retrieved from

    https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/232864133106790401

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 6). PROGRAMMING CHANGE: The men's basketball

    game #USAvsARG will be on @MSNBC at 5:15p ET/ 4:15p CT. #USAB2012

    [Tweet]. Retrieved from

    https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/232584536825929730

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 6). PHOTO SHOOT! Behind the scenes with the women's

    @usagym team! http://nbco.ly/R38CRP #fab5 #Olympics [Tweet]. Retrieved

    from https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/232466421551099904

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 5). It's GOLD for @usainbolt with a new #Olympic

    Record! 9.63! RT if you're impressed! pic.twitter.com/q4p0EsxY [Tweet].

    Retrieved from https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/232314283244011522

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 5). If James #Bond were an Olympic athlete, he would

    definitely compete in _____. #Olympics [Tweet]. Retrieved from

    https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/232282798277402624

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 5). VIDEO: Want to know more about the MOST

DIFFICULT vault in #gymnastics? @mckaylamaroney & @jordyn_wieber tell

all: http://nbco.ly/TaeRnd [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/232301324904058880

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 5). In case you missed it: @christinaloukas' dives from the

semi finals that advanced her into the finals: http://t.co/iGjioCtJ #Olympics

[Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/232259881036566530

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 5). .@sanyarichiross: "I always say 'look good, feel good,

run good!" VIDEO: A day in the life: http://nbco.ly/Nivrgm [Tweet]. Retrieved

from https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/232310775966994433

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 5). VIDEO: McKayla Maroney's jaw-dropping vault that

helped #TeamUSA win gold (in slo-mo!):

http://nbco.ly/NqMCM3 #stillspeechless [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/232298588821151744

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 5). We don't know what we're enjoying more right now,

the match happening at #Wimbledon, or the crowd that's watching. #tennis

[Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/232169434947678208

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 5). "I love being in the air flipping, spinning, and people

looking at it and saying, 'How do you do that?'" - @christinaloukas [Tweet].

Retrieved from https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/232258492759678976

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 4). Asafa Powell (@officialasafa) & @usainbolt are

    friends: they play cricket together & have gone head-to-head in paintball!

    #trackbuddies [Tweet]. Retrieved from

    https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/231910249467084801

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 4). DID YOU KNOW: Approximately 5,000 tons of sand

    were transported to the #HorseGuardsParade to accommodate #Olympic

    #beachvolleyball? [Tweet]. Retrieved from

    https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/231919683404693504

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 4). RESULTS: Great Britain's Jessica Ennis (@j_ennis)

    wins GOLD in heptathlon: http://nbco.ly/Rmty8k #trackandfield [Tweet].

    Retrieved from https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/231843387832164352

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 4). 22 #Olympic Medals. 18 #Olympic Golds. 1 greatest

    #Olympian of all time. #MichaelPhelps [Tweet]. Retrieved from

    https://twitter.com/NBCOlympics/status/231950581210705920

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 4). TRUE or FALSE: @usainbolt will win gold in the

    100m at #London2012.[Tweet]. Retrieved from

    https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/231909341496766464

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 4). It's the last time we'll ever see @michaelphelps

    compete at the #Olympics. RT to congratulate the most decorated Olympian ever!

    [Tweet]. Retrieved from

    https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/231947373910306817

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 4). PHOTOS: @justingatlin on the track in 2012:

http://nbco.ly/MFQme4 [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/231906873459240961

NBCOlympics. (2012, August 4). VIDEO: The science behind @OscarPistorius' carbon

fiber blades: http://nbco.ly/MFOstG #bladerunner [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/231913014729768960

NBCOlympics. (2012, July 26). What's it like to meet @michaelphelps & @ryanlochte?

Ask @jordyn_wieber, & the rest of the women's @USAGym team:

http://t.co/Yqme9IjP   [Tweet]. URL unavailable.

NBCOlympics. (2012, July 25). WATCH LIVE NOW on @NBCSN! Women's #soccer

group play, @ussoccer_wnt vs. France! LIVESTREAM here:

http://nbco.ly/N2oVt6 #USWNT [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/nbcolympics/status/228157898667225090

NBC Sports Group Home. (2012, August 4). *NBC Sports Pressbox*. Through first week,

London Olympics sets viewership records. Retrieved from

http://nbcsportsgrouppressbox.com/2012/08/04/through-first-week-london

olympics-sets-viewership-records/

NBC Sports Group Home. (2012, August 7). *NBC Sports Pressbox*. More than 200

viewers tune in for the first 11 days of the Olympics. Retrieved from

http://stage.nbcuni.com/corporate/newsroom/more-than-200-million-viewers

tune-in-for-the-first-11-days-of-the-olympics/

NBC Sports Group Home. (2012, August 12). *NBC Sports Pressbox*. Through 16 days,

31.1 million average primetime viewership for London Olympics on NBC is best

for non-U.S. Summer Olympics in 36 years. Retrieved from

http://nbcsportsgrouppressbox.com/2012/08/12/through-16-days-31-1-million

average-primetime-viewership-for-london-olympics-on-nbc-is-best-for-non-u-s

summer-olympics-in-36-years/

NBC Universal surpasses $1 billion in national ad sales for London 2012 Olympic

Games. (2012, July 25). *NBC Sports Pressbox*. Retrieved from

www.nbcumv.com/mediavillage/sports/nbcsports/pressreleases?pr=contents/press

releases/2012/07/25/nbcuniversalsur1343237886417.xml

Olympics to offer unprecedented digital and social coverage of London 2012 Olympic

Games. (2012, July 24). *NBC Sports Pressbox*. Retrieved from

www.nbcumv.com/mediavillage/sports/nbcsports/pressreleases?pr=contents/press

releases/2012/07/24/nbcolympicstoof1343140684350.xml

Olympic Charter. (n.d.). International Olympic Committee. Retrieved from

www.olympic.org/Documents/olympic_charter_en.pdf

Ourand, J. (2013, November 18). Choose your perspective. *SportsBusiness Daily*.

Retrieved from

http://www.sportsbusinessdaily.com/Journal/Issues/2013/11/18/Colleges/Final

Four.aspx#.UooIbzUSzH4.facebook

Ovide, S. (2012, July 23). Twitter embraces Olympics to train for the big time. *Wall

Street Journal*. Retrieved from

http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10000872396390444025204577543313

Owens, J. (2006). *Television sports production* (4th ed.). Amsterdam: Focal Press.

Palser, B. (2009). Hitting the tweet spot. *American Journalism Review*, *31*(2), 54.

Panja, T. (2014, October 6). NBC ignores criticism of tape-delayed Olympics to smash

 records. *Bloomberg*. Retrieved from http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-10

 06/nbc-ignores-criticism-of-tape-delayed-olympics-to-smash-records.html

Parker, A. (2014, January 28). With social media's rise, the pulpit isn't just the President's

 anymore. The New York Times. Retrieved from

 http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/29/us/politics/a-night-no-longer-just-the

 presidents-pulpit.html?emc=eta1&_r=0

Parks, L. (2004). *Flexible microcasting: Gender, generation, and television-Internet*

 convergence. In L. Spigel & J. Olsson (Eds.), Television after TV: Essays on a

 medium in transition, 133–156. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Patton, M.Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA:

 Sage.

Perlroth, N., & Bilton, N. (2012, August 22). Despite #NBCFail, NBC and Twitter say

 partnership was success. *Bits.* Retrieved from

 http://bits.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/08/22/despitenbcfail-nbc-and-twitter-say

 partnership-was-success/

Pierce, T. (August 6, 2012). So NASA can send us high res [sic] images from Mars in

 minutes but it takes NBC 6 hours to get the Olympics on tv [sic] to the USA from

 London? #nbcfail. [Tweet]. Retrieved from

 https://twitter.com/busblog/status/232352333453991936

Plunkett, J. (2012). BBC rivals only allowed to show six minutes of Olympics footage a

 day. The Guardian. Retrieved from

http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2012/jul/27/bbc-rivals-six-minutes-olympics-footage

Poggi, J. (2012). So much for #NBCFail: Olympic ratings soar. *Advertising Age*. Retrieved from http://adage.com/article/media/nbcfail-olympics-ratings soar/236524/

Poster, M. (1995). *The second media age*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Pound, D. (2004). *Inside the Olympics.* New York, NY: Wiley and Sons.

Purcell, K. (2013, October 10). Online video 2013. *Pew Research Centers Internet American Life Project.* Retrieved from http://www.pewinternet.org/2013/10/10/online-video-2013/

Raboy, M. (2008). Dreaming in technicolor the future of PSB in a world beyond broadcasting. Convergence: *The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*, *14*(3), 361-365.

Rashtchy, F., Kessler, A. M., Bieber, P. J., Shindler, N. H., & Tzeng, J. C. (2007). *The user revolution: The new advertising ecosystem and the rise of the Internet as a mass medium*. Minneapolis, MN: Piper Jaffray Investment Research.

Rawlins, W.K. (1993). *Communication in cross-sex friendships*. In L.P. Arliss and D.J. Borisoff (eds), Women and Men Communicating: Challenges and Changes, 51-70. Fort Worth, TX: Hardcourt Brace-Jovanovich.

Raymond, R. (August 6, 2012). First ever Olympic medal for Grenada. That's brilliant. Well done Kirani James. I bet they are celebrating back home. #Olympics2012 [Tweet]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/raubrey/status/232575648781176833

Rosen, J. (2006, June 30). The people formerly known as the audience. *The Huffington Post*. Retrieved from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jay-rosen/the-people-formerly-known_1_b_24113.html

Rubio, J. (2012, August 3). NBC's Olympics website garners 744 million page views, quadrupling Beijing Games. *The Verge*. Retrieved from http://www.theverge.com/2012/8/3/3218353/nbc-olympics-site-744-million-page-views

Sandelowski, M. (1995). Qualitative analysis: What it is and how to begins. *Research in Nursing and Health*, *18*, 371-375.

Sandomir, R. (2012, July 29). Olympic viewers have a new reason to complain, and the means to do it. *New York Times*. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/30/sports/olympics/nbc-olympics-delay-and-streaming-bring-complaints-on-twitter.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0

Sarantakes, N. E. (2011). *Dropping the torch: Jimmy Carter, the Olympic boycott, and the Cold War*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Schrodt, J.M. (2011). Olympic athletes utilizing social media networks. (Unpublished thesis). University of Central Missouri, Warrensburg, MO.

Seay, L. (July 28, 2012). Good lord. NBC nightly news is reporting that Lochte beat Phelps. AND THEY HAVEN'T SHOWN IT YET. #nbcfail. [Tweet]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/texasinafrica/status/229346280625815552

Seidman, R. (2012). #NBCFail Fails: Less Than 0.5% of the 150 Million Olympic Related Tweets Included Hashtag. Retrieved from

http://tvbythenumbers.zap2it.com/2012/08/14/nbcfail-fails-less-than-0-5-of-the

150-million-olympic-related-tweets-included-hashtag/144994/

Seppänen, P. (1984). The Olympics: A sociological perspective. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, *19*(2), 113-127.

Sharif, B. (July 28, 2012). @NBC, profits strategy v PR disaster, brand hit? Short term v long term. You're risking too much when you don't listen to viewers. #nbcfail. [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/beasharif/status/229364910210048000

Sherman, A. (2012, August 1). NBC's tape-delay strategy boosting ratings, revenue. *Bloomberg*. Retrieved from, http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-08-01/nbc-says-it-s-right-around-breaking-even-on-olympic-games-1-.html

Shin, Y.R., & Yim, S.H. (2011, July 23). CNN exec says consumers want news 'on the go' *Korean Joonang Daily*. Retrieved from

http://koreajoongangdaily.joinsmsn.com/news/article/article.aspx?aid=2939260

Shoemaker, P.J., Johnson, P.R., Seo, H., & Wang, X. (2010). Readers as gatekeepers of online news. *Brazilian Journalism Research*, *6*(1), 55-77.

Shoemaker, P. J., & Vos, T. P. (2009). *Gatekeeping theory*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Shumeet, B., Rohan S., Sivakumar D., Jing Y., Yagnik J., Kumar S., Ravichandran, D., & Aly, M (2008). Video suggestion and discovery for youtube: taking random walks through the view graph. In *Proceedings of the 17th International Conference on World Wide Web* (WWW '08). ACM, New York, NY, USA, 895-904.

Singer, J.B. (2005). The political j-blogger: 'Normalizing' a new media form to fit old norms and practices. *Journalism*, *6*(2), 173-198.

Singer J.B. (2006). The Socially Responsible Existentialist; A normative emphasis

    for journalists in a new media environment. *Journalism Studies*, *7*(1), 2-18.

Slack, T. (2004). *The commercialisation of sport*. London, UK: Routledge.

Smith, J. (August 11, 2012). @texasinafrica: Tried to watch Olympics. Tom Brokaw

    talking about the Blitz for some reason. Turned off the not-Olympics. #nbcfail.

    [Tweet]. Retrieved from

    https://twitter.com/meprogrammerguy/status/234446536736636928

Smith, L., & Bissell, K. (2012). Nice dig!: Verbal and visual coverage of 2008 beach

    volleyball. *Communication & Sport*, *0*(0), 1-17.

Smith, L. & Bissell, K. (2009). Nice dig!: An analysis of the verbal and visual

    coverage of men's and women's beach volleyball during the 2008 Olympic games.

    In Proceedings of ICA, Chicago, Ill.

Snider, P.B. (1967). 'Mr. Gates' revisited: A 1966 version of the 1949 case study.

    Journalism Quarterly, *44*(3), 419-427.

Soroka, S. (2012). The gatekeeping function: Distributions of information in media and

    the realworld. *The Journal of Politics*, *74*(2), 514-528.

Spence, J. (1988, November 20). Are Olympic TV rights worth the price? *The New York*

    Times. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/1988/11/20/sports/views-of

    sport-are-olympictv-rights-worththe-price.html

Srivastava, M. (July 28, 2012). If you were planning to record that Olympics event

    you were going to miss, never mind, NBC is doing it for you #nbcfail. [Tweet].

    Retrieved from https://twitter.com/min2/status/229360682389340160

Stanley, C. (2007). When counter-narratives meet master narratives in the journal

editorial review process. *Educational Researcher*, *36*(1), 14-24.

Stewart, C. (2012). In age of Twitter, NBC rewrites Olympic playbook. *The Wall Street

Journal.* Retrieved from,

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB100014240527023036440045775232807389080

6.html

Suze, C. (July 28, 2012). NBC's hype about how great their coverage will be was a

classic bait and switch. #NBCfail. [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/SuzyVMc/status/229365552391544833

Svensson, P. (2012). NBC to break even, not lose money on Olympics. *Yahoo! News*.

Retrieved from http://news.yahoo.com/nbc-break-even-not-lose-money-olympics

195204861finance.html

Tanner, S. (July 29, 2012). In 1964, daily Olympics film was flown to the U.S. &

broadcast in B/W. Morning events shown in the evening. In 2012, we got color.

#NBCFail. [Tweet]. Retrieved from

https://twitter.com/Tannerman/status/229754988367323136

Television Bureau of Advertising. (2002). Ad revenue track: Political advertising.

Retrieved from http://www.tvb.org/rcentral/adrevenuetrack/politics/politics.html

Terry, S. (2006). YouTube video-sharing site is changing popular culture. *Which Way,

L.A.?*. Retrieved from

http://www.kcrw.com/news/programs/ww/ww061122youtube_videosharing

Thompson, D. (2012, August 14). How #NBCFail became 'the most watched TV event

in U.S. history.' *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from

http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2012/08/how-nbcfail-became-the

most-watched-tv-event-in-us-history/261118/

Titlow, J. (2012). How NBC's Olympics strategy became a new media fiasco. *ReadWriteWeb*. Retrieved from http://readwrite.com/2012/07/31/how-nbcs olympics-strategy-became-a-new-media-fiasco#awesm=~otCr0VdMa1HCKs

Titscher, S., Meyer, M., Wodak, R., & Vetter, E. (2000). Methods of text and discourse analysis (Bryan Jenner, Trans.). London, UK: Sage.

Tough, L., & Parr, B. (1995). Democratic interaction versus making choices. *Convergence, 1*(2), 14-18.

Turner, G., & Tay, J. (2009). *Television studies after TV: Understanding television in the post broadcast era*. New York, NY: Routledge.

TV History Archive of American Television (n.d.). Capturing TV history through video interviews. *Archive of American Television*. Retrieved from http://www.emmytvlegends.org/resources/tv-history

Uricchio, W. (2009). The future of a medium once known as television. In: Pelle Snickars, Patrick Vonderau, ed. *The YouTube reader*. Sweden: National library of Sweden, 24-37.

Vollmer, C., & Precourt, G. (2008). *Always on: Advertising, marketing, and media in an era of consumer control*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Walsh, P. (2003). The withered paradigm: The web, the expert and the information hegemony, in Henry Jenkins and David Thornurn (eds) *Democracy and New Media* (pp. 365-72). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Watts, D., & Dobbs, P.S. (2007). Influentials, networks, and public opinion formation. *Journal of Consumer Research 34*(4), 441–458.

Weinstein, S. (July 29, 2012). Phelps swims for the USA in the 4x100 relay in 1 hour or so...seen everywhere but here in the USA on #NBCfail. [Tweet]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/steveweinstein/status/22964771593872998

Wenner, L.A. (1989). *Media, sports, and society: the research agenda*. In L.A. Wenner (ed.), Media, Sports, and Society, 13-48. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Westerman, D., Spence, P., & Van Der Heide, B. (2013). Social media as information source: Recency of updates and credibility of information. *Journal of Computer Mediated Communication*, *1*, 1-13.

Westley, B.H., & Maclean, M.S., Jr. (1957). A conceptual model for communications research. *Journalism Quarterly*, *34*, 31-38.

Whannel, G. (1984). *The television spectacular*. In A. Tomlinson and G. Whannel (eds), Five ring circus: Money, power, and politics at the Olympic Games, 30-43. London, UK: Pluto Press.

White, D.M. (1950). The 'gate keeper': A case study in the selection of news. *Journalism Quarterly*, *27*, 383-390.

White, D.M. (1964). The 'Gatekeeper': A case study in the selection of news, In Lewis A. Dexter/David M. White: *People, Society and Mass Communications* (pp.160-172). London, UK: Free Press of Glencoe.

Williams, B.A., & Carpini, M.X.D. (2004). Monica and Bill all the time and everywhere: The collapse of gatekeeping and agenda setting in the new media environment. *American Behavioral Scientist, 47*(9), 1208-1230.

Wilson, D. (2012). London Games to be first social media Olympics. *Businessweek*. Retrieved from http://www.businessweek.com/ap/2012-06-19/londongames-to be-first socialmedia-olympics

Woodward, K. (2012). *Sex power and the Games*. London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Yoder, M. (2012, July 30). NBC's Olympic tape delay strategy ruffling feathers... again. *Awful Announcing*. Retrieved from http://www.awfulannouncing.com/2012 articles/july/nbc-s-olympic-tape-delaystrategy-ruffling-feathers-again.html

Zhao, X., Jiang, J., Weng, J., He, J., Lim, Ee P., Yan, H., & Li, X. (2011). Comparing Twitter and traditional media using topic models. Research Collection School of Information Systems (Open Access). Paper 1375.