

# The Internal and External Influences on Individual Journalists

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## **Abstract**

This research paper is based on a study of the internal and external influences that affect an individual journalist and their produced work. There have been studies that research how media organizations influence the general public but there are many factors that come into play when creating the news. A journalist is influenced by their morals, beliefs and opinions or internal factors when making news decisions. Journalists are influenced by external influences as well, such as their news organization, guidelines and universal ethics.

The purpose of this study is to gain an understanding of the process that a journalist must go through when creating and curating the news.

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# Chapter 1

## *Introduction*

### **Statement of the Problem**

This study focuses on the different internal and external factors that have an influence on a journalist's ideology. By taking an in depth look into the ideology of a journalist, not only is the profession being studied but also the factors that influence the journalist's work. These influences ultimately help shape what the end product of the coverage of a certain event, issue or topic will be. Over the years journalism studies refer to the journalists' professional process as a distinctly ideological development and as an emerging ideology serving to continuously refine and reproduce what a journalist is a how they define what news is (Deuze, pg.244).

The way that a journalist works in the field and produces the news has been studied for many years. What hasn't been comprehensively studied is the decision process and influential factors that come into play when creating the news.

### **Background of the Problem**

The existing literature regarding the influences of journalism mainly focuses on the benefits that the newsroom brings to the public. The idea that a journalist is creating content for the public is widely spoken about. What is often overlooked is how the content is created or how content is perceived as newsworthy. It has been identified that journalists have various roles within their field but the value that is given to these roles suggest that these perceived roles influence their work. "Personal values and demographic factors contribute to a web of context through which journalists view their

roles and make decisions about which functions they feel are central” (Plaisance and Skewes, pg. 833).

The idea that journalists potentially use their personal beliefs within their process to create news is important to study. These beliefs are factors that create the concept of what journalists define as news. The media organization that a journalist is employed at and the individual’s personal beliefs structure much of the news content and delegates what is important for the public to know.

### **Purpose of the Study**

According to the current shift in journalism where online media outlets dominate readership, journalists are influenced by many factors when creating news content for the public and content that will engage their audience. Journalists are academically taught to keep personal biases out of the newsroom and facilitate the news objectively. There are many internal and external influences that affect a journalist’s view on what content should be reported on.

A journalist is influenced by the type of reporting that their organization facilitates as the newsroom has certain expectations as to what is important to report on. What content is newsworthy varies in every news organization but there is a worldwide guideline that is followed on what is determined to be “newsworthy”. This is just a glimpse of the different factors that have an impact on a journalist and ultimately influence their produced work. By investigating the current influences on journalists it will benefit the reader to understand what methods and processes shape a journalist and their work.

## **Setting for the Study**

This study will be done as part of the data collection for a senior project at California Polytechnic State University located in San Luis Obispo, California. Interviews will be conducted with three experts in the following fields: broadcast radio medium, print medium, and broadcast television medium. The experts will each be asked to answer a designed questionnaire based on the research questions and fill the gaps in previous literature on the topic of internal and external influences on journalists.

## **Research Questions**

The study used the following research questions that were designed to answer fundamental gaps in the existing literature on the topic of internal and external influences on journalists. Each question was created after investigating the existing information on the topic in order to acquire additional pertinent and necessary data from professionals in the fields of broadcast television, broadcast radio and print mediums.

1. What are the motives of a journalist when he or she is facilitating the news?
2. What are the guidelines that a journalist must follow when reporting the news?
3. What personal morals do journalists have when creating the news?
4. How do different media platforms influence the way that a journalist facilitates the news?
5. What does a journalist find as newsworthy when reporting on certain topics?



6. Does the public or audience influence the journalists or their work in any way?

### **Definition of Terms**

The following several terms have been defined in order to assist the reader and provide context throughout the remainder of the study.

Civic Journalism: Public journalism (also known as civic journalism) is one recent attempt to place value on what citizens know about issues, problems, and events in their communities. (Miller and Kurpius, pg. 139)

Cohort membership: Cohort membership is a group of people used in a study who have something (such as age or social class) in common. (Peiser, pg. 244)

Ethics: Ethics is based on the Greek work *ethos*; it is defined in terms of what is morally right or wrong in terms of the self in relation to others. (Perebinossoff, pg.7)

Journalist's Ideology: A cultural knowledge that constitutes 'news judgment', rooted deeply in the communicators' consciousness. (Deuze, pg. 444)

Medium: One of the means or channels of general communication, information, or entertainment in society, as newspapers, radio, or television. (dictionary.reference.com)

Watchdog: A journalist that believes he or she is an agent of empowerment and nation building. A journalist that keeps a watchful eye on the government. (Weaver & Willnat, pg. 36)

### **Organization of Study**

Chapter 1 includes the background of the problem, the purpose of the study and the definition of terms. Chapter 2 will identify the issues of internal and external influences on a journalist and their facilitation of the news by reviewing the current

literature on the topic. Chapter 3 will present the methodology of the study. In Chapter 4, the findings from the interviews will be presented and organized based on the original research questions. Lastly, Chapter 5 will include a summary of the study and an insight as to what journalists are influenced by when covering news in different journalism mediums.

## Chapter 2

### *Literature Review*

This chapter focuses on the existing literature on the topic of internal and external influences on a journalist and their method for covering and delegating news coverage.

#### **Motives and Roles**

The main role that a journalist takes on when providing the audience with news is a facilitator of information. This role essentially motivates the journalist to provide their organization and the public with quality news content. “Consequently, it is not unreasonable to expect that perceived roles and underlying principles correlate with one another-not only in the sense that journalists endorse various media roles and corresponding values, but that values, even potentially conflicting ones, are held simultaneously” (Skewes and Plaisance, pg. 835). It is argued that when journalists perceive their role as a provider of news that influences what kind of content they provide their audience with.

This influence, created by the journalistic role ultimately influences how and what the journalist will deem is important for the public to know. In order to fulfill their role as a facilitator of news the journalist must consider what is important enough to cover. The journalist must find out what is newsworthy to the public as well as their news organization.

#### **Newsworthiness Influences**

What a journalist considers as “newsworthy” is a factor that influences their decision-making process on the coverage of news. Before an article is created an idea or story pitch is delegated by the newsroom and whether it has any importance to their

audience is considered (Donsbach, pg. 134). In order for a story to be considered newsworthy it must have one or more of the following characteristics: timeliness, proximity, prominence, human interest and relevance. These characteristics may vary to every journalist or the definition of the characteristic may be different to each individual. These characteristics also differ in each organization, what might be important in one town for instance will not be important news to the state. What the audience may believe is relevant or important to their lives is also taken into consideration when delegating these characteristics.

A factor that comes into play when delegating what piece of content is newsworthy is their “cohort membership” (Peiser pg.244). Cohort membership, or age group is a vital characteristic that determines what is important enough to be reported on. In the journalism world, different age groups within the men and women in the field, mean journalists differ in what they believe is newsworthy and what they believe should be reported on. These different age groups also differ on what the public will deem as important, interesting and worth their overall time. Wolfram Peiser suggests in the article “Setting the Journalist Agenda: Influences from Journalists’ Individual Characteristics and from Media Factors”, that a journalist born before the World War II time period would consider the reunification of Germany important because they personally experienced the divide (Peiser, pg. 244). A journalist that was born ten years later wouldn’t consider that as important or relevant to modern or current topics.

When a journalist or a newsroom is delegating the importance of a news pitch, the story’s newsworthiness is taken into consideration. A story must have one or a few of these factors to be considered important: timeliness, proximity, prominence, human

interest and relevance. What an individual deems as newsworthy influences their work and their decisions to cover certain stories. Along with the fact that a journalist is influenced by what they believe is newsworthy they are also influenced by the news organization that they work for.

### **Occupational Influences**

An external influence that motivates a journalist to present the news in a given manner is what Paul Voakes, author of the article “Social Influences on Journalists’ Decision Making in Ethical Situations”, calls occupational influence. This factor is defined as the influence created by the market that the journalist finds himself or herself in. “It is concerned with the organization’s relations with competing news media in its market as well as the organization’s place in the market” (Voakes, Pg.24). This means that the organization or publication that the journalist finds him or herself in reflects what end product the journalist will create.

For example if the organization is competing to create news quickly then the journalist will be influenced to work quickly and produce their news quickly. If a journalist is part of an organization that covers a specific region then the news that is reported on will be of importance to that region. In order for the organization to stay ahead in the competitive market a journalist will do what they can to keep their organization in the highest rank. This also means that the type of newsroom that the journalist find themselves in will influence how they work in order to produce content the organization will use and keep the organization running.

Another factor in the occupational influence is the persona that a journalist receives when employed for a specific organization. A journalist continues to learn about

reporting news, as every organization reports the news in a different manner. “In addition to the constant teaching and reinforcement engendered by colleagues in the newsroom, some journalists are active in professional associations and through meetings and publications are exposed to issues common to other journalists” (Voakes, pg. 25). It is explained that through socializing within the organization journalists exchange ideas and thoughts in order to display what is of importance within that specific organization. In this sense the journalist learns what is important when choosing what should be reported on and what angle to take the story in. Content is created and is influenced by the type of work that the organization creates.

In contrast Mark Deuze argues that some reporters identify themselves more with the profession, or professional title, of journalist rather than the organization that has employed them. Deuze finds that the reporter feels that the values of the journalist, gives legitimacy and credibility to their work. The values are public service, objectivity, autonomy, immediacy, and ethics (Deuze, pg.447). By using these values when determining what is news the journalists is always reinventing what is important to them, the organization and their public. In this argument states that a journalist is influenced by the organization but is mainly influenced by the idea that their profession is to report the news accurately while following ethical guidelines.

### **Morals and Ethics**

When reporting the news in any medium, reporters must always be fair and accurate. These are just two types of ethics that journalists must abide by in order to be seen as a credible and their organization can be seen as a credible source of news for the public. In the larger view of the journalism field reporters are influenced by these ethics

when making decisions on how to cover a certain topic, how to approach a source and how to delegate whether an article should be published.

Moral development is high in investigative and civic journalism as judgment is key when searching for factual evidence and information. “It has been shown that investigative reporters make moral decisions regarding wrongdoing then abandon objectivity to push for the public good, serve as moral judges and deal with ethical issues more than other types of reporters” (Coleman and Wilikins, pg. 514). It is argued that when dealing with uncovering information the journalist uses their moral judgment to report on the subject for the public. The journalist is influenced by their moral reasoning in order to facilitate the news. Not only is the influence taking ethics into consideration but the journalist is also taking the public into consideration. The morals lead the journalist to think about whether the information is important to the public and whether it will create an impact for the public.

There are many ethical issues that arise when journalists are reporting on the news. These issues can vary between an issue that a journalist may report on or even the journalist’s actions. Philippe Perebinosoff explains in his book “Real-World Media Ethics” many media organizations test their employees to ensure that their ethical behavior is maintained. He said that all major broadcasters ABC, CBS, FOX and NBC administer ethics survey and questionnaires. In this way these organizations can maintain that their journalists are making ethical decisions. “Media companies have guidelines outlining what is ethically permissible and what is not” (Perebinosoff, pg.5). Every organization has different ethical guidelines that journalists must abide by in order to provide their audience with factual, fair and accurate stories.

These methods also give the organization as well as the journalist credibility and a sense of trust between the media and the public. These morals and ethics that journalists abide by influence how they create the news in a fair and accurate manner to maintain their relationship with the public. Creating a credible name for the individual and for the news organization builds trust with the audience, as they are aware that they can present accurate news pieces.

### **Public Service**

The main role that a reporter plays in journalism is to provide a service to the public. When creating news stories or delegating what is a newsworthy topic to report on, the main goal is to create an informative piece for the public. Yariv Tsfati and Oren Livio argue that the media's impact is perceived as the "third person effect". This effect demonstrates that a journalist doesn't just believe that their work is for "themselves", or "you the reader" but for everyone. The idea is that a journalist perceives that the influence of media on others is larger than the influence that media creates on the journalist (Tsfati and Livio, pg. 114).

The effects of the media are not only influencing the public that is essentially taking in the news coverage but the media that is created as well influences journalists as well. The media influences journalists just as the public is influenced. This occurs because they are taking in the information and processing it in a way that they can create a news piece. When a topic is taken into the newsroom and assigned to a reporter, the content is taken into consideration as information that the public would be interested in or information that the public should be aware of. Keeping the public informed of anything



that a journalist believes the public should know and would concern them, gives the journalist the role of watchdog.

## **Chapter 3**

### *Methodology*

The contents of this chapter present the methods that were used to collect the data for the study. The methods include data sources, collection and presentation of the data and delimitations.

#### **Data Sources**

For this study, one expert from the field of broadcast radio, broadcast television, and news editorial were interviewed based on a single questionnaire. The questionnaire was created to specifically answer the research questions regarding the internal and external influences on a journalist. The broadcast radio expert selected for the interview was:

#### **Participants**

The first participant interviewed was Jordan Bell a broadcast radio journalist and producer for KCBX Central Coast Public Radio. The broadcast television expert interview was Armando Tonatiuh, a correspondent for Univision Costas Central. The final expert was in the news editorial field, Kaytlyn Leslie, a south county beat reporter for the San Luis Obispo Tribune.

#### **Interview Design**

The following questions were asked of each of the experts. These questions resulted in data sources for the study:

1. Are you personally motivated to cover certain story assignments?
2. Do you believe there are any external factors that influence?

3. Do your morals and/or beliefs influence you to cover news in a certain way? Can you expand on that?
4. Would a certain situation of a person or event effect whether you would cover the story a certain way or not at all?
5. How does your work affect public opinion?

### **Data Collection**

For the data collection of this study three individual interviews were conducted with each expert. The interviews were conducted during June 2015 and lasted approximately 30 minutes each. During each interview the experts were asked to answer questions from the designed questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to provide data and answers to the original research questions while gaining insight into the influences of the journalism profession.

### **Data Presentation**

The answers that were collected during each interview were documented by audio recordings by using a digital voice recorder as well as hand written notes. These notes were taken during the interview and after depending on whether follow up questions for clarification were needed. The method used for collection data ensures that the responses and data are presented in an accurate and objective way.

### **Delimitations**

The data collected is presented in the most accurate and objective way possible but there are limitations for this study. The limitations are based on the type of data collected and the interview process. The study was conducted to gain an insight of the influences that affect the experts interviewed in their respected fields. Therefore, there are

limitations in the fact that the experts are giving responses based on their experiences and opinions, resulting in answers that cannot be generalized.

Another aspect to take into consideration was the fact that a majority of the interviews were conducted over the phone which could lead to a potential non-candid responses. All experts were employed in the Central Coast area limiting the data from being generalized. The interviews were conducted with a digital recorder but there are some potential limitations when taking the clarity of the audio recording. All experts are fairly new to the professional journalism field which limits the experience to be generalized to all journalists.

## Chapter 4

### *Data Analysis*

Chapter 4 contains descriptions of the experts interviewed in the study and a summary of the responses to the questionnaire. The responses were collected through a digital recorder in interviews that lasted about 25 to 30 minutes. It will be presented in the form of direct quotations or paraphrased responses. The answers will then be analyzed and compared to the original research questions as well as the literature presented in Chapter 2.

#### **Description of Participating Experts in Related Fields**

##### **Broadcast Radio.**

The first participant interviewed was Jordan Bell a broadcast radio journalist as well as producer of a specific show within the daily newscast. Bell began her career in public radio when she interned with KCBX Central Coast Public Radio in San Luis Obispo, California back in 2014. She has been employed by KCBX for about a year and is now a reporter and producer of the show *Issues and Ideas*.

##### **Broadcast Television.**

The second participant is Armando Tonatiuh who is a broadcast television correspondent. Tonatiuh is a news correspondent for Univision Costa Central. He covers news in the San Luis Obispo and Santa Maria area for Telemundo and Univision, both Latin American news organizations. He has been a correspondent for the organization for about two years.

## **News Editorial.**

The third participant is Kaytlyn Leslie a reporter for a print news publication. Leslie is a south county beat reporter for the San Luis Obispo Tribune. She began her career with the Tribune about two years ago and has been in charge of a certain beat throughout her career.

## **Internal and External Questionnaire**

Each expert was asked to respond to the following questions and probes regarding what they believe their personal internal and external influences are within their work and their organization.

### **1. Are you personally motivated to cover certain stories?**

Question #1 was asked to gain an understanding in how journalists reach a decision to covering certain stories within their given medium. The question was designed to understand what each individual journalist sees as newsworthy enough to cover while taking into consideration their organization and other factors.

- Jordan Bell: “I think that to some extent I feel like certain stories need to be told... But I also still have to do that within the parameters of our values as a newsroom and a news organization and in what we like to align ourselves with and the greater NPR value system and that mindset, of speaking to the audience and providing something different to just a regular story. But I also think that the value that NPR has, like not necessarily having that story first but having it accurate, but also providing a greater context and also the why behind things” (Appendix A).

- Armando Tonatiuh: “Yes, I’ll tell you more specifically immigration stories are very near and dear to my heart because I’m an undocumented student so I kind of you know, I know a lot about that kind of stuff... But I’ve always been extra careful to cover that even if it is about immigration even if it is for action, to cover it in a very unbiased way. I really believe that, that is the most important thing that we can do for each other in journalism community and just in the general population. I would not feel comfortable if I was doing my own spin on it or my own personal opinion” (Appendix B).
- Kaytlyn Leslie: “Yeah, I would say that there are stories that you know you see pop up and they definitely look more interesting to you and you feel like that’s a really good thing I want to cover that” (Appendix C).

## 2. Do you believe there are any external factors that influence you?

Question #2 was asked of the respondents to see whether the individuals believed that they were influenced by their employers, their organization, or any other type of external factor. This question was designed so that the journalist can identify what factors if any influence them to cover certain stories or topics.

- Jordan Bell: “I think objectivity is a value but I think it’s impossible for any human being to achieve because you’re going to go into the field or have a phone conversation and based on your experiences and all those things that have added up in your life to get to where you are, you’re going to be prompted to ask a different question than someone else... And yes I will give the facts and I will try to balance the story by getting like whatever this paradigm we live in with this one of two sides kind of thing always.” (Appendix A).

- Armando Tonatiuh: “I mean I can tell you Univision of course is secluded to the Hispanic population and it has a lot of different views especially when it comes to healthy care, especially when it comes to immigration. So I can definitely tell you that, that kind of pressure exists from other sources and enforcing their reporters in one way or another,” (Appendix B).
- Kaytlyn Leslie: “I think that you kind of have to have that kind of judgment because there are so many stories that come to you all the time and you’re always constantly having to you know prioritize everything and figure out which ones you can do. Luckily lot of the help there is from your editors, they’re typically pretty good at giving you a little bit more input on what they think is going to help out. But they’re a good external influence on that” (Appendix C).

3. Do your morals and/or beliefs influence you to cover news in a certain way? Can you elaborate on that?

Question #3 was asked to gain an insight into what personally influences each journalist, if any. The question was designed to understand what a journalist takes into consideration when making decisions on how to cover a story, whether it is newsworthy and how the story will affect their audience.

- Jordan Bell: “You know give those two sides because it’s kind of how you’re supposed to structure things but I think my personal values or my personal subjective mind is totally going to influence what I do but there are reasons that as journalists we supposed to follow a value system and that helps us to not get into trouble because we are people just as much as the next person. And so I think that’s how my values influence me” (Appendix A).



- Armando Tonatiuh: “My main philosophy is I like to help empower Latinos in any way that I possibly can... You know I just think that my main motivator is just to try to give people the best information, stay as close to the truth as possible so they can make their own education decisions about whatever I’m covering” (Appendix B).
- Katylyn Leslie: “That’s a hard one because I’d say you want to try to aim to not have that really be, really play a factor I mean I know that it does kind of play a factor when you look at the story and your like oh I don’t want to really go there, I don’t want to have to do that. You do have to go and you do have to cover something that maybe are different from what you think. But it also gives you and interesting perspective” (Appendix C).

4. If there was a certain situation that involved writing a story of a human-interest piece or covering an event how would you choose which story to cover? Why would you choose one story over the other? What influences this decision?

Question #4 was created in order to understand how a journalist decides on what stories have the most value in terms of informing their audience. This questions provides an insight into the different views on what story has more precedence over another and why.

- Jordan Bell: “I think that is a big factor in how they report the origin of how they find things...” (Appendix A).
- Armando Tonatiuh: “It gives you a good opportunity to bring awareness to something that millions or hundreds of thousands of people might be suffering from so I would see that as very newsworthy. Any time that you get a chance to

interview one person, even if it's a wide spread problem... How is this going to impact the person watching it on TV, can we do something to raise awareness about it stuff like that" (Appendix B).

- Kaytlyn Leslie: "If people are going to read it, if people are going to care. Even if it's something that I would personally disagree with... If people are going to be interested in that you still do have to write about it and so you kind of separate yourself from it at that point" (Appendix C).

#### 5. How does your work affect public opinion?

Question #5 was asked to gain an understanding of how the audience affects what stories the journalist produces. How an audience will perceive the information or whether the audience finds the story important affects whether a journalist will cover a specific topic or not.

- Jordan Bell: "I think that, I guess we kind of in some ways use a utilitarian approach like okay this is going to affect this many people and that's often times criteria for making something useful. And we are a public service and we are here to serve the public, so yeah definitely" (Appendix A).
- Armando Tonatiuh: "I think my work effects public opinion a lot. People are heavily influenced by what they see on TV, they're heavily influenced by media especially in such a community as the Central Coast California. We have a big immigrant population and we only have two basic cable channels in Spanish, that's Telemundo and Univision so I do think that we have a huge impact on the community" (Appendix B).

- Kaytlyn Leslie: “Yeah it’s a never ending loop because you see that people care about something then you know in the future this is something similar to what they cared about that last time I should probably write about it this time so it kind of speaks into each other” (Appendix C).

### **Influences on Individual Journalists Research Questions**

For this research project the following six questions were created for the study to determine what influences exist that affect journalists and their produced work. These influences that were researched were internal and external influences based on the individual journalist, media platform and the journalists organization.

#### **Question 1: What are the motives of a journalist when he or she is facilitating the news?**

- “Journalists’ perceptions about what is news are influenced as much by their personal experiences as by their training and newsroom socialization. In this sense, news content can be highly individualized” (Skews and Plaisance, pg. 836).
- “The major assumption is that journalists’ backgrounds and ideas have some relationship to what is reported (and how it is covered) in the various news media around the world, in spite of various societal and organizational constraints, and that this news coverage matters in terms of public opinion...” (Peiser, pg. 243).

#### **Question 2: What are the guidelines that a journalist must follow when reporting the news?**

- “Journalists in elective democracies share similar characteristics and speak of similar values in the context of their daily work, but apply these in a variety of

way to give meaning to what they do. Journalists in all media types, genres and formats carry the ideology of journalism” (Deuze, pg.445).

**Question 3: What personal morals do journalists have when creating the news?**

- “What is considered as ethical behavior may depend on the personal values of the journalist, the customs of the news organization for which he or she works, the availability of accurate information about a situation, and the perceptions that reporters or editors have about the potential consequences of decisions” (Weaver and Willnat, pg. 358).
- “Journalists were slightly more likely to endorse the need to analyze and interpret complex problems; to be adversaries of public officials; and help develop intellectual or cultural interests of the audience” (Weaver and Willnat, pg. 360).

**Question 4: How do different media platforms influence the way that a journalist facilitates the news?**

- “Crane found that journalists create stories more to please their colleagues than for their audiences, as they seek to be viewed as professionals by their peers. This the standard for professionalism leads to a competition for highly placed individuals whom journalists value as credible sources of trustworthy information” (Miller and Kurpius, pg.140)

**Question 5: What does a journalist find as newsworthy when reporting on certain topics?**

- “More than half of the journalists considered it extremely important for the media to investigate government claims: to analyze and interpret complex problems; to

get information to the public quickly; and to avoid stories where facts cannot be verified” (Weaver and Willnat, pg. 356).

**Question 6: Does the public or audience influence the journalists or their work in any way?**

- “The practices of public journalists tend to reinforce the dominant position of news media in communities while at the same time endorsing a more responsive attitude towards publics, indeed showing how an age-old ideological value can serve to maintain the status quo in journalism while its practitioners adapt to a changing media culture (Deuze, pg.448).

**Influences on Journalists Data**

In order for this study to be comprehensive it was important to speak with experts in the different media platforms and see what their responses were to the created questionnaire. This personal insight and information would add to the presented research as there is a small amount of information that currently exists on the topic. In order to acquire this data Jordan Bell, a broadcast radio expert, Armando Tonatiuh, a broadcast television expert and Kaytlyn Leslie, a news editorial expert, were interviewed for the study. Each individual was asked identical questions specifically designed to answer the original research questions in an individual interview setting. The following tables present the respondents’ answers in the form of their individual responses and insight on the original research questions.

**Research Question 1: What are the motives of a journalist when he or she is facilitating the news?**

The research question was studied in response to the current literature that exists on the topic of internal and external influences on individual journalists. Based on the literature it is stated that there is a sense of personal motivation on behalf of the journalist when creating and curating the news. What these motivates are differ with each individual journalist.

This question was studied in order to gain a better understanding of what influences journalists to cover certain news topics. There are certain factors that influence how a journalist decides what should be covered within their news organization as well. It was asked to clarify how a journalist defines what factors influence their work as well as their decision making process.

Table 1 summarizes the answers to this question asked of the respondents.

Table 1

*Motivating Factors on a Journalist*

---

Respondent	Journalists are motivated because...	Example
Jordan Bell	A need to raise awareness.	NPR, tells the “Why” in a story.
Armando Tonatiuh	Previous knowledge about the subject.	Immigration stories, while he is an undocumented student.
Kaytlyn Leslie	An interesting story.	Story assignments

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All respondents had fairly consistent answers to the question, in that they all believe whether internal or external, there are motives that gear a journalist in a certain

direction. Jordan Bell explained that the need to raise awareness and tell a story is what she believes motivates her work. In contrast Armando Tonatiuh said that he believes having prior knowledge on the subject can aid a story especially when it is something that is very personal for him. Kaytlyn Leslie said that when she sees certain story assignments that are interesting and what she deems is newsworthy she is motivated to cover them.

**Research Question 2: What are the guidelines that a journalist must follow when reporting the news?**

This research question was created in order gain a better understanding of what guidelines are in place that journalists are abiding by when making decisions on which stories are newsworthy and how certain stories should be covered.

The question was studied in order to understand the thought process and guidelines that a journalist follows. There are many questions that a journalist must answer such as: what is newsworthy, what the audience will find important, how to cover the story and whether or not a certain story should be covered at all. This question was researched so that the guidelines that a journalist must follow while working in the field are clearly defined.

Table 2 summarizes the answers to this question asked of the respondents.

Table 2

*Guidelines for Journalists*

Respondent	What guidelines to reporters have...	Example
Jordan Bell	To report with a balance and a value system	Journalists are human
Armando Tonatiuh	Cover stories in an unbiased manner	Empower Latinos with his coverage
Kaytlyn Leslie	Journalists make news decisions	Help from editors

It was found from the respondents that there is varies guidelines that journalists must follow in order to cover the news. There isn't one defining guideline model but some of the responses align with one another. Jordan bell believed that by reporting the news with a balance and a certain value system is what she follows in order to create her news stories. She does say that as much as journalists are supposed to be objective, it just isn't possible because a reporter's subjective mind will always come into play. Armando said that within his organization he covers stories that he hopes will empower the Latino community but he follows the guidelines of being unbiased. Kaytlyn Leslie said that she follows the decision making guidelines of a journalist in that she follow what her news organization deems as important to cover.

**Research Question 3: What personal morals do journalists have when creating the news?**



This research question was created in order to gain an insight of what internal factors, if any, are influencing journalists and their work. These factors more specifically, are a journalist’s personal morals. It has been discovered in the literature review that journalists are supposed to be objective and report the news without a bias. This isn’t the case as many journalists are influenced by their morals and the morals that they have learned to abide by. The research question was studied so that there is a better understanding of internal influences that gear a journalist to report on certain stories.

Table 3 summarizes the answers to this question asked of the respondents.

Table 3

*Personal Morals*

Respondent	Personal morals affect work...	Example
Jordan Bell	Report on both sides of a story	Giving both platforms a voice.
Armando Tonatiuh	Objective and unbiased	Providing the community with accurate information
Kaytlyn Leslie	Having to do your job	Not wanting to cover a story of a death

The table summarizes the respondents’ answers to question of whether personal morals affect journalists. Jordan Bell responded to the question affirming that personal morals do affect the work of a journalist but must still remain unbiased when presenting coverage. Armando Tonatiuh says that there are personal morals that come into play in a journalist’s work even though its coverage should be objective and unbiased. Kaytlyn Leslie explains that she has had to report on a death and personally she didn’t want to do

that story because she wouldn't want to be bothered by the media had a relative of hers past. In any case she said that she along with other journalists must do their job.

**Research Question 4: How do different media platforms influence the way that a journalist facilitates the news?**

This research question was created in order to gain a better understanding of the different media platforms that journalists work in and how that influences their work. The research question was studied in order to define what different factors come into play when a journalist is covering varying news stories. The different media platforms have different focuses when covering the news and taking their specific audience into consideration.

Table 4 summarizes the answers to the question asked of the respondents.

Table 4

*Different Media Platforms*

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Respondent	Are media platforms are influential...	Example
Jordan Bell	Skills and characteristics are gained from newsroom	Stylistic characteristics from news director.
Armando Tonatiuh	The organization has a say in the type of stories they're looking for	Univision covers health care
Kaytlyn Leslie	Many different stories cause for newsroom influence	Editors are influencers

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From the data findings in Table 4 the answer was unanimous in that all respondents believed that they were in some way influenced by their news organization.

Jordan Bell said that she gained many of her stylistic approaches to writing from her news director because that results in the type of stories that are covered within that media organization. Armando Tonatiuh said that he has seen the influence within his media organization Univision Costa Central, as the organization focuses in the Latino community. Kaytlyn Leslie said that within her newsroom a lot of decisions made are influenced but the editors within the newsroom and that is how content is created as well as structured.

**Research Question 5: What does a journalist find as newsworthy when reporting on certain topics?**

This research question was designed in order to understand how a journalist perceives a story as newsworthy. In order for a story to be reported on or published it must be newsworthy enough that it is important and compelling to the certain audience that a news organization has. The question was studied to receive a clear understanding of what is viewed as newsworthy and how a journalist decides what stories fall under that category. Every news organization differs in the way that they present their news as well as the angle in which they present it.

Table 5 summarizes the answers to the question asked of the respondents.

Table 5

*What is Newsworthy*

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Respondent	How is newsworthy defined	Example
Jordan Bell	Find the origin of a story and tie in human element	A city ordinance and a affected community member.

Armando Tonatiuh	Human-interest piece	How can one element portray the story
Kaytlyn Leslie	The community/public	Whether or not people will read the story

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Table 5 presents the idea that there are many different aspects that come in to play when determining what story is newsworthy. Jordan Bell explains that when she covers certain stories she feels that finding the origin of a story it usually ties to a human element. Similar to Bell, Armando Tonatiuh explained that he also find the human-interest element very powerful when story telling, the person often is the face of the topic. Kaytlyn Leslie presented a different route in that she believes whatever the public deems as important is newsworthy. If the public will read it, she along with her colleagues will cover it.

**Research Question 6: Does the public or audience influence the journalists or their work in any way?**

This question was created in order to have a better understanding of whether journalists believe their work affect public opinion and how that ultimately affects their work. There has been research that suggests that journalists role is to inform the public but how they take that into consideration is overlooked. The question was studied so that the respondents could give their insight and personal experiences with public influence, if any.

Table 6 summarizes the answers to the questions asked of the respondents.

Table 6

*Public Opinion*

Respondent	Is public opinion influential...	Example
Jordan Bell	How will a story affect the public	We are a public service
Armando Tonatiuh	People are influenced by what they see on TV	Only two Spanish channels in the Central Coast
Kaytlyn Leslie accurate	Public Record	Always want to be

According to the data presented in Table 6 the concept of public opinion having an affect on a journalist is prominent. Jordan Bell explains that when creating a story or curating a story idea, the public is taken into consideration. She said that journalists and media organizations are a public service. Armando Tonatiuh said that from a broadcast standpoint he feels that the public is heavily influenced by what they hear on television. In his case, working with Univision Costa Central, there are only two Spanish channels in the Central Coast so he feels that he along with his organization have a huge influence on the public and vice versa. Kaytlyn Leslie said that she is always keeping the public in mind and that influences her to report fairly and accurately as the public sees the news as a public record.

## Chapter 5

### *Discussion and Recommendation*

#### **Summary**

This study was created to gain a better understanding of the process that a reporter goes through when working in the field of journalism. There are many factors that are internal and external that influence the ways that a reporter covers certain news stories and makes decisions to cover stories. Today many journalists are aware that reporting news without a bias isn't possible as there are influences present in their daily work. A majority of the literature found during this research process, was about what factors are present within the journalism profession it was essential to collect data from experts in the broadcast radio, broadcast television and news editorial fields regarding their personal insight and experiences of factors that they believe influence them and other journalists.

In order to find more information on what influences exist that affects journalists, one expert from each field was interviewed based on a single questionnaire designed to answer the following research question for the study:

7. What are the motives of a journalist when he or she is facilitating the news?
8. What are the guidelines that a journalist must follow when reporting the news?
9. What personal morals do journalists have when creating the news?
10. How do different media platforms influence the way that a journalist facilitates the news?

11. What does a journalist find as newsworthy when reporting on certain topics?
12. Does the public or audience influence the journalists or their work in any way?

The research questions were altered slightly in order to create an applicable questionnaire for the expert sources in this study. The questionnaire was designed to clarify the presented literature in this research project. The questionnaire was also designed to gain insight from the respondents as to what factors they believe influence them as well as other journalists.

### **Discussion**

With the data that was collected in Chapter 4, connections were made between the expert's responses provided during the interview process and the existing literature presented in Chapter 2. With this data and research it is possible to make conclusions regarding the following original research questions.

#### **Research Question 1: What are the motives of a journalist when he or she is facilitating the news?**

When conducting the interviews with the experts in the various fields of broadcast and news editorial, it was unanimously agreed that journalists have motives when covering the news. These motives vary between each individual journalist but they are present as each journalist is what Jordan Bell, broadcast radio expert, said "only human". Ideally the news is to be reported on objectively but every person along with every journalist has opinions, beliefs and those affect their work.

The presented literature in Chapter 2 aligns with this idea of journalists having personal motives when covering the news. “Consequently, it is not unreasonable to expect that perceived roles and underlying principles correlate with one another-not only in the sense that journalists endorse various media roles and corresponding values, but that values, even potentially conflicting ones, are held simultaneously” (Skewes and Plaisance, pg. 835). Skewes and Plaisance present the fact that journalists are motivated to cover certain stories because they have a role to fulfill.

With the data gathered and the research presented is it possible to conclude that journalists are motivated to cover certain stories. There are different aspects such as beliefs, roles and media organizations that affect this motivation.

**Research Question 2: What are the guidelines that a journalist must follow when reporting the news?**

With the literature presented in Chapter 2 and the data collected by the expert interviews it is clear to say that there are guidelines present that a journalist follows in order to cover the news. Although these guidelines are not clearly defined because they differ between each individual journalist and their media organization. There are many factors that are taken into consideration with these guideline such as: ethics, morals, what the organization wants and what the public needs to know. In order to present the news with all those characteristics the journalist must follow their guidelines.

One main guideline that was found within the research is that journalists must maintain an ethical reasoning when covering the news. This influence is not only internal but also external. “Media companies have guidelines outlining what is ethically permissible and what is not” (Perebinossoff, pg.5). Here Phillippe argues that media



organization have an influence on their reporters in a sense of what is ethically sound for that specific organization.

Overall, the conclusion can be made that there are certain guidelines that a journalist must abide by when creating and curating the news. A main guideline that was presented during the research and data collecting was ethical guidelines. These specific guidelines vary between each individual journalist as well as individual media organizations.

### **Research Question 3: What personal morals do journalists have when creating the news?**

With the literature that is presented in Chapter 2 and the analyzed data from the expert interviews it has been found that journalists are influenced by their morals. Again these morals vary between each individual journalist, as these can be subjective thoughts, beliefs or opinions. These factors of influence gear a journalist to create and cover news in a different way according to their morals.

“It has been shown that investigative reporters make moral decisions regarding wrongdoing then abandon objectivity to push for the public good, serve as moral judges and deal with ethical issues more than other types of reporters” (Coleman and Wilikins, pg. 514). In this argument it is stated that journalists make decisions and create news coverage based on their moral guidelines.

With the data presented and the literature in Chapter 2, it can be said that journalists are heavily influenced by their morals. These morals guide how a journalist reacts to decision making and how to cover the news.

**Research Question 4: How do different media platforms influence the way that a journalist facilitates the news?**

According to the analyzed data from the expert interviews, there is a huge difference of news coverage when looking at the different media platforms. These platforms, in regards to this study, include broadcast radio, broadcast television, and news editorial. Within these different mediums it was found that the focus of news shifts along with the audience type that the organization has.

“I mean I can tell you Univision of course is secluded to the Hispanic population and it has a lot of different views especially when it comes to healthy care, especially when it comes to immigration. So I can definitely tell you that, that kind of pressure exists from other sources and enforcing their reporters in one way or another. Now I’ve never been really told ‘Hey Armando you’re going to cover this story and you’re going to have this spin on it’, but it’s pretty obvious that Univision has to cover specific stuff” (Appendix B). Armando Tonatiuh said that within his news organization their influence was a focus on the Latino community as they are a Spanish news channel.

In regards to the analyzed data, the conclusion can be made that the media organization in which a journalist finds himself or herself in will influence their work. Each organization is looking to cover the news in a certain way that is geared to their audience and that will influence what the media coverage ultimately is.

**Research Question 5: What does a journalist find as newsworthy when reporting on certain topics?**

What a journalist deems as newsworthy is determined by two influential factors and that is what the journalist finds as newsworthy and what the media organization finds

to be newsworthy. In order for a journalist to work for a certain media organization they must produce content that aligns with the organization and their news focus.

A news pitch or story is always delegated by the newsroom to consider what aspects it might have to be newsworthy. In order for a story to be considered newsworthy it must have one or more of the following characteristics: timeliness, proximity, prominence, human interest and relevance (Donsbach, pg. 134).

With the analyzed data and the literature presented in Chapter 2, it can be concluded that the newsroom and media organization that a journalist finds themselves in will affect their end product. There is always a certain focus that a media organization has in compliance with their respected audience.

**Research Question 6: Does the public or audience influence the journalists or their work in any way?**

According to the analyzed data and the presented literature in Chapter 2, the audience and the public plays a major role in what news is covered and what angle the news story will have. Each organization as well as individual journalist will always take the public into consideration as the role of journalist is to provide a public service.

“...A journalist doesn’t just believe that their work is for “themselves”, or “you the reader” but for everyone” (Tsfati and Livio, pg. 114). In conclusion, the work that a journalist produces is for the public, and to inform the public.

**Recommendations for Practice**

Once the study was completed, substantial data had been collected and analyzed on the topic of internal and external influences on individual journalists. With the given information it is important to make note of the most important information that is present

for this topic of influential factors on news creators. Some recommendations for understanding these factors is to first identify what factors influence produced news content. In this way the research can began to understand these influential factors in a comprehensive manner.

### **Understanding Influential Factors**

Each individual journalist is influenced by internal and external factors that have been created by their personal self or by their experiences in the field. In order to understand how these influences affect produced work the influences must be identified.

### **Consistency Works**

In order to understand what the factors are that influence journalists there must first be an understanding of what the factors are. In order to report the news there must be a fair amount of consistency to under again understand how the process of the facilitation of news works.

### **Study Conclusion**

In conclusion, given the general findings of the study, there should be qualitative research done regularly on the topic of internal and external influences on a journalist. Routine data collection and interviews should be conducted based on individual journalists that have expertise in the different media platforms within the journalism field. Overall, the study presented the collective opinions of three experts in the fields of broadcast radio, broadcast television, and news editorial. However, influential factors that affect journalists and their work vary between each individual. Therefore the study includes recommendations for a better understanding of how to identify which influential

factors are affecting produced news. The study does serve as an educational tool for getting an understanding of what kind of factors influence a journalist.

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## Appendix A

### *Interview Transcripts: Jordan Bell*

The following interview was conducted to get expert opinions from a broadcast radio perspective based on a questionnaire about the internal and external influences on individual journalists.

Interviewer: Karen Melissa Garcia  
Respondent: KCBX Central Coast Public Radio  
(Jordan Bell)  
Date of Interview: 5/21/15

#### *Interview Description:*

Karen Garcia: “Are you Personally motivated to cover certain stories?”

Jordan Bell: “Our newsroom is small and we have a small staff. Things I’m motivated to do are obviously a result of two things, what we are limited by having such a small staff but also that’s like a two part good thing. It’s a good opportunity to cover a lot of stories for the most part since it is Randol and I. And we also need to cover what is newsworthy but am I motivated to do certain stories based on internal values, yeah. I think that to some extent I feel like certain stories need to be told. I always want to and try to share the human element of stories because that’s important. But I also still have to do that within the parameters of our values as a newsroom and a news organization and in what we like to align ourselves with and the greater NPR value system and that mindset, of speaking to the audience and providing something different to just a regular story. But I also think that the value that NPR has, like not necessarily having that story first but having it accurate, but also providing a greater context and also the why behind things. I think that the ‘why’ often aligns with a human sort of thing what motivates us as people. So I think



that fortunately I'm aligned with an organization that lets me do things like that. To answer your question yes, and I hope I did that."

KG: "Yes, you did."

KG: "Do you believe there are any external factors that influence you? Or is there a certain way that they do?"

JB: "I've always thought about this question, especially studying journalism in college and there's the kind of whole mantra of being objective and being a journalist who's objective. I think objectivity is a value but I think it's impossible for any human being to achieve because you're going to go into the field or have a phone conversation and based on your experiences and all those things that have added up in your life to get to where you are, you're going to be prompted to ask a different question than someone else. You're also going to be influenced by say like, I'm sure I've gotten a lot of stylistic things from my news director and I'm also going to be influenced by my personal experiences and therefore I need to ask certain questions and also notice different things or be inclined to see it in a different way. And yes I will give the facts and I will try to balance the story by getting like whatever this paradigm we live in with this one of two sides kind of thing always. You know give those two sides because it's kind of how you're supposed to structure things but I think my personal values or my personal subjective mind is totally going to influence what I do but there are reasons that as journalists we supposed to follow a value system and that helps us to not get into trouble

because we are people just as much as the next person. And so I think that's how my values influence me."

KG: "Oh perfect you answered another question so we'll skip that. Do you believe your morals or/and beliefs influence you to cover the news in a certain way? Can you explain that?"

JB: "So based on where you heard the story even though there could be a city council ordinance that gets passed and it's the same thing and there's two different situations and the origin that I find the story in. Yeah that's a good question.

I think that is a big factor in how they report the origin of how they find things but its important what I would ideally like to say that I do is, say you're starting with a person who is upset about their home, being kicked out of their home. You're going to have to find that reason and ultimately trace that back to this city ordinance and if you're at the city council meeting and you see that this passed your obviously going to structure it, likely going to structure it after that day or that evening and then hopefully include a human element. I would be inclined to go and find the person. Now I would likely find the person after doing the city council meeting more than and try to find the balance more. If I had started with the person it would be more about the person I think I would consider it more of like a feature piece as opposed to an issue focused piece. I think either way you I would trace it back to the other person because most of those things, of public policy and things like that, it's going to affect the person and you definitely want to include them."

KG: “How Does your work affect public opinion? Or how do you hope that it will affect public opinion?”

JB: “I hope that it first makes people informed, makes them aware of something that’s going on. It’s an important responsibility and I think that the people I choose and their opinions are going to leave a thought in someone’s mind. The person that I include in my story is going to influence someone and so I hope I choose someone that is responsible and trustworthy and accurate to be in a story but that’s tough because we’re on a deadline. We need someone that’s going to be accurate and appropriate for the story but also someone to reach in time for our newscast fortunately for us, most of the time that happens but if I’m going to include someone who is, and it’s a very clearly two-sided situation, I’m going to try to include both. And if it’s not two sound bites or two quotes it’s going to be a statement or a this is how this group has expressed their fuel something like that. How do I hope this affects people? I hope it makes people more aware of other people, I hope it makes other people more visible to people who cant see them because they’re just not pertinent to that knowledge or have the ability to seek out other people. That’s the importance of news, making other people who aren’t visible more visible.”

KG: “Do you think that’s an influence in your coverage, wanting to make the public more visible or to take the public into consideration when you’re covering certain news topics?”

JB: “I think that, I guess we kind of in some ways use a utilitarian approach like okay this is going to affect this many people and that’s often times criteria for making something useful. And we are a public service and we are here to serve the public, so yeah definitely. “

## Appendix B

### *Interview Transcripts: Armando Tonatiuh*

The following interview was conducted to get expert opinions from a broadcast radio perspective based on a questionnaire about the internal and external influences on individual journalists.

Interviewer: Karen Melissa Garcia  
Respondent: Univision Costa Central  
(Armando Tonatiuh)  
Date of Interview: 6/6/15

#### *Interview Description:*

Karen Garcia: “Are you Personally motivated to cover certain stories? Or at least with your time an Univision did you feel that there were certain things that made you want to cover a story?”

Armando Tonatiuh: “Yes, I’ll tell you more specifically immigration stories are very near and dear to my heart because I’m an undocumented student so I kind of you know, I know a lot about that kind of stuff. I know a lot about the kind of struggle that people face. But I’ve always been extra extra careful to cover that even if it is about immigration even if it is for action, to cover it in a very unbiased way. I really believe that, that is the most important thing that we can do for each other in journalism community and just in the general population. I would not feel comfortable if I was doing my own spin on it or my own personal opinion. I mean that’s what people watch Fox News for.”

KG: “Do you believe there are any external factors that influence you?”

AT: “Me, not personally but I will tell you I do know that there is a lot of external bias that goes on in the media organization. I mean I can tell you Univision of course is secluded to the Hispanic population and it has a lot of different views especially when it comes to health care, especially when it comes to immigration. So I can definitely tell you that, that kind of pressure exists from other sources and enforcing their reporters in one way or another. Now I’ve never been really told ‘Hey Armando you’re going to cover this story and you’re going to have this spin on it’, but it’s pretty obvious that Univision has to cover specific stuff. One of them you know of course is in favor of health care, Obama Care. So I was asked to do a couple stories on that throughout the year, just about you know the general population, how people can subscribe for it, what people are eligible and stuff like that.”

KG: “Do your morals or/and beliefs influence you to cover the news in a certain way? Can you explain that?”

AT: “You know, I mean I guess I would like to say no but the truth is with every reporter no matter who you meet there’s going to be something, something that you believe in, something that you’re doing it for. My main philosophy is I like to help empower Latinos in any way that I possibly can. Univision Costa Central is a very small platform compared to CNN, NBC so I don’t have like a ton of influence but I know that I do have an influence because people get to turn on the TV and see me every night at six and eleven p.m. You know I just think that my main motivator is just to try to give people the

best information, stay as close to the truth as possible so they can make their own education decisions about whatever I'm covering.”

KG: “Would a situation of a person or new topic effect whether you would cover the story a certain way or not at all?”

AT: “I love that kind of story that human-interest story is excellent, it's actually the best kind of news that you can find as a journalist. My personal opinion when you find one individual case, like if you find a women battling leukemia say if one man is being deported what it does is that when you pay attention to that one person he reflects the general population. It's kind of like one example of a bigger story, the bigger national story. There's a million people battling leukemia when you zero in and talk to one person battling leukemia it kind of puts a face to the disease. It gives you a good opportunity to bring awareness to something that millions or hundreds of thousands of people might be suffering from so I would see that as very newsworthy. Any time that you get a chance to interview one person, even if it's a wide spread problem. I know we're talking really negatively but like skin cancer I would say that its very very newsworthy but it has to do with how your going to cover that story, what your angle is and in my opinion it doesn't always fit. And usually most of the time it's the greatest gift of all. How is this going to impact the person watching it on TV, can we do something to raise awareness about it stuff like that.”

KG: “How does your work affect public opinion?”

AT: “I think my work effects public opinion a lot. People are heavily influenced by what they see on TV, they’re heavily influenced by media especially in such a community as the Central Coast California. We have a big immigrant population and we only have two basic cable channels in Spanish, that’s Telemundo and Univision so I do think that we have a huge impact on the community. Just waking down the street and having someone say hey you know what I heard the story that you did on the immigration facility that’s being created that was great thanks for doing a story about that. I mean that has a great impact on people and when these stations cater to these communities it builds trust and that’s really important.”



## Appendix C

### *Interview Transcripts: Kaytlyn Leslie*

The following interview was conducted to get expert opinions from a broadcast radio perspective based on a questionnaire about the internal and external influences on individual journalists.

Interviewer: Karen Melissa Garcia  
Respondent: The San Luis Obispo Tribune  
(Kaytlyn Leslie)  
Date of Interview: 6/9 /15

#### *Interview Description:*

Karen Garcia: “Are you personally motivated to cover certain stories?”

Kaytlyn Leslie: “Yeah, I would say that there are stories that you know you see that pop up and they definitely look more interesting to you and you feel like that’s a really good thing I want to cover that. So it’s always nice when those come up.”

KG: “Do you believe there are any external factors that influence you? That could be anything from the actual news peg that was given to you, something that you personally believe or anything like that?”

KL: “You’re personally news decision basically. I do think that plays a role and I think that a lot of people, I think that you kind of have to have that kind of judgment because there are so many stories that come to you all the time and you’re always constantly having to you know prioritize everything and figure out which ones you can do. Luckily lot of the help there is from your editors, they’re typically pretty good at giving you a

little bit more input on what they think is going to help out. But they're a good external influence on that."

KG: "Do your morals or/and beliefs influence you to cover the news in a certain way? Can you explain that?"

KL: "That's a hard one because I'd say you want to try to aim to not have that really be, really play a factor I mean I know that it does kind of play a factor when you look at the story and your like oh I don't want to really go there, I don't want to have to do that. You do have to go and you do have to cover something that maybe are different from what you think. But it also gives you an interesting perspective."

KG: "Would a situation of a person or news topic affect whether you would cover the story a certain way or not at all? Do you maybe have like an example of a time when you did something like that?"

KL: "Well I would say that a personal one is that any time that there is a death and you have to cover that and talk to the family. The hardest part about that is going and talking to the family and basically bug the family. You have to you know, try and get them to talk to you. And that's so hard because personally I would prefer to not have to like if I was in a situation like that I would prefer for people to not be bugging me. But I understand that we have to, so I guess that's one of those things, one of those situations when you have to do your job, even if it's not fun."

KG: “How does your work affect public opinion?”

KL: “If people are going to read it, if people are going to care. Even if it’s something that I would personally disagree with. If its you know a group that’s wanting something that you don’t necessarily want or if it’s a person who’s saying that they want things a certain way that you don’t necessarily agree with. If people are going to be interested that you still do have to write about it and so you kind of separate yourself from it at that point.”

KL: “Yes, okay so that’s weirdest thing in the world. I went to a meeting one time with a bunch of people and it was the weirdest feeling because they kept on pulling up this article that I had worked on maybe a week before. And they would pull it up as evidence of their argument or something like that. It was just the weirdest feeling because that’s when you really see that people do read your things and do pay attention and they do use newspapers as the record. As something that gives information that’s fascinating.

KG: “Do you think that, that public opinion and how your seeing that your work influences others do you think that, that also influences you as a journalist and as a reporter covering stories and anything of that nature?”

KL: “Yeah it’s a never ending loop because you see that people care about something then you know in the future this is something similar to what they cared about that last time I should probably write about it this time so it kind of speaks into each other.”

Table 1

*Motivating Factors on a Journalist*

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Respondent	Journalists are motivated because...	Example
Jordan Bell	A need to raise awareness.	NPR, tells the “Why” in a story.
Armando Tonatiuh	Previous knowledge about the subject.	Immigration stories, while he is an undocumented student.
Kaytlyn Leslie	An interesting story.	Story assignments

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Table 2

*Guidelines for Journalists*

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Respondent	What guidelines to reporters have...	Example
Jordan Bell	To report with a balance and a value system	Journalists are human
Armando Tonatiuh	Cover stories in an unbiased manner	Empower Latinos with his coverage
Kaytlyn Leslie	Journalists make news decisions	Help from editors

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Table 3

*Personal Morals*

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Respondent	Personal morals affect work...	Example
Jordan Bell	Report on both sides of a story	Giving both platforms a voice.
Armando Tonatiuh	Objective and unbiased	Providing the community with accurate information
Kaytlyn Leslie	Having to do your job	Not wanting to cover a story of a death

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Table 4

*Different Media Platforms*

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Respondent	Are media platforms are influential...	Example
Jordan Bell	Skills and characteristics are gained from newsroom	Stylistic characteristics from news director.
Armando Tonatiuh	The organization has a say in the type of stories they're looking for	Univision covers health care
Kaytlyn Leslie	Many different stories cause for newsroom influence	Editors are influencers

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Table 5

*What is Newsworthy*

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Respondent	How is newsworthy defined	Example
Jordan Bell	Find the origin of a story and tie in human element	A city ordinance and a affected community member.
Armando Tonatiuh	Human-interest piece	How can one element portray the story
Kaytlyn Leslie	The community/public	Whether or not people will read the story

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Table 6

*Public Opinion*

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Respondent	Is public opinion influential...	Example
Jordan Bell	How will a story affect the public	We are a public service
Armando Tonatiuh	People are influenced by what they see on TV	Only two Spanish channels in the Central Coast
Kaytlyn Leslie accurate	Public Record	Always want to be

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