# Print Sports Journalists' use of Social Media and its Effect on Professionalism

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
BY

Sada J. Reed

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

Adviser: Kathleen Hansen

September, 2011

**Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank my adviser, Kathleen Hansen, for her leadership and encouragement throughout this thesis. Her knowledge of scholarly research and professional journalism practice inspired me as a student and as a researcher. I thank my committee members, Nicole LaVoi and Seth Lewis, as well as Shayla Thiel-Stern and Sanford Weisberg, for their time, support and expertise in the completion of this research.

## Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to Jason Reed, who was worth every penny.

## Abstract

The use of social media among sports writers to gather information has influenced sports journalism practices and relationships with sources, further complicating the industry's abstract definition of "professionalism." This study builds off pilot surveys and interviews that assessed print sports journalists' use of social media. In this study, a survey was administered to 77 print sports journalists who cover professional sports. This paper seeks to extend the pilot study and previous professional research in two ways: Firstly, to assess how print sports journalists who cover professional sports use Facebook and Twitter to gather information; and secondly, to analyze how these sports writers define "professionalism" and what industry factors correlate with chosen definitions, such as gatekeeping, newspaper circulation, frequency of social media use, and work superiors' attitudes toward social media. Cross tabulations and chi-square tests were used to test hypotheses. Cramer's V or Phi, depending upon the cross tabulation, were used to measure relationship strength. Results suggest a strong relationship between frequency of Twitter usage and the definition of professionalism chosen; circulation size and instances of directly quoting from athletes' social media accounts; and age and Twitter usage.

**Table of Contents**

## List of Tables

## INTRODUCTION

For more than a century, the field of print journalism has been marked by its polarizing views about professional status and how professionalism should be conceptualized (Janowitz, 1975; Osiel, 1986; Schiller, 1981; Schudson, 1978; Tuchman, 1972; Garrison & Salwen, 1989, p. 58). Despite the attention given to it, print journalism still lacks a unified consensus of how "professionalism" is defined (Beam, 1990, p. 1). Late publisher and American newspaper journalism award namesake Joseph Pulitzer (1904) advocated the professionalism of journalism, claiming better education and training would improve the status of journalists (Beam, 1990, p. 1). Another early advocate, Walter Lippmann, suggested journalists adopt a disinterested stance toward phenomena they cover (Lippmann, 1920; Schudson, 1978, p. 151-155; Beam, 1990, p. 1). Contemporary journalists and researchers have critiqued *characteristics* of the profession (i.e., generating stories that meet community and organizational needs, verifying sources, gatekeeping, impartiality), but a standard definition of journalism "professionalism" continues to be debated (Tuchman, 1978b; Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2001, Wilstein, 2002; Fuller, 2010).

Sports journalism has not been spared these debates and criticism. In Salwen and Garrison's (1998) study, sports journalists saw issues related to professionalism as the most serious problem facing sports journalism and the second-most important problem facing journalism. Journalism ethics was an especially common concern among sports journalists, as sports journalism and the evolving relationship between sports writers and

the people and events they cover has been criticized for, "hackneyed writing, cheering for the home team, gladly accepting 'freebies,' serving as a source of scrapbook material for the stars, and an unwillingness to report in-depth issues," according to Garrison and Salwen (1989, p. 57) (Garrison, 1989; Garrison & Sabljak, 1993; Koppett 1981; Surface, 1972). These criticisms have long-since raised questions about the role of sports journalists and their proper place in journalism.

The implications of these criticisms have changed with print sports journalists' use of social media. As Dave Kindred said in the winter 2010 *Nieman Reports*, "the work on a sports beat today is more than an evolutionary step in the news business. It is revolutionary – with reporting routines that never existed before becoming fixtures overnight" (p. 52). It is now possible for stories to be broken by sports writers reading posts on athletes' Twitter and Facebook accounts. A lack of consensus regarding how social media "fit" inside traditional journalism professionalism has influenced the relationship between journalists and their sources. For example, in June 2009, Kevin Love, a National Basketball Association forward for the Minnesota Timberwolves, "tweeted," or posted, on his Twitter account that coach Kevin McHale would not return to his position the following season. This tweet was picked up by sports news outlets including ESPN, which ran an *Associated Press* story on its website claiming a source, "speaking on condition of anonymity because an announcement had not yet been made, said McHale and new boss David Kahn came to the conclusion that McHale's time with

the Timberwolves was up." The article went on to say Love appeared to express regret about making McHale's correspondence public.

This new phenomena of extracting information, and in this case, direct quotes, from Twitter and Facebook profiles is not limited to professional sports. In February 2010, various sports news outlets ran reports claiming University of Oregon football coach Chip Kelly dismissed Jamere Holland from the team because of the wide receiver's expletive-filled post on the player's Facebook page. In his post, Holland mistakenly concluded teammate Kristian Kiko Alonso, who had been arrested on suspicion of driving under the influence of intoxicants, was kicked off the team. Holland blasted the move as being unfair and damaging to the team. When *The Oregonian* asked Kelly if the violation was related to Holland's Facebook post, Kelly said, "I won't get into the specifics, but you're smart enough to figure it out." The article said Holland later posted on his Facebook page, "I wish I could block whites as friends and only have blacks LOL, cause apparently I'm misunderstood."

Newsrooms have begun to determine professional journalistic conduct by addressing social media in their company policies. In August 2010, *The Washington Post* sportswriter Mike Wise was suspended for deliberately posting a phony scoop on Twitter as an experiment to see how widely it would be picked up. "I'm not a journalism ombudsman," Wise said. "And I found that out in a very painful, hard way. I need to take my medicine and move on, and promise everybody this will never happen again" (Kurtz,

2010). Wise was suspended because of a company policy, which was adopted the previous fall after a managing editor posted opinionated tweets. The company policy said on social networks, "Nothing we do must call into question the impartiality of our news judgment. We never abandon the guidelines that govern the separation of news from opinion, the importance of fact and objectivity, the appropriate use of language and tone, and other hallmarks of our brand of journalism" (Kurtz, 2010).

Social media have influenced sports journalism practices and further complicated the industry's abstract definition of "professionalism." This study seeks to extend previous professionalism studies in two ways. Firstly, the project seeks to assess how print sports writers who cover professional sports are using Facebook and Twitter. Secondly, it analyses how these sports writers define "professionalism" and what industry factors correlate with chosen definitions, such as how they define gatekeeping, how big their newspaper circulation size is, how frequently they use social media, and the attitude of their work superiors toward social media.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Defining "professionalism"*

From a sociological perspective, mass media scholars have debated whether journalism can even be considered a profession (Gerald, 1963; Head, 1963; Hodges, 1986; Kimball, 1965; Merrill, 1986; Rosten, 1937; Schramm, 1957, p. 345-347; Singletary, 1982; Bissland & Rentner, 1989; Coldwell, 1970; Garrison & Salwen, 1989; Idsvoog & Hoyt, 1977; Janowitz, 1975; LeRoy, 1972-73; Linehan, 1970; Menanteau-Horta, 1967; McLeod & Hawley, 1964; McLeod & Rush, 1969; Nayman, 1970; Nayman, Atkin, & O'Keefe, 1973; Nayman, McKee, & Lattimore, 1977; Ward, 1966; Weinthal & O'Keefe, 1974; Wright, 1976). According to Lewis (2010):

> Scholars initially identified professions by the extent to which they were self-governing and embodied certain professional traits such as formal education, licensing, codes of ethics, relationships of trust between professional and client, a public-service imperative over commercial interest, social status, and so forth. (p. 34)

Lewis (2010, p. 34) concludes this approach was eventually discarded "as sociologists moved 'from the false question: 'Is this occupation a profession?' to the more fundamental one: 'What are the circumstances in which people in an occupation attempt to turn it into a profession, and themselves into professional people?'" He also cites Larson (1977, p. xii), who argues "'ideal-typical constructions do not tell us what a profession is, but only what it pretends to be,' and that it is more appropriate to ask 'what professions do in everyday life to negotiate and maintain their special position'" (Lewis, 2010, p. 34-35). Beam (1990, p. 2) suggests two general approaches sociological literature uses to observe profession: A phenomenological perspective, which looks at

how the term is used in the everyday life of members of an occupational group (Dingwall, 1976; Freidson, 1983); and a catalog of the traits, attributes, or functions shared by occupations commonly identified as professions (Becker & Carper, 1956; Lieberman, 1956).

The circumstances in which journalists began to identify journalism as a profession are argued in Beam's (1990) study, which defined professions as occupations in which members have collectively secured the authority to control the substance, performance, and goals of their work as a particular system of social control in which members of an occupational group regulate their own behavior. In relation to journalism, this approach envisions professionalism not as characteristic of an individual or an occupational group, but as a characteristic of a news media organization.

Journalism in the United States lacks the characteristics of a profession because "it has no monopoly on the training and certification of its workforce, nor has the means to prevent others from engaging in its work" (Lewis, 2010, p. 41). Professionalism exists when an organized occupation determines who is qualified to perform certain tasks and prevents others from performing those tasks, controlling the criteria by which performance is evaluated (Freidson, 2001, p. 12; Lewis, 2010, p. 40). Researchers have measured professionalization by surveying journalists' attitudes and values, concluding "the modern journalist is *of* a profession but not *in* one" (Lewis, 2010, p. 41). Lewis (2010) explains:

> Throughout much of the 20th century, journalism established institutional routines (e.g., the "inverted pyramid" style of reporting) and organization-spanning norms (e.g., codes of ethics) that worked to accomplish the two purposes of professionalization: professional control and occupational closure. Successful in their "professional project," journalists could lay claim to greater social authority during much of the mass media era. (p. 41)

Lewis concluded that if professionals have *jurisdiction* (Abbott, 1988) "through which to govern a body of knowledge and the practice of that expertise, with an ideological interest in doing 'good work' for society that transcends a corporate imperative, then threats to the profession are primarily struggles over boundaries" (p. 3).

Social media pose a potential threat to professionalism because the degree and kind of participation allowed in online spaces challenges news organizations to reassess their established boundaries (Lewis, 2010, p. 51). "The digitization of media broke cultural and material barriers to mass publishing, posing commercial and conceptual threats to journalists' sense of control and jurisdiction" (Lewis, 2010, p. 45). Participation in the news is not new: The volume and scope digital forms entail is (Lewis, 2010). Singer (2004, p. 275) said despite the Internet's labeling as the future of journalism, journalists struggled in the last decade to see how a profession based on selecting and vetting information before disseminating it might fit in a world where anyone can easily and instantly publish anything.

Control over the flow of news information by media professionals, or gatekeeping, has also been contested with the rise of digital media (Bryant & Thompson, 2002). As Hermida (2010) summarizes:

> The professional and cultural attitudes surrounding Twitter have their roots in the working routines and entrenched traditional values of a journalistic culture which defines the role of the journalist as providing a critical account of daily events, gathered, selected, edited and disseminated by a professional organization. It reflects the unease in adopting a platform which appears to be at odds with journalism as a "professional discipline for verifying information." (p. 300)

Reporters are reluctant to change ingrained work habits they indirectly learned over time from the established group behavior of the newsroom (Schultz & Sheffer, 2010; Daniels & Hollifield, 2002; Giles, 1995; Singer, 2004). Online journalists still see their role as revolving around the delivery of credible information, but that information is less likely to be static and more likely to be open to further shaping by individual users. According to Singer and Ashman (2009, p. 6), newspaper journalists strongly believe ethics and standards are an element of professionalism that should be the same in print and online, but they worry that time and staffing pressures are eroding the ability to verify information quickly enough to disseminate it competitively. As Lewis (2010) concludes:

> Journalists derive much of their sense of purpose and prestige through their control of information in their normative roles. In other words, they take for granted the idea that society needs them as journalists – and journalists alone – to fulfill the functions of watchdog publishing, truth-telling, independence, timeliness, and ethical adherence in the context of news and public affairs information (p. 45).

### *Print sports journalism*

How these concepts and concerns carry into sports journalism has been debated. Garrison (1989, p. 57) argues the professional divide between sports journalists and their

colleagues in news used to be larger than it is today. Not only did sports journalists cover different subject matter than their newsroom colleagues, the "professional" approaches they took to report the stories varied considerably. Though recent content analyses suggest sports journalists now tackle formerly taboo subjects (i.e., drug use, the politics of sports, homosexuality, and gambling), print sports journalists formerly did not cover much else than games and personalities (Garrison & Salwen, 1989, p. 58; Garrison 1989; Salwen & Bernstein, 1986; Salwen & Garrison, 1987; Schillinger & Jenswold, 1987). Telander's (1984) anecdote reflects sports writers' changing relationships with the people and content they cover:

> It is 1928 and the baseball writers covering the New York Yankees on this rail trip are sitting in the train's club car, playing nickel-ante poker. Suddenly the door to the club car busts open and Babe Ruth sprints down the aisle, followed closely by an attractive young woman wielding a knife. "I'll kill you, you son of a bitch!" the woman screams as she disappears after Ruth into the next car. The writers observe the action, then turn and look at each other. "That'd make a helluva story," one of them says. The others chuckle and nod and the poker game resumes (p. 5).

Telander goes on to explain how no one reported the incident until Fred Lieb, a witness, wrote about it in a column for the St. Petersburg Times in 1976. Lieb said he waited a half-century to tell the story because, "We were in the business of creating heroes, not tearing them down." Sports writers felt if they told the truth about athletes, readers would revolt and there would be no need for sports sections or sports reporters (Telander, 1984). Telander concluded, "The Babe was not real. Few people could see him; almost nobody could hear him; his prowess on the field was all that counted. Thus his bout with gonorrhea in 1926 was passed off as 'stomach cramps.'"

The industry changed significantly with the rise of television sports, which could report play-by-plays faster than print media. This new competition highlighted the need for newspapers to focus on behind-the-scenes accounts of games and sports figures (Garrison & Salwen, 1989, p. 58). As a result, sports writers began interjecting themselves into stories, using exclamation points, dots, allusions, hyperbole and bombast, leading athletes to wonder if they had become "pawns in a media circus" (Telander, 1984, p. 6). Besides these changes, the demographics of sports writers began to change as well. Aging sports writers who worked their way up from copy boys to columnists were replaced by younger journalists who aimed to be the "deep throat" of the locker room (Telander, 1984, p. 6). The business, legal, and social aspects of professional- and college-level sports that previously seldom found their way into sports reporting entered sports journalism, as sports journalists were becoming more skilled and better educated (Garrison & Salwen, 1989, p. 58). The younger, better-educated journalists were thought to represent the new breed with professional aspirations, while the journalists of an earlier generation represented the "buffalos" (Coldwell, 1974; Nayman, McKee, & Lattimore, 1977; Weinthal & O'Keefe, 1974; Garrison & Salwen, 1998, p. 59).

Telander (1984) said these changes deeply affected not just the professionalism of sports journalism, but specifically how athletes communicated with sports writers: Athletes became more wary, spoke in clichés, and were reluctant to open interviews with anecdotes (Telander, 1984, p. 3). It became more common for athletes to complain about

unfair stories, saying sports writers a.) Misquoted the athlete; b.) Used quotes out of context; c.) Used off-the-record material; d.) Mentioned athletes' private lives; e.) Misinterpreted the athlete's philosophy, salary, attitude, or childhood; f.) Portrayed the athlete as a bad person; or g.) Portrayed the athlete as a bad athlete (Telander, 1984, p. 4).

A growing concern for increased professionalism in sports journalism during the 1970s and 1980s led to the adoption of professional performance guidelines, such as general newsroom codes of ethics and specific sports department codes and policies (Garrison & Sabljak, 1993; Garrison & Salwen, 1989, p. 58). This did result in some criticism (Wulfemeyer, 1985). Novak (1976) said professionalism in sports journalism "saps" the genre of its religious fervor, chiding writers for their enthusiasm for the "new breed of sportswriters" with their "quality of writing," "questioning minds," and "master's degrees" (Garrison & Salwen, 1989, p. 58). Some editors even feared mandatory educational requirements would change the make-up of the newsroom personnel, limit the pool of applicants, and threaten existing jobs (Garrison & Salwen, 1989, p. 65).

***Hegemonic masculinity***

Cultural critics studying sports media have used the theory of hegemonic masculinity to understand sports journalism. Coined in the 1970s, the theory of hegemonic masculinity refers to an idealized, dominant masculinity in U.S. culture that, presented as "natural," helps the powerful (able-bodied, White men and their primary institutions) but disadvantages others (women, racial minorities and homosexuals) (Hardin, Dodd, &

Lauffer, 2006, p. 431; Hardin, Kuehn, Jones, Genovese, & Balaji, 2009). Sports media have been criticized for perpetuating this hierarchy (Hardin, Dodd, & Lauffer, 2006, p. 431). This is done through coverage that demarks and denigrates qualities, traits and behaviors considered "feminine" or contradictory to force, power and patriarchy (Hardin et al., 2009, p. 184). Studies examining sports media's "common sense" way of portraying female and gay male athletes have cited sports media's coverage as the central, if not *the* central, maintenance site for cultural and institutional hegemony (Anderson, 2005). Sports columnists, for example, are a key part of the large communicative chain charged with safekeeping sport culture's hegemonic masculinity because they are considered credible conduits, authoritative because of their "objectivity" and detachment (Hardin et al., 2009). Female and gay male athletes remain subaltern, or outside of sports media's hegemonic power structure, because, according to Dworkin and Wachs (1998, p. 2), sports media function as surveillance and policing mechanisms by "carrying out ideological repair work which protects sports heroes in a gender regime which privileges heterosexual manhood and pathologizes gay male and female (hetero)sexuality." Hegemonic masculinity has regularly been contested, but it is resilient enough to "absorb counterdiscourses and mask its own rituals of renewal" (Butterworth, 2006, p. 152; Hardin et al., 2009). Messner (1992), among other scholars, argues the masculinity-in-crisis thesis as a prominent force in this renewal. According to Hardin et al. (2009):

> The crisis-of-masculinity thesis posits that legitimate, traditional displays of manhood have become stigmatized, denying men the opportunity to fulfill their "natural" yearning to exhibit behaviors deemed masculine, such as aggressiveness, competitiveness, and detachment. (p. 185)

Messner (1992) argues that the institution of competitive sports in the United States was built on this masculinity-in-crisis thesis (Hardin et al., 2009, p. 185). The sports journalists participating in this study cover athletes at the highest levels of competitive sports: Professional football, basketball, baseball and hockey players. Professional athletes in aggressive team sports are part of an "endlessly renewed symbol of masculinity" (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 833), a culture that has been "normalized" to sports journalists and thus, significantly distinguishes them from their news counterparts.

Past research suggests sports writers are not aware of this body of literature, though more research is needed in order to test this theory. Kian (2007, p. 5) suggests mass media practices, however, may be responsible for perpetuating this hegemony by providing minimal coverage of female athletics. This, in turn, results in the mass audience underestimating the amount of women participating in competitive athletics (Kian, 2007, p. 5). According to Kian (2007):

> Sport media often only cover sporting events that help reinforce stereotypical feminine images and portrayals of women athletes. Finally, when sport media professionals do cover female sporting events, they often minimize or trivialize women's athletic accomplishments through their use of language or commentaries. (p. 5)

The lack of women working in sports media, especially in leadership positions, may also continue a masculine hegemonic culture, as "normalized" professional practices continue unquestioned (Hardin, 2005). Other studies, however, suggest most female and male sportswriters grew up in a masculine hegemonic culture and remain entrenched in that

culture after their entrance into sports journalism (Kian, 2007, p. 9). This would suggest sports writers' notions of professionalism could be substantially different than their news colleagues.

### *The rise of social media*

How social media influence professionalism, and specifically professional relationships, has yet to be seen, as these new technological changes alter how journalists produce content, structure their work environments, and build relationships with sources, competitors, the public, and one another (Pavlik, 2000; Paterson & Domingo, 2008, p. 159). Digital technologies and digital cultures (Deuze, 2006; Jenkins, 2006) enable and encourage greater user participation in the media process, but by doing so, challenge journalism's professional jurisdiction (Lewis, 2010, p. 4). The Internet gives users unprecedented ease in participating in the creation and distribution of media, which can be seen in Web 2.0 applications like Twitter and Facebook. In this study, Facebook and Twitter will be the social media of focus.

According to Clark (2009), Twitter became the fastest-growing Internet communication tool in 2009. As of March 2011, Twitter had an estimated 200 million users (Shiels, 2011). Twitter is a micro-blogging website that allows users to post unlimited messages, or tweets, of 140 characters or fewer. Each Twitter user disseminates messages either to a select private group (the account's "followers") or to the searchable public web. In both cases, messages automatically appear on followers' Twitter webpage or mobile devices.

Any individual or organization representative can sign up for a free account, though no account is needed to search all public streams.

As of January 2011, Facebook had more than 600 million active users. It was launched in 2004 as a social networking site for Harvard University students and expanded the following month to Stanford, Columbia, and Yale universities. It is free, offering users the chance to create profiles which may contain photos and lists of personal interests, and to accumulate friends on a reciprocal basis via "friending," a request that must be accepted before the person is entered on their list of "friends" (boyd, 2006). The term "friend," however, encompasses a wide variety of relationships (i.e., close friends, acquaintances, coworkers) (Allan, 1989). In September 2006, Facebook opened to anyone over the age of 13 with a valid e-mail address and by December 2007, more than half of Facebook users were outside universities (Facebook, 2007; Lewis & West, 2009, p. 1210).

It was during this time the implications for journalists entered regular discussion because it resulted in faster contact with younger sources on the positive end, and with considerations of an accountability-free environment on the negative end (Wilson, 2008, p. 12). Sports journalists' use of it is already drastically different than what it was in Wilson's (2008, p. 12) study, where the author said journalists were using the site primarily for professional networking purposes and saw the site as limited in its usefulness as a journalistic tool. According to Java, Song, Finin, and Tseng (2007),

people use Twitter for four reasons: daily chatter, conversation, sharing information and reporting news (Hermida, 2010, p. 299). Hermida (2010) concluded journalists use social media in order to fulfill two of these uses, sharing information and reporting news.

Though Facebook and Twitter are only seven and five years old, respectively, there is a plethora of research done on social media use for news dissemination (for examples, see Farhi, 2009; Posetti, 2009; Hermida, 2010). According to Farhi (2009), news organizations adopted social media because "its speed and brevity make it ideal for pushing out scoops and breaking news to Twitter-savvy readers" (p. 28). This medium is useful for news dissemination when stories are changing quickly (Farhi, 2009, p. 28). Sports Journalists use social medium for similar purposes. Schultz and Sheffer (2010, p. 233) determine that most sports journalists use Twitter for posting information about breaking news, promoting their work and connecting to readers. Schultz and Sheffer (2010) cite Derrick Goold of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* as an example of how sports journalists are incorporating Twitter into their routines:

> Before one particular [St. Louis Cardinals baseball] game, Goold tweeted that the team was watching a Major League Baseball-related steroid video. According to Thornton (2009), "That's the kind of nugget that would never make it into a game story or even into a blog post. Goold also interacts with users via Twitter and has a Facebook page for himself and his blog" (¶4). Goold leads the discussion on his blog, yet lets the audience lead the discussion on Twitter and Facebook. (p. 230)

Schultz and Sheffer's (2010, p. 234) findings suggest print sports journalists' did not see social media as having stand-alone value, but view it as a promotional tool.

Along with dissemination, past research has also looked at social media use for newsgathering. This research, however, mostly focuses on crowd sourcing, organizing trends through the use of hashtags, and seeking story ideas. Journalists have criticized using social media for newsgathering purposes, saying many of the messages they find are unsubstantiated rumors and wild inaccuracies (Hermida, 2010, p. 299). The unverified nature of the information on Twitter has led journalists to comment that "it's like searching for medical advice in an online world of quacks and cures" (Goodman, 2009) and "Twitter? I won't touch it. It's all garbage" (Stelter, 2009; Hermida, 2010, p. 300). Journalists maintain a gatekeeping role by filtering and selecting what tweets to publish and thus, selecting what to exclude or include. Farhi (2009) suggests:

> Journalists should view Twitter as a "collective intelligence system" that provides early warnings about trends, people and news. Journalists [Arizona State University journalism professor Dan Gillmor] says, should "follow people who point them to things they should know about" and direct questions back to them to do better reporting." (p. 29)

These papers critique social media use from the perspective of practice, asking questions about the "best" ways journalists could use this medium. This current study, however, focuses on what newsgathering through social media means for professionalism, in terms of relationships with sources and how this use challenges traditional norms of private and personal spaces between journalists and their sources. As Posetti (2009) suggests:

> Because [social media] merges the professional and personal, the public and the private – blurring the lines of engagement for journalists trained to be didactic observers and commentators rather than participants in debates and characters within stories. (p. 1)

Keeping the personal and professional spheres separate, while maximizing the benefits of social media, can be problematic for sports journalists, as this study explores (Posetti, 2009, p. 1).

### *Public versus private spaces*

Public and private spaces are important to sports journalism professionalism research because their boundaries have been marked in past scholarly and professional journalism literature. Though definitions of professionalism remain vague, the belief that journalists should adopt a disinterested stance toward the people they cover has been a staple characteristic of journalism for decades (Lippmann, 1920; Schudson, 1978; Beam, 1990). In, "The Elements of Journalism," Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel repeatedly state the importance of journalists maintaining an independence from the people and situations they cover (2001). Fuller (2010) and Hermida (2010) highlight journalists' need to make decisions through rational thought and disinterest, producing accurate and objective pictures of reality while not allowing their professional contacts to become personal relationships. This "professional distance" with sources has been an accepted aspect of journalism professionalism for decades (Tuchman 1978a), though sports writers have historically been criticized for overstepping these boundaries by "cheering for the home team" and providing nothing more than "scrapbook material" for the athletes they cover (Garrison & Salwen, 1989, p. 57). This study intends to examine how sports writers' use of social media has further blurred the already contentious line between public and private spaces in journalism.

In terms of online social network usage, past research examines the formation and maintenance of online networks that support social ties – networks that, arguably, could include Facebook and Twitter (Wasserman & Faust, 1994; Wellman & Berkowitz, 1997; Papacharissi, 2009). Papacharissi (2009, p. 206) argued electronic media are characterized by their ability to remove, or at least rearrange, the boundaries between public and private spaces, affecting lives not so much through content, but rather "by changing the 'situational geography' of social life" (Meyrowitz, 1986, p. 6). Describing this effect, Meyrowitz (1986) employed an architectural analogy and asked his audience to imagine a world where all walls separating rooms, houses, and offices were removed, thus combining several distinct situations. This merging of private and public spaces carries behavioral consequences for individuals, who must adjust their behavior so as to make it appropriate for a variety of different situations and audiences. As a result, the realm of interaction and self-presentation fostered by electronic media conveys a lack of a situational place to orient the individual, and is particularly relevant to interaction developing in online social networks (i.e., Barnes, 2006; boyd & Heer, 2006; Lewis, 2011).

Past literature has examined how the relationships between sports writers and athletes change when the professionally accepted boundaries of public and private spaces appear to shift. As the earlier Babe Ruth example supports, sports writers formerly did not report on athletes' personal lives. When a new medium, television, became an industry-wide

competitor to newspapers, sports journalism began encompassing formerly taboo subjects and athletes responded by communicating less openly with sports writers (Telander, 1984). These boundaries have shifted again with the rise of digital media, as Papacharissi (2009, p. 200) concludes, where users of most social networks are not looking to meet new people or to network, but rather to sustain contact with their existing group of friends or acquaintances (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Therefore, it is unlikely sports writers are becoming Facebook friends with athletes they currently or previously cover unless they already have a relationship in "real life." This study aims to examine this assumption.

## PRESENT STUDY

The current study examines how print sports writers who cover at least one professional sport beat are using Facebook and Twitter to gather information, and how this use has influenced their definition of journalism professionalism. Analyzing this relationship is important because maintaining a "critical distance" from people and events being covered is a traditional trademark of traditional journalism's attempt to ensure journalists become observers rather than participants (Brooks, Kennedy, Moen, & Ranly, 2002, p. 311). The distance between a source and a journalist is an accepted aspect of journalism professionalism (Tuchman 1978a), as it allows a journalist to objectively verify and to test the accuracy of information (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2001). For these reasons, the current study focuses on the professional implications of using social media for the *gathering* of information specifically, rather than the combination of gathering and *disseminating*, as has been cited in past literature. The study expands on a pilot study

conducted in the spring of 2010, which included in-depth, in-person interviews with three sports journalists from the Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minn., area (See Reed, 2011 for full pilot study). Though narratives have been criticized as being overly interpretative and potentially too subjective, this method was used for a pilot study because it allows subjects to speak freely and attempts to dismantle the researcher-subject relationship by placing the two on more equal footing (Behar & Gordon, 1995; Visweswaran, 1994).

These interviewees were chosen because of their participation in state journalism conventions and panels, and their extensive connections with industry professionals and academics. Each journalist was asked to describe 1.) His or her Facebook and Twitter usage (in order to gauge if personal and professional usage was blurred), 2.) If they've broken stories with information they've discovered via these sites, 3.) How they use the information they find on social media, and 4.) How the size and demographics of their coverage area and the relationships they have with coaches, athletes, and athletic directors affect how they use information. One participant I interviewed, who I'll call Bob[1], is a 37-year-old Caucasian male sports editor with 10 years of professional newspaper experience. He grew up in Minneapolis, attended Iowa State, and works for a small suburban weekly newspaper (circulation 7,811). Harry, a 34-year-old Caucasian native man of St. Paul, Minn., has been a sports journalist for 12 years and works for a large daily newspaper in Minneapolis (circulation 606,698). The third participant, Jane, is a 48-year-old Caucasian woman from Iowa who has 25 years of sports journalism

[1] Names of all participants have been changed in order to ensure privacy.

experience. A sports columnist with a particular emphasis on Olympic sports, Jane also works for a daily newspaper in Minneapolis (circulation 606,698).

Emergent coding was used to examine interview transcripts and to categorize interviewee's responses. Emergent coding, which is when categories are established following some preliminary examination of the data, is a reliable form of analysis outlined by Haney, Russell, Gulek, and Fierros (1998). The results were then used to create a survey, which was piloted on 10 sports writers in the fall of 2010[2]. The pilot survey participants were chosen because they were professionally acquainted with the author. Besides taking the survey, all 10 respondents were asked to offer feedback. Their suggestions were taken into account while clarifying questions on the current study's survey. None of the pilot respondents participated in the final survey (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006).

***Social media use***

Each of the sportswriters interviewed used Facebook and Twitter, while of the 10 pilot survey respondents, eight people said they used Facebook and Twitter for personal and professional use. Six people said they check their Facebook account two to four times a day, and four respondents said they check it more than five times a day. Six people

[2] All pilot respondents were white U.S. citizens, though their coverage areas ranged from the St. Paul-Minneapolis area (four people), Orlando, Fla. (two), Dayton, Ohio (two) and Augusta, Maine (two). Eight respondents were men and two were women. Eight people had four-year undergraduate degrees, while two had vocational or community college degrees. Eight respondents were newspaper employees, while two people considered themselves to be employed primarily in online news. All respondents worked in news organizations with circulations that ranged between 10,001 and 50,000. All respondents used social media, though two respondents said they used it solely for personal use.

believed social media have not changed the quality of their work, two people believe it has, and two are not sure. Six of the respondents said they are not Facebook "friends" with athletes, coaches, or anyone else that they cover, though four people were. For Twitter use, six people do not use Twitter, and four people use it for personal and professional reasons. Of those who use Twitter, half check it more than five times a day, and five check two to four times a day. Five people also have one Twitter account, while the other five respondents have more than one.

Ironically, none of the 10 sports writers who participated in the pilot survey followed any coaches, athletes, or anyone else that they cover. This may be because of the types of beats these specific sports writers have. Respondents said in feedback e-mails that the motivation for "following" someone on Twitter or "friending" someone on Facebook is strongly influenced by the level of athletics the sports writer covers: The weight given to a professional athlete's Twitter feed was heavier than that of a prep athlete, and there was more pressure to quickly turnover breaking stories about professional athletes than prep athletes. All of the participants covered a wide range of athletics, though mostly prep sports. For example, when a local high school football coach was let go, word rapidly traveled to Bob. The information had the makings of a breaking news story, but it was not used that way (as it was in the examples given in this study's introduction). Bob contacted the high school athletic director, but the AD said he'd only discuss the situation if Bob promised not to go public with the story until the students were told about their coach's departure. Bob agreed. "If I worked for ESPN, I would have broken this right

away. But in this case, I am going to have to work with this guy (in the future)," he said. He added that many of the people in his small, weekly coverage area are still more loyal to the print edition; this trickle of people going online has taken pressure off of speedily publishing news online, making his decision to hold off on the story more accepted by his superiors. Because results from the pilot survey suggest the level of athletics (*professional versus prep*) influenced how sports writers use information posted on respective athletes' websites, and that circulation size may also influence a sports writer's decision to use social media, the current study focuses on sports writers who cover professional sports.

These interviews vary considerably from previous studies, like Wilson's (2008, p. 12) analysis, in which the journalists interviewed said they didn't think there was room for Facebook, nor did they see any role for it in their lives. The results from this study's pilot interviews and pilot surveys, however, appear to support Schultz and Sheffer's (2010, p. 4) study, which said there is a place for Twitter in the newsroom, whether it is a headline service for breaking news or a promotion for journalists' work on other media.

R1: How are print sports writers who cover professional sports using Facebook and Twitter to gather information?

*Work superiors.* Measuring social media use includes analyzing work superiors' influence on sports journalists' usage. Past research (Sheffer & Schultz, 2009) suggests

journalists felt pressured by management to implement technology, were unfamiliar with its use, and were thus resistant toward its implementation (Sheffer & Schultz, 2010, p. 480). Social media, however, embody gathering and communicating, instead of just disseminating, which may threaten journalistic standards in ways the advent of radio and television did not (Sheffer & Schultz, 2010, p. 481). Athletes and other sports-related celebrities have attracted devoted followers on social media: As of June 2011, Shaquille O'Neal had more than three million followers on Twitter. Journalists' use of social media as an information-gathering tool has led to breaking news stories (as outlined in this study's introduction). Professional sports organizations' management are responding: National Football League teams, for example, now ban or limit tweeting during open practices at team training camps (Schultz & Sheffer, 2010).

How sports journalists use social media may be related to media management attitudes regarding the medium. Wilson's (2008) study included a quote from a then-55-year-old *New York Times* deputy managing editor who said knowing what is happening online was crucial to the job. More than using the site for himself, the editor said he created a Facebook profile to stay current and to see how site features were used (Wilson, 2008, p. 12). The managing editor went on to say if a journalist doesn't understand where the audience is and what it is doing, the journalist doesn't understand the audience. This attitude was shared by the sports journalists interviewed in pilot interviews, particularly in disseminating news. "We use it as a reporting tool," Jane said. "We're highly encouraged in the newsroom to use Facebook and Twitter because there are people who

use Twitter or Facebook who maybe don't go to the (newspaper's) website." Four participants in the pilot study agree, saying their superiors at work encouraged them to use social media, while four other people said their superiors do not encourage the use. Two people said they do not know. All respondents, however, worked in news organizations with circulations that ranged between 10,001 and 50,000. According to this pilot, a newspaper's circulation size does not correlate with sports writers' likelihood to have superiors who encourage the use of social media.

H1: Circulation size does not determine whether sports writers have superiors who encourage their use of social media.

***Professionalism***

Definitions of professionalism and gatekeeping, assessments of public and private spaces, and directly quoting from social media accounts are aspects of professionalism measured in this study. In the pilot survey, eight people said their definition of professionalism has not changed because of social media. All respondents said their relationships with sources have not changed, nor has social media changed how they do their job. In pilot interviews, Jane said she looks on people's Facebook and Twitter accounts for background research before her interview, "to get a sense of who they are," but she is only "friends" with sports writers, not with athletes she has covered. "I think in social media, there is that line," she said. "You want to keep a distance; if you're too close to them in a personal sense, writing something negative could be more of a challenge."

This behavior suggests Jane supports a traditional characteristic of journalism professionalism, which says journalists should keep a disinterested stance toward the people they cover (Lippmann, 1920; Schudson, 1978; Beam, 1990). Bob appeared to support this stance, as he said parents and community members communicate with him through traditional and digital media. For example, when a local high school football coach was let go, community members contacted Bob through Facebook messages, even though he wasn't "friends" with them. They also contacted him by telephone and e-mail, suggesting Facebook was only one of a several media through which the relationship between the journalist and the people they cover was maintained. To clarify, Bob said he was contacted quickly because of five years of building relationships within the community, not because of his use of social media.

Keeping pace with the speed of media consumption and the increasing demand for services may be a new aspect of 21st century journalism professionalism, as Schultz and Sheffer (2010) observed in their study of Twitter and sports journalism. Traditional tenets, like testing information so personal and cultural biases do not undermine the accuracy of work (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2001), however, were still important to Harry, particularly after an error his industry colleagues made when they sacrificed accuracy for speed. Harry retold of a situation when he read about the suspension of four high school boys' hockey players via a message board. Fathers of the players' teammates confirmed the validity of the rumor, and Harry debated running with the story, but he waited for the

coach to call him back to confirm details. In this case, the coach confirmed everything the sports writer had already gathered, but the situation could have easily been different: Harry cited local outlets' past backtracking of inaccurately reported news stories they received via Twitter (i.e., blunders regarding Minnesota Twins Major League Baseball player Joe Mauer's contract, Cretin-Derham Hall High School senior football player Seantrel Henderson's university selection) as reasons for holding off on running with the story. "I think we're sacrificing accuracy for speed," he said. "It's another good lesson; to take a deep breath and focus on getting it right."

These findings suggest a traditional hallmark of professionalism such as verifying information still exists in social media-generated journalism. How sports writers define "professionalism," however, may depend on how comfortable they are with social media and how much social media have infiltrated their daily routines.

R2: How do sports writers define "professionalism"?

H2: Sports writers who most often check Facebook and/or Twitter accounts will most often choose the speed-oriented definition of professionalism, derived from Schulz and Sheffer's (2010) observations.

*Public versus private spaces*. Each of the participants interviewed said they used Facebook and Twitter, though none of them were Facebook friends with athletes they cover. None had uncovered stories about athletes via this medium, though they are aware

of other sports journalists who have. Bob initially began using Facebook when he heard about a "page" created in support of a high school girls' golf coach in his coverage area who was released from her position. He joined the group to learn more about the situation and is "now addicted to Facebook." Bob is no longer a part of the "page" or is "friends" with athletes or coaches.

The other interviewees did not share this opinion. As stated earlier, Jane has only been Facebook "friends" with professional colleagues within the industry and thought keeping a distance to be best. There may be a variety of explanations for this difference, particularly the different relationships that emerge through different newspaper circulation and community sizes.

H3: Sports journalists at smaller newspapers are more likely than sports journalists at large newspapers to "friend" athletes, coaches, and other people they cover.

*Directly quoting*. Taking a quote directly from a Facebook or Twitter page would, theoretically, eliminate athletes' complaints of being misquoted. Failure to verify the quote with the source, however, would not fit traditional tenets of journalism professionalism (Tuchman, 1978b; Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2001, Wilstein, 2002; Fuller, 2010). Eight of the pilot survey respondents said they have discovered story ideas and breaking news via social media, but none of them said they've ever quoted directly from a Facebook profile or Twitter account. All respondents, however, worked in news

organizations with circulations that ranged between 10,001 and 50,000. This may be different for sports writers at larger newspapers and for the current study's sample, which focuses only on sports writers who cover professional sports.

H4: Sports writers from larger circulation newspapers quote directly from Facebook and/or Twitter feeds more often than sports writers from smaller circulation newspapers.

*Gatekeeping*. Kovach and Rosenstiel (2001, p. 23) define journalistic gatekeeping as "deciding what information the public should know and what it should not." Gatekeepers decide which events receive coverage (Brooks, Kennedy, Moen, & Ranly, 2002). Past research analyzes what newsroom characteristics account for information "passing through the gate" and appearing in a medium (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006). Gatekeepers are usually invisible to the news audience, as the sifting of information is done "behind the scenes" and entails making crucial decisions regarding how the news organization portrays people and events (Vivian, 1997). Though gatekeeping is a traditional characteristic of journalistic professionalism, 21st century scholars argue gatekeeping is no longer defining journalism's role. As Kovach and Rosenstiel (2001) explained even before the rise of social media:

> If the *New York Times* decides not to publish something, at least one of countless other websites, talk radio hosts, and partisans will. We now see examples of this regularly. When traditional news organizations declined to air the extramarital history of House Judiciary Chairman Henry Hyde, the new website *Salon* did. Or when Newsweek delayed breaking the initial Lewinsky scandal, Matt Drudge went ahead. (p. 24)

Singer (2004, p. 268) suggests journalists are retaining all or part of their gatekeeping roles, though the elements that once made up the loose definition of professionalism is threatened by an audience able to actively participate in creating and disseminating news. The 10 pilot survey respondents varied in what they believed the role gatekeeping in modern sports journalism to be: Six people said their definition of gatekeeping has not changed with the use of social media, two said it has, and two said they did not know.

H5: Social media have not changed sports writers' definition of gatekeeping.

## METHODOLOGY

### *Participants*

Participants were recruited by contacting professional sports teams' press relations offices and asking for their respective lists of newspapers that hold season press passes. Thirty-two National Football League (NFL) teams, 30 National Basketball Association (NBA) teams, 30 Major League Baseball (MLB) teams, and 30 National Hockey League (NHL) teams' press relations offices were contacted via e-mail or telephone. Contacting professional sports teams instead of newspapers was done to narrow the sample to only sports writers who cover at least one professional sport. Because journalistic practices vary between the United States and Canada, Canadian teams were eliminated from the sample: The Toronto Raptures (NBA); the Toronto Blue Jays (MLB); and the Calgary Flames, Edmonton Oilers, Montreal Canadiens, Ottawa Senators, Toronto Maple Leafs and Vancouver Canucks (NHL). This left 114 eligible teams. The 114 teams were

contacted no more than three times by telephone in order to obtain lists of newspapers that receive season press passes. After three attempts, personnel from 35 teams either did not return phone calls or refused to participate[3]. Most of these 35 teams, however, had overlapping markets with teams that did participate. For example, the Boston Red Sox did not participate, but the Boston Celtics and Boston Bruins did. Newspapers that cover the Boston Celtics and Boston Bruins are likely to cover the Boston Red Sox as well. Also, many teams from the same state or city provided overlapping lists of newspapers.

Based on the information provided by press relations' personnel, a list of 304 newspapers was created. Forty-two of these newspapers were eliminated from the sample because either e-mails bounced back or because the recipient said they had no professional sports beat writers. This left 262 eligible newspapers. Newspapers were then contacted three times through e-mail: Firstly, through an introduction e-mail (See Appendix A); secondly, through a follow-up e-mail two weeks after the initial e-mail (See Appendix B); and thirdly, with a reminder e-mail two weeks after the second e-mail (See Appendix C). The second and third e-mails included the survey link, which can be found in Appendix D. Participants were provided with a consent form. Seventy-seven participants completed the survey. Table 1 provides participant demographics.

[3] Teams that did not participate were the Anaheim Ducks, Atlanta Braves, Atlanta Hawks, Atlanta Thrashers, Baltimore Orioles, Boston Red Sox, Buffalo Sabres, Chicago Bulls, Chicago White Sox, Cincinnati Reds, Colorado Rockies, Denver Nuggets, Detroit Red Wings, Florida Marlins, Florida Panthers, Golden State Warriors, Houston Astros, Indiana Pacers, Los Angeles Clippers, Los Angeles Dodgers, Miami Heat, Milwaukee Bucks, New York Islanders, New York Knicks, New York Rangers, New York Yankees, Orlando Magic, Philadelphia 76ers, Philadelphia Phillies, Pittsburgh Penguins, San Antonio Spurs, St. Louis Cardinals, Tampa Bay Rays, Tampa Bay Lightning, Washington Nationals.

*Table 1. Participant Demographics*

| | All Participants (n = 77) (%) |
|---|---|
| Age | |
| Years | M = 45.32 |
| Sex | SD = 10.46 |
| Male | 72 (93.5) |
| Female | 5 (6.5) |
| Professional experience | |
| Years | M = 22.37 |
| | SD = 10.54 |
| Race/ethnicity | |
| White | 66 (87) |
| Black/African-American | 6 (7.8) |
| American Indian/Native Alaskan | 2 (2.6) |
| Asian/Asian-American | 1 (1.3) |
| Other | 1 (1.3) |
| Education | |
| High School diploma/GED | 11 (13) |
| Two-year vocational/community college degree | 1 (1.3) |
| Four-year undergraduate degree | 59 (77.9) |
| Master's degree or higher | 6 (7.8) |

Though 77 respondents participated, several people identified themselves as beat writers for more than one professional team: 51 participants cover football teams, 38 participants cover baseball teams, 20 participants cover basketball teams, 19 participants cover hockey teams, and 19 participants cover "other" professional sports (N = 147).

### *Measures*

Research materials consisted of a survey containing 27-items that measured social media use and professionalism.

*Social media use*. Four items, two ordinal and two nominal, measured social media use and frequency, while one ordinal item each measured social media influence on quality of work and superior's encouragement of social media use. One ordinal item each asked if participants are Facebook "friends" with athletes, coaches, or anyone else they cover as a sports writer and if they "follow" the Twitter feeds of any athletes, coaches, or anyone else they cover as a sports writer.

Two questions asked if participants used Facebook and Twitter, respectively, and two questions asked about usage. One item asked how often participants check Facebook per day, giving options that range from 0 = *None. I rarely check my Facebook account*, to 3 = *More than 5 times a day*. *Don't know* was also an option in order to ensure exhaustivity (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006). An item asked how often participants check Twitter feeds per day, giving options that range from 0 = *None. I rarely check my Facebook account*, to 3 = *More than 5 times a day*. A fifth question also asked participants to rate how social media have changed the quality of work. Respondents could choose between [social media have] *improved the quality of work*, *decreased the quality of work*, or *not influenced the quality of work*. There were also *don't know* and *not applicable* options. A sixth question asked participants if their superiors at work encourage them to use social media.

*Professionalism*. Five definitions of "professionalism" were created from past literature on characteristics of journalism professionalism. Participants checked which of the

following characteristics they believed to most accurately summarize their definition of professionalism. The first option, *to ask tough questions, to conduct investigations, and to take community complaints seriously,* derives from the KGUN-TV in Tucson's "Viewer's Bill of Rights" discussed in Kovach and Rosenstiel's (2001) study. This outline of professionalism was created by the news director and was repeatedly broadcast as what citizens should expect from the station and its people (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2001, p. 66). The second question, *to tell the truth and to test information so personal and cultural biases do not undermine the accuracy of work*, summarizes Kovach and Rosenstiel's (2001) study. These first two definitions derive from industry studies. The remaining three definitions derive from scholarly sources. The third question, *to serve the public interest and to provide reports and analyses of events through narratives*, summarizes characteristics discussed in Fuller (2010) and Hermida (2010). These studies are newer than the previous two sources and focus on the influence social media have on 21st century journalism. The fourth question, *to make decisions about the newsworthiness of daily news and to keep pace with the speed of media consumption and the increasing demand for information services*, derives from Schultz and Sheffer's (2010) study, which explores how Twitter is affecting sports writing specifically. The fifth definition, *to listen to instinct, to know sources, and to generate stories that meet organizational needs and standards*, derives from Tuchman's (1978a) study of newsrooms and social constructions of reality.

None of the above authors specifically defined professionalism in the ways outlined above. The definitions, however, are compiled from these authors' observations of how journalism is or should be practiced.

*Public versus private*. The "professional" boundary between public and private spaces was measured with two nominal items in order to assess whether participants practice traditional characteristics of journalism professionalism, such as maintaining a disinterested stance toward the people they cover (Lippmann, 1920; Schudson, 1978; Beam, 1990) and producing accurate and objective pictures of reality while not allowing their professional contacts to become personal relationships (Fuller, 2010; Hermida, 2010). This is particularly important to measure among sports writers, as past literature has criticized sports writers' lack of professional distance toward their sources (Garrison & Salwen, 1989). One question asks if participants have ever discovered story ideas and/or breaking news items because of something they saw on someone's Facebook profile or Twitter feed. Another question asks if relationships with athletes, coaches, or anyone else they cover as a sports writer has changed since they began using social media. Participants who answered yes were asked to explain how the relationships have changed in the following question.

*Directly quoting*. A final item was used to measure participants' comfort with directly quoting from an athlete's social media page. Interpreting and distilling is part of a sports journalist's duty because sources don't speak grammatically or concisely, and to quote

anyone verbatim is likely to be embarrassing to the person being quoted (Telander, 1984, p. 10). Based on pilot interviews, how comfortable a sportswriter is using information from a social medium depends on the individual journalist's 1.) Attitude toward the athlete's maturity and level of sports (i.e., prep versus professional athleticism) and 2.) Interpretation of information posted on social media as being public or private. One nominal item asks if the participant has ever directly quoted from the Facebook profile or Twitter feed of an athlete, coach, or anyone else they cover as a sports writer, and used it in a story.

*Gatekeeping*. One nominal item measures if participants' definitions of gatekeeper ("someone who decides if and how a message will be distributed by mass media") changed since they began using social media. Applicants who responded with yes were asked to describe in the following question how their definition has changed.

Besides assessing participants' basic demographics, the questionnaire also included items that assessed participants' professional demographics, like circulation size and in what sector of sports journalism they are primarily employed (i.e., newspaper, online news). This was done to ensure the sports writer is employed with a newspaper that has print and/or online versions. Magazine, radio, and television sports journalists were not eligible. Demographics questions also asked about their title, how many months and years of professional journalism experience they have, and what professional sports they cover. Participants were also asked if they belong to any professional associations,

having a list of 23 professional associations from which to choose, along with an "other" space where they could identify a non-listed option. Professional demographics can be found in Appendix E.

## RESULTS

The objectives of this study were to discover how print sports writers who cover professional sports are using Facebook and Twitter to gather information, and how these sports writers define journalistic "professionalism." The hypotheses specifically analyze relationships between social media use and definitions of "professionalism" and gatekeeping; circulation size and public versus private boundaries with sources and superior's encouragement of social media use. Because the data are nominal and ordinal, nonparametric tests were used for their analysis. Nonparametric methods also do not depend on the assumption that the response variable has a normal distribution (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006). Because the data are primarily categorical and comprised of discrete random variables, several nonparametric tests were inappropriate for this study.

Firstly, cross tabulations were constructed to measure the differences between observed counts on contingency tables and the counts that could be expected if there was no relationship (Utts & Heckard, 2006). Significance for the hypotheses was determined at $p < .05$. For symmetric measures, Cramer's V and Phi were used to measure relationships depending upon the type of tables used. Phi was limited to 2 x 2 nominal tables only.

Cramer's V was constructed for hypotheses that included three categories of circulation sizes and at least one ordinal variable.

Secondly, chi-square tests were conducted so long as necessary conditions could be met for the proper cross tabulations to be constructed. For 2 x 2 tables, at least three of the four expected counts must be 5 or more, and all expected counts must be 1 or more. For larger tables, which also require larger samples, all expected counts should be greater than 1 and at least 80% of cells should have an expected count greater than 5 (Utts & Heckard, 2006, p. 530).

***Preliminary Analysis***

Descriptive statistics conclude participants are predominantly white (87%), male (93.5%), sports writers (55.8%) with an average of 22.37 (SD = 10.54) years of professional experience. Most (77.9%) have a four-year undergraduate degree, work for daily newspapers (92.2%) with circulation sizes of more than 100,001 (55.8%) and belong to professional associations (79.2%). Twenty-eight participants belong to more than one professional organization. Football-related organizations were the most prevalent: Twenty-one respondents are members of Football Writers Association of America, 20 participants are members of Associated Press Sports Editors, and 15 participants are members of Professional Football Writers of America. Twelve respondents are also members of Baseball Writers Association for America. Table 2 provides' participants' responses.

*Table 2. Social Media Use*

| | All Participants (n = 77) (%) |
|---|---|
| Use | |
| Facebook | |
| No | 39 (50.6) |
| Used to, but no longer | 1 (2.6) |
| Yes | 37 (46.8) |
| Twitter | |
| No | 9 (11.8) |
| Used to, but no longer | 6 (7.9) |
| Yes | 61 (80.3) |
| Average times per day account is checked | |
| Facebook | |
| None | 4 (10.5) |
| 1 time | 7 (18.4) |
| 2-4 times | 18 (47.4) |
| More than 5 times | 9 (23.7) |
| Twitter | |
| None | 4 (7) |
| 1 time | 6 (10.5) |
| 2-4 times | 14 (24.6) |
| More than 5 times | 32 (56.1) |
| Don't know | 1 (1.8) |
| Facebook "friends" with athletes | |
| Yes | 15 (39.5) |
| No | 19 (50) |
| Don't know | 4 (10.5) |
| "Follow" athletes on Twitter | |
| Yes | 53 (89.8) |
| No | 5 (8.5) |
| Don't know | 1 (1.7) |
| Social media's influence on work quality | |
| Improved quality of work | 24 (31.2) |
| Decreased quality of work | 9 (11.7) |
| Not influenced quality of work | 34 (44.2) |
| Don't know | 4 (5.2) |
| Not applicable | 6 (7.8) |

Descriptive statistics also conclude print sports writers who cover professional sports predominantly use Twitter for professional purposes (80.3%), while Facebook use is nearly split: Thirty-nine (50.6%) participants do not use Facebook for professional

purposes, while 37 (46.8%) do. Participants who do use Facebook mostly check the account two to four times a day (47.4%), while Twitter users check their accounts more frequently: Of the 61 Twitter users, 32 (56.1%) check Twitter more than five times a day, while 14 (24.6%) check Twitter two to four times a day. In terms of being Facebook "friends" with athletes, participants are nearly split: Fifteen (39.5%) are and 19 (50%) are not. The majority of participants (89.8%) who use Twitter, however, "follow" athletes and other people they cover.

### *Chi-Square Tests*

*Work superiors*. Of the 77 participants, 61 (79.2%) respondents said their work superiors encourage them to use social media, while 15 (19.5%) respondents said their work superiors did not encourage use. Two respondents (1.3%) didn't know. In order to test H1, a chi-square analysis was conducted. Descriptive statistics revealed only one participant who worked for a newspaper with a circulation size of less than 10,000. This observation was eliminated from the cross tabulation. The two respondents who didn't know if their work superiors encouraged social media use were also dropped from this test in order to meet necessary conditions. A 2 x 2 cross tabulation was then constructed of the circulation demographics and superior's encouragement of social media use data. A chi-square test revealed the relationship was not significant ($x^2(1) = 1.158$, $p = .561$). In fact, sports journalists at newspapers with circulation sizes of 50,001 to 100,000 were slightly more likely (86.7%) than sports journalists at circulations of more than 100,001

(81.4%) and less than 50,000 (72.2%) to have superiors who encourage social media use. There was not enough evidence to reject a null hypothesis. H1 was supported.

*Professionalism*. Sixty-two participants (80.5%) have discovered breaking news and story ideas on social media, while 15 (19.5%) have not. Fifty-four participants (36.7%) also say their relationships with athletes have not changed, while 13 (16.9%) think the relationships have changed. The remainder of participants was unsure. Respondents who thought relationships had changed described the changes as both negative and positive: Positive in that it allowed "more interaction," improving relationships on "a personal level;" negative in that it is "more contentious," making athletes "more guarded." One respondent said, "A player was upset because I posted info from his Facebook page," while another participant said he, "had a source limit access to him because of something [the participant] tweeted and blogged that he didn't want spread to a larger audience." Some participants described changes more in terms of journalistic practices: The use of social media gives participants "additional access," and has helped them in "developing sources." As one respondent said, "I'm a lot more casual on Twitter and can get away with more than I could in the newspaper, so players do get sensitive to what I put on Twitter and the blog." A full list of respondents' comments may be found in Appendix E.

There was no dominant definition of professionalism selected. Twenty-seven (35.1%) participants chose, *to serve the public interest and to provide reports and analyses of events through narratives* (Fuller, 2010; Hermida, 2010). These studies focus on the

influence Twitter has on 21st century journalism, suggesting journalism approaches that help the public regulate the flow of information (Hermida, 2010, p. 297). Table 3 provides journalists' definitions of journalistic professionalism.

*Table 3. Defining Professionalism*

| | All Participants (n = 77) (%) |
|---|---|
| Definition of professionalism | |
| "To ask tough questions, to conduct investigations, and to take community complaints seriously." | 4 (5.2) |
| "To tell the truth and to test information so personal and cultural biases do not undermine the accuracy of work." | 18 (23.4) |
| "To serve the public interest and to provide reports and analyses of events through narratives." | 27 (35.1) |
| "To make decisions about the newsworthiness of daily news and to keep pace with the speed of media consumption and the increasing demand for information services." | 11 (14.3) |
| "To listen to instinct, to know sources, and to generate stories that meet organizational needs and standards." | 17 (22.1) |

Two other definitions, however, were favored nearly as much: 23.4% of respondents chose *to tell the truth and to test information so personal and cultural biases do not undermine the accuracy of work* (Kovach and Rosenstiel, 2001), while 22.1% chose *to listen to instinct, to know sources, and to generate stories that meet organizational needs and standards* (Tuchman, 1978a).

Cross tabulations were constructed in order to test H2. Since only four participants selected, *To ask tough questions, to conduct investigations, and to take community*

*complaints seriously*, (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2001) as a definition of professionalism, these observations were dropped from the categorical cross tabulation in order to meet necessary conditions. Also, since only 37 (46.8%) participants use Facebook for professional purposes and 61 (80.3%) users used Twitter, measuring H2 was problematic because it would require isolating usage variables within already-small sample sizes. In order to meet necessary conditions, frequency categories for both Twitter and Facebook were recoded, combining users who rarely check their accounts with users who check accounts once a day. The one respondent who didn't know how often they check Twitter account per day was also eliminated from the sample. Results found no significant relationship between Facebook use and the definition of professionalism chosen ($x^2(1) = 2.273$, $p = .897$). There was a significant relationship, however, between Twitter use and the definition of professionalism chosen ($x^2(1) = 15.485$, $p = .017$). Cramer's V was used to measure the relationship, ($df = 6$, $v = .375$) suggesting frequency of Twitter use has a large influence on how sports journalists define professionalism. Of the respondents who chose, *to listen to instinct, to know sources, and to generate stories that meet organization needs and standards* (Tuchman, 1978a), 90% of them checked Twitter accounts more than five times a day. The majority of users who check Twitter feeds two to four times a day (64.3%) chose, *to serve the public interest and to provide reports and analyses of events through narratives* (Fuller, 2010; Hermida, 2010), as their preferred definition.

In order to test H2, observations of Schulz and Sheffer's (2010) definition of professionalism, *to make decisions about the newsworthiness of daily news and to keep pace with the speed of media consumption and the increasing demand for information services*, was isolated. Observations of all other definitions were combined into a second group. This allowed the necessary conditions for a 2 x 2 table and a cross tabulation was constructed of the new isolated professionalism definitions and frequency of Twitter use, as well as another cross tabulation of the new isolated professionalism definitions and frequency of Facebook use. A chi-square test revealed the relationship between defining professionalism in terms of speed and Twitter usage was not significant ($x^2(1) = 5.009$, $p = .082$), nor was the relationship between this definition and frequency of Facebook use significant ($x^2(1) = .930$, $p = .628$). These results suggest sports journalists who most often check their Twitter and Facebook accounts are no more likely to define professionalism in terms of "speed" than journalists who chose the other definitions. H2 was not supported.

*Public versus private spaces*. A chi-square analysis was conducted to test H3. All original circulation sizes were used in the cross tabulation, with the exception of the one observation of circulation sizes less than 10,000. The four respondents who said they did not know if they were friends with athletes they cover were also eliminated from the test. A cross tabulation was created of the circulation and friends with athletes categories. A chi-square test revealed 66.7% of respondents from newspapers of 50,001 to 100,000 circulations were "friends" with athletes they cover, while only 40% from 10,001 to

50,000 circulations and 33.3% of more than 100,001 circulations were. This chi-square test suggests the relationship between circulation size and being Facebook "friends" with athletes was not significant ($x^2(1) = 2.633$, $p = .268$). H3 was not supported.

*Directly quoting*. Forty-seven (61.8%) participants have directly quoted from athletes' Facebook page and/or a Twitter feed, while 28 (36.8%) have not. In order to test H4, all original circulation sizes were used in the cross tabulation, with the exception of the one observation of circulation sizes less than 10,000. Necessary conditions were met and a cross-tabulation was constructed of the circulation and directly quoting categories. This chi-square test suggests the relationship between circulation size and directly quoting from social media accounts was significant ($x^2(1) = 12.843$, $p = .002$), with the largest circulation related to the largest amount of direct quoting. Cramer's V was used to measure the relationship, ($df = 2$, $v = .417$) suggesting circulation size has a large influence on sports journalists to quote directly from Facebook and/or Twitter feeds. H4 was supported.

*Gatekeeping*. The survey question asked participants, "Has your definition of gatekeeper (someone who decides if and how a message will be distributed by mass media) changed since you began using social media?" Results were nearly split. Thirty-six participants (47.4%) said no, while 26 respondents (34.2%) said yes. Eight people (10.5%) did not know and six respondents (7.9%) were not applicable. This suggests that social media use has not changed sports writers' definition of gatekeeping, but the margin is small.

Respondents who answered yes were asked to explain how their definition has changed. The answers varied greatly. Some respondents cited a drop in accuracy standards because of "the practice of re-tweeting others work" and the implications re-tweets have: not verifying the information, stealing a competitor's work, and telling a story in "drips and drabs." Others cite gatekeepers as the other people using social media, saying "the public dictates the news more often and that there are few gatekeepers now. "Many people can distribute information, regardless of their credentials and credibility." Others saw their role as a gatekeeper because of heightened priorities, saying "there's more info to sift through," but their editors' attention to the source has made social media "a more mainstream source of info." This has led to higher importance of "building our own audience instead of relying on a circulation director to do it." Others cited social media use as a necessity of traditional practice: "Simply by the need to quote from such media if the person in question cannot be contacted directly," or "Athletes don't need the media to deliver their message, they do it themselves, many quite poorly." The comments suggest a lack of mutual understanding of what gatekeeping is, let alone what journalists' roles as gatekeepers entail: "First off, I'm not real comfortable with that term," one participant said. "Sounds ... Elitist? Fascist? ... Anyway, the biggest change since the rise of social media is the way it has fragmented the message. Is there breaking news? Get the very first inkling of it out there before you do anything else. Then release information as it comes, instead of presenting a cohesive whole. I feel like we all need to be on Ritalin." A complete list of responses can be found in Appendix F.

In order to test H5, new categories were created from gatekeeping data in order to meet necessary conditions: The six respondents who said the question was not applicable and the eight people who did not know if their definition had changed were excluded from the test. All original circulation sizes were used in the cross tabulation, with the exception of the one observation of circulation sizes less than 10,000. Necessary conditions were met and cross-tabulations were constructed first of Twitter use and gatekeeping definitions, then of Facebook use and gatekeeping definitions. Chi-square tests suggest the relationship between Twitter use and gatekeeping definitions was not significant ($x^2(1) = 1.169$, $p = .280$). The relationship between Facebook use and gatekeeping definitions was also not significant ($x^2(1) = 1.060$, $p = .303$). These results suggest there is not enough evidence to reject a null hypothesis. H5 was supported.

## DISCUSSION

Based on these results, journalism's lack of a unified definition of professionalism applies to sports journalism also. Despite the relatively homogenous demographics of the sports journalists surveyed, no definition of journalistic professionalism was unquestionably more popular in this sample of 77 participants. This study found a strong relationship between frequency of Twitter usage and the definition of professionalism chosen, but what specific characteristics determine a journalist's definition of professionalism continues to puzzle: Chi-square tests in this study found no significant relationship between professionalism and age, professional organization association, circulation size, years of experience, sport covered, or belief in an altered gatekeeper role.

Though frequency of Twitter use has a relationship with how the person defines professionalism, age played a significant role in Twitter usage. Respondents' maximum and minimum ages were used as guidelines to recode responses into three categories: Twenty-three- to 38-year-olds, 39- to 54-year-olds, and 55- to 70-year-olds. A chi-square test revealed age was significantly related to Twitter usage ($x^2(1) = 6.318$, $p = .04$). All of the Twitter users sampled in the 23- to 38-year-old demographic checked accounts at least once each day, followed by 93% of Twitter users in the 39- to 54-year-old bracket and 71.4% of users in the 55- to 70-year-old demographic. Cramer's V was used to measure the relationship ($df = 2$ and $v = .336$), suggesting age has a strong effect on Twitter usage for professional use. Age also had a significantly strong relationship with discovering story ideas and/or breaking news items on social media ($x^2(1) = 14.473$, $p = .001$, $v = .434$) and with following Twitter feeds of athletes they cover ($x^2(1) = 8.915$, $p = .012$, $v = .392$). Age was not, however, significantly related to sports journalists being Facebook "friends" with the athletes they cover ($x^2(1) = 2.066$, $p = .356$).

This study suggests Twitter has been accepted as a "normalized" medium for professional sports journalism newsgathering, particularly among younger professionals. The same cannot be said, however, of Facebook. Participants' divided use of Facebook for professional purposes suggests a professional boundary Twitter is not perceived to have. This may suggest Twitter allows them to gather news while keeping a disinterested stance toward the people they cover, while Facebook blurs this traditionally accepted

tenet of professional and private boundaries. This is supported by the lack of "friends" being made with sources, even at the smallest circulation newspapers, where professional boundaries appeared to be most blurred in the pilot survey and interviews.

An explanation for the strong relationship between circulation and directly quoting from source's accounts may be the large markets in which most professional sports teams are located. Located in large cities, most of these newspapers have more pressure to post quickly and harnessed social media for professional purposes at an earlier date. This ties to the pilot interviews and surveys, which suggested using Twitter for these purposes would be more applicable to sports journalists who cover professional sports than it would for other sports journalists.

This study's results regarding superior's encouragement of social media (and its lack of connection to circulation size) and participants' claim that the medium has not changed relationships with sources support past literature that claimed social media use has not influenced sports journalists' understanding of professionalism. As Lewis (2010, p. 53) concludes, "journalists have fallen back on professional defenses: Holding fast to enduring values, taking conservative steps to change, and then – even when opening the gates to participation – co-opting participatory practices to suit traditional routines and ideals." This study's correlation between age and Twitter use, and, in turn, Twitter use and how professionalism is defined, may suggest a generational and technical gap similar to what scholars described following the advent of television journalism. As the

literature review concludes, sports journalism practice changed significantly when television become a competitor, and behaviors once previously considered unprofessional (i.e., writing about athletes' personal lives, writing about taboo subjects, altering grammar usage) became a new standard of journalistic professionalism. These results support Salwen and Garrison's (1998, p. 64) study, which suggests journalists have not discarded traditional hallmarks of journalistic professionalism, though the environment in which they seek professionalism has changed: Stelter (2009) found a plethora of journalists who were uninterested in harnessing social media, but the majority of the participants in this study are not only using Twitter for professional purposes, but are discovering breaking news and story ideas through the medium. Many participants also see the medium as credible enough to directly quote from athletes' social media accounts.

### *Limitations and Future Direction*

While the findings of this study present important implications for journalism professionalism research, it does have some limitations. This study was not the first to try to define professionalism in journalism, as past literature includes attempts to measure professionalization by surveying journalists' attitudes and values (Lewis, 2010, Witschge & Nygren, 2009). This study's measurement of sports journalists' values doesn't necessarily determine industry-wide professionalism ideals. These efforts conclude, "The institutional forms of professionalism likely will always elude the journalist" (Lewis, 2010, p. 41). Additionally, this study was conducted with 77 sports journalists who cover professional sports. As the pilot interviews and survey suggest, the level of athletics

(*professional versus prep*) had an effect upon the way sports writers would use information gathered on respective athletes' websites. The sample's large involvement in professional organizations may also have skewed the results, as the most likely participants in a study like this may potentially be the population that cares most of about professionalism. These challenges mean the results from this study may not be generalized to all sports journalists. Future research should examine how sports writers covering prep sports use social media, analyzing how their usage differs from those who cover professional sports and how results vary with the larger sample size that study would offer.

Secondly, the 114 professional sports teams that participated varied in the depth of newspaper information they provided. Some teams provided organized lists of daily and weekly newspapers and individual writers, some of whom had season passes and others who only covered games sporadically and were, therefore, not eligible. Most NFL teams, for example, had "black books" listing this information. This information was easily accessible and most complete, as football beat writers accounted for the bulk of this study's sample. Other teams, however, said they had no lists of newspapers that receive press passes, listing from memory the large circulation newspapers that consistently receive passes. Some teams said they'd need to have someone compile a list, while others weren't sure it was within company policy to reveal the list at all. This may have biased the sample to larger circulation newspapers and toward sports writers who cover football.

Thirdly, it is unknown how many sports writers at the 262 newspapers contacted were eligible to participate. Though 42 of these newspapers were eliminated from the sample because either e-mails bounced back or because the recipient said they had no professional sports beat writers, it is unknown how many sports writers read the e-mail, saw they were ineligible (i.e., because they didn't cover professional sports), and deleted the e-mail. It is unknown how many sports writers on the NFL "black book" lists, for example, considered themselves to be beat writers and participated. Some lists contained all sports writers who have requested press passes. This does not necessarily include season press passes. These challenges, along with the lack of cooperation from several professional sports organizations, means the population parameters are unknown.

Fourthly, as this study revealed, the way sports writers and scholars define "gatekeeper" varies considerably. Though past literature suggests 21st century journalists are no longer gatekeepers, participants in this study still largely saw themselves as gatekeepers, in terms of their duty to decipher and to make choices about what information is presented and what is not. Participants' varied responses regarding how they believe their role of gatekeeper has changed reflects a lack of a unified definition of gatekeeping (See Appendix F). The meaning of "gatekeepers" should be clarified in further study of journalism practices.

Finally, the sample size of this study was 77 people. Though that may be a considerable percent of the sports journalists' population that covers professional sports, it wasn't large enough to confidently say sample size didn't affect significance in this study. Though necessary conditions were met in order to conduct chi-square tests, the sample size was too small to measure interrelationships in many tests (Utts & Heckard, 2006). A larger sample may also significantly alter the relationship between the frequency of Twitter use and chosen definitions of professionalism also.

### *Conclusion*

This study sought to extend previous professionalism studies by assessing how print sports writers who cover professional sports define professionalism and use social media to gather information, and what industry factors influence this usage, such as how they define gatekeeping, how big their newspaper circulation size is, how frequently they use social media, and the attitude of their work superiors' toward social media. Despite the relatively homogenous demographics of the sports journalists surveyed, no definition of journalistic professionalism was unquestionably more popular. This study found a strong relationship between frequency of Twitter usage and the definition of professionalism chosen. Circulation size does not determine whether sports journalists' superiors encourage social media use, nor did participants' use of social media change their definitions of gatekeeping. There was a strong relationships between circulation size and instances of directly quoting from athletes' social media accounts; frequency of Twitter usage and the definition of professionalism chosen; and age and Twitter usage. Twitter

has been accepted as a "normalized" medium for professional use, while Facebook is more contested. Participants' divided use of Facebook for professional purposes and high use of Twitter for professional use suggests Twitter allows newsgathering while keeping a disinterested stance toward the people they cover, while Facebook blurs the professional and private boundaries.

Though there is a relationship between definitions of professionalism and frequency of Twitter usage, more study is needed to analyze what characteristics contribute to sports journalists' attitudes regarding professionalism and why.

**Works Cited**


Abbott, A. D. (1988). *The system of professions: An essay on the division of expert labor*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Allan, G. (1989). *Friendship: Developing a Sociological Perspective*. Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Anderson, C. (2008). Professionalization of journalism. In W. Donsbach (Ed.), *International encyclopedia of communication*. London: Blackwell.

Anderson, E. (2005). *In the game: Gay athletes and the cult of masculinity*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Associated Press (2009, June 17). Love: McHale won't return. *ESPN.com*. Retrieved from http://sports.espn.go.com

Barnes, S. (2006). A privacy paradox: Social networking in the United States. *First Monday*, 11(9).

Beam, R. (1990). Journalism professionalism as an organizational-level concept. *Journalism Monographs,* 121, 1-43.

Becker, H., & Carper, J. (1956). The elements of identification with an occupation. *American Sociological Review*, 21, 341-347.

Behar, R., & Gordon, D. (1995). *Women's writing culture*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Bissland, J. H., & Rentner, T. L. (1989). Education's role in professionalizing public relations: A progress report. *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, 4(1), 92-105.

boyd, D. (2006). Friends, friendsters and top 8: Writing community into being on social network sites. *First Monday*, 11(12).

boyd, D., & Heer, J. (2006). Profiles as conversation: Networked identity performance on friendster. *Proceedings of Thirty-Ninth Hawai'i International Conference on System Sciences*, 59-69. Los Alamitos, CA:IEEE Press.

boyd, D. M., & Ellison, N. B. (2007). Social network sites: Definition, history, and Scholarship. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication,* 13(1).

Breed, W. (1955). Social control in the newsroom: A functional analysis. *Social Forces*, 33, 326-335.

Brooks, B., Kennedy, G., Moen, D., & Ranly, D. (2002). *News Reporting and Writing*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's.

Bryant, J., & Thompson, S. (2002). *Fundamentals of Media Effects*. Boston: McGraw-Hill.

Butterworth, M. (2006). Pitchers and catchers: Mike Piazza and the discourse of gay identity in the national pastime. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues,* 30, 138-157.

Clark, G. (2009). Environmental Twitter. *Environment Magazine,* 51(5), 5-7.

Coldwell, T. (1970). *Professionalization and performance among newspaper photographers* (Unpublished master's thesis) University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WS.

Coldwell, T. (1974). Professionalization and performance among newspaper photographers. *Gazette,* 20, 73-81.

Connell, R., & Messerschmidt, J. (2005). Hegemonic masculinity: Rethinking the concept. *Gender & Society*, 19, 829-859.
Daniels, G. L., & Hollifield, C. A. (2002). Times of turmoil: Short- and long-term effects of organizational change on newsroom employees. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 79(3), 661-680.
Dingwall, R. (1976). Accomplishing profession. *The Sociological Review*, 24(2), 331-349.
Dillman, D. (1978). *Mail and telephone surveys*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
Dueze, M. (2006). Participation, remediation, bricolage: Considering principal components of a digital culture. *The Information Society: An International Journal*, 22(2), 63-75.
Duncan, M., & Messner, M. (2000). *Gender in televised sports: 1989, 1993 and 1999*. Los Angeles: The Amateur Athletic Foundation.
Dworkin, S., & Wachs, F. (1998). Disciplining the body: HIV positive male athletes, media surveillance and the policing of sexuality. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 15, 1-20.
Facebook (2007). *Press Room: Statistics*. Retrieved December 3, 2007, from http://www.facebook.com/press/info/php?statistics
Farhi, P. (2009, June 24). The Twitter explosion. *American Journalism Review*. Retrieved from http://www.ajr.org/Article.asp?id=4756
Freidson, E. (1975). *Doctoring together: A study of professional social control*. New York: Elsevier.
Freidson, E. (1983). The reorganization of the professions by regulation. *Law and Human Behavior*, 7(2-3), 279-290.
Freidson, E. (2001). *Professionalism: The third logic*. Cambridge, UK: Polity.
Fuller, J. (2010). What is happening to news? *Dædalus*, 139(2), 110-118.
Fullwood, C., Sheehan, N., & Nicholis, W. (2009). Blog function revisited: A content analysis of MySpace blogs. *CyberPsychology & Behavior*, 12(6), 685-689.
Gardner, H., Csikszentmihalyi, M., & Damon, W. (2001). Good work: *When excellence and ethics meet*. New York: Basic Books.
Garrison, B. (1989). The Evolution of Professionalism in Sports Reporting. In R. Jackson and T. McPhail (Eds.), *The Olympic Movement and the Mass Media*: *Past, Present, and Future Issues*. Calgary, Alberta: Hurford Enterprises.
Garrison, B., & Sabljak, M. (1993). *Sports reporting*. Ames: Iowa State University Press.
Garrison, B., & Salwen, M. (1989). Newspaper sports journalists: A profile of the "profession." *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 13(2), 57-68.
Gerald, E. J. (1963). *The social responsibility of the press*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
Gieryn, T. F. (1983). Boundary-work and the demarcation of science from non-science: Strains and interests in professional ideologies of scientists. *American Sociological Review*, 48(6), 781-795.
Giles, R. (1995). *Newsroom management: A guide to theory and practice*. MI: Media Management Books.
Goffman, E. (1963). *Behavior in public places*. New York: Free Press.

Goodman, E. (2009, July 5). Journalism needed in Twitter era. *Columbia Daily Tribune*. Retrieved from http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/2009/jul/05/journalism-needed-in-twitter-era/.

Haney, W., Russell, M., Gulek, C., & Fierros, E. (1998). Drawing on education: using student reflection surveys and drawings to promote middle school improvement. *Schools in the Middle*. National Association of Secondary School Principals: Chicago.

Hardin, M. (2005). Stopped at the gate: Women's sports, 'reader interest,' and decision-making by editors. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 82(1), 62-77.

Hardin, M., Dodd, J., & Lauffer, K. (2006). Passing it on: The reinforcement of male hegemony in sports journalism textbooks. *Mass Communication & Society*, 9(4), 429-446.

Hardin, M., Kuehn, K., Jones, H., Genovese, J., Balaji, M. (2009). 'Have you got game?' Hegemonic masculinity and neo-homophobia in U.S. newspaper sports columns. *Communication, Culture & Critique* 2, 182-200.

Harrison, J. (2010). User-generated content and gatekeeping at the BBC hub. *Journalism Studies*, 11(2), 243-256.

Hayes, A., Singer, J., & Ceppos, J. (2007). Shifting roles, enduring values: The credible journalist in a digital age. *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, 22(4), 262-279.

Head, S.W. (1963). Can a journalist be a "professional" in a developing country? *Journalism Quarterly*, 40, 594-598.

Hermida, A. (2010). Twittering the news: The emergence of ambient journalism. *Journalism Practice*, 4(3), 297-308.

Hodges, L. (1986). The journalist and professionalism. *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, 1(2), 32-36.

Hughes, E. C. (1971). *The Sociological Eye*. Chicago: Aldine-Atherton.

Idsvoog, K. A., & Hoyt, J. L. (1977). Professionalism and performance of television journalists. *Journal of Broadcasting*, 21, 97-109.

Java, A., Finin, T., Song, X., & Tseng, B. (2007). *Why we Twitter: Understanding microblogging usage and communities*. San Jose, California, USA: University of Maryland.

Janowitz, M. (1975). Professional models in journalism: The gatekeeper and the advocate. *Journalism Quarterly*, 52, 618-626, 662.

Jenkins, H. (2006). *Convergence culture: Where old and new media collide*. New York: New York University Press.

Johnson, T. J. (1972). *Professions and Power*. London: Macmillan.

Johnstone, J. W. C., Slawski, E. J., & Bowman, W. W. (1972-73). The professional values of American newsmen. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 36(4), 522-540.

Kane, M. J. (1996). Media coverage of the Post Title IX female athlete: A feminist analysis of sport, gender, and power. *Duke Journal of Gender Law & Public Policy*, 3(1), 95-127.

Karlsson, L. (2007). Desperately seeking sameness: The processes and pleasures of identification in women's diary blog reading. *Feminist Media* Studies, 7(2), 137-153.

Kian, E. (2007). Gender in sports writing by the print media: An exploratory examination of writers' experiences and attitudes. *The SMART Journal*, 4(1), 5-26.
Kimball, P. (1965). Journalism: Art, craft, or profession. In, K. Lynn (Ed.), *The Professions in America* (242-260) Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.
Kindred, D. (2010). The sports beat: A digital reporting mix — with exhaustion built in. *Nieman Reports*, 64(4), 51-53.
Koppett, L. (1981). *Sports illusion, sports reality*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
Kovach, B., & Rosenstiel, T. (2001). *The elements of journalism: What newspeople should know and the public should expect*. New York: Three Rivers Press.
Kurtz, H. (2010, August 31). Post sportswriter Mike Wise suspended for Roethlisberger hoax on Twitter. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/08/31/AR2010083104105.html
Kwon, O., & Wen, Y. (2009). An empirical study of the factors affecting social network service use. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 26, 254-263.
Larson, M. (1977). *The rise of professionalism: A sociological analysis*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Lewis, J., & West, A. (2009). 'Friending': London-based undergraduates' experience of Facebook. *New Media Society*, 11, 1209-1229.
Lewis, S. (2010). *Journalism innovation and the ethic of participation: A Case study of the Knight Foundation and its News Challenge*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from http://sethlewis.org/research/dissertation
LeRoy, D. J. (1972-73). Levels of professionalism in a sample of TV newsmen. *Journal of Broadcasting*, 17, 51-62.
Lieberman, M. (1956). *Education as a profession*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall.
Linehan, B. (1970). *Professional orientation of newsmen on state dailies: A Wisconsin newsmen study* (Unpublished master's thesis). University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WS.
Lippmann, W. K. (1920). *Liberty and the news*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Howe.
McLeod, J. M., & Hawley, S. E., Jr. (1964). Professionalization Among Newsmen. *Journalism Quarterly*, 41, 529-539.
McLeod, J. M., & Rush, R. (1969). Professionalization of Latin American and U.S. journalists, Part II. *Journalism Quarterly*, 46, 784-789.
Menanteau-Horta, D. (1967). Professionalism of journalists in Chile. *Journalism Quarterly*, 44, 715-724.
Merrill, J. (1986). Journalistic professionalization: Danger to freedom and pluralism. *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, 1(2), 56-60.
Messner, M. (1992). *Power at play: Sports and the problem of masculinity*. Boston: Beacon Press.
Meyrowitz, J. (1986). *No sense of place*. New York: Oxford University Press.
Musa, B., & Domatob, J. (2007). Who is a development journalist? Perspectives on media ethics and professionalism in post-colonial societies. *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, 22(4), 315-331.

Nayman, O. (1970). *Professional orientation of metropolitan Turkish journalists: A communicator analysis (*Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WS.
Nayman, O., Atkin, C. K., & O'Keefe, G. J. (1973). Journalism as a profession in a developing society: Metropolitan Turkish newsmen. *Journalism Quarterly*, 50, 68-76.
Nayman, O., McKee, B.K., & Lattimore, D.L. (1977). PR personnel and print journalists: A comparison of professionalism. *Journalism Quarterly*, 54, 492-497.
Noordegraaf, M. (2007). From "pure" to "hybrid" professionalism: Present-day professionalism in ambiguous public domains. *Administration & Society*, 39(6), 761.
Novak, M. (1976). The game's the thing: A defense of sports as ritual. *Columbia Journalism Review*, (June), 33-38.
Osiel, M. (1986). The professionalization of journalism: Impetus or impediment to a "watchdog" press. *Sociological Inquiry*, 156, 163-189.
Papacharissi, Z. (2009). The virtual geographies of social networks: A comparative analysis of Facebook, LinkedIn and ASmallWorld. *New Media Society*, 11, 199-220.
Paterson, C., & Domingo, D. (2008). *Making online news: The ethnography of new media production*. New York: Peter Lang.
Pavlik, J. (2000). The impact of technology on journalism. *Journalism Studies*, 1(2): 229-237.
Posetti, J. (2009, June 17). Twitter's difficult gift to journalism. *NewMatilda.com.* Retrieved from http://newmatilda.com/2009/06/16/twitters-difficult-gift-journalism
Reed, S. (2011). Sports journalists' use of social media and its effects on professionalism. *Journal of Sports Media* 6(2).
Reinardy, S. (2006). It's gametime: The Maslach Burnout Inventory measures burnout of sports journalists. *J&MC Quarterly*, 83(2), 397-412.
Rosten, L. (1937). *The Washington Correspondents*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co.
Salwen, M., & Bernstein, J. (1986). Coverage of aftermath of 1984 World Series. J*ournalism Quarterly*, 63, 385-389.
Salwen, M., & Garrison, B. (1987). Sports and politics: *Los Angeles Times*' coverage of the 1984 summer Olympic Games. *Newspaper Research Journal*, 8(2), 43-52.
Salwen, M., & Garrison, B. (1998). Finding their place in journalism: Newspaper sports journalists professional "problems." *Journal of Sport & Social Issues*, 22(1), 88-102.
Schiller, D. (1981). *Objectivity and the news: The public and the rise of commercial journalism*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
Schillinger, E., & Jenswold, J. (1987). Three Olympiads: A comparison of *Pravada* and *The Washington Post*. *Journalism Quarterly*, 64, 826-833.
Schramm, W. (1957). *Responsibility in Mass Communication*. New York: Harper & Brothers.

Schudson, M. (1978). *Discovering the news: A social history of American newspapers*. New York: Basic Book.
Schudson, M. (2003). *The sociology of news*. New York: Norton.
Schultz, B., & Sheffer, M. L. (2010). An exploratory study of how Twitter is affecting sports journalism. *International Journal of Sport Communication*, 3(2), 226-239.
Sheffer, M. L., & Schultz, B. (2009). Are blogs changing the news values of newspaper reporters? *Web Journal of Mass Communication Research*, 16(July). Retrieved from http://wjmer.org/vol16
Sheffer, M. L., & Schultz, B. (2010). Paradigm shift or passing fad? Twitter and Sports Journalism. *International Journal of Sport Communication*, 3, 472-484.
Shiels, M. (2011, March 28). Twitter co-founder Jack Dorsey rejoins company. *BBC News*. Retrieved from http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-12889048
Simmons, T. (2008). The personal is political? Blogging and citizen stories, the case of Mum's Army. *Information Policy*, 13, 13-50.
Singletary, M. W. (1982). Are journalists professionals? *Newspaper Research Journal*, 3(2), 75-87.
Singer, J. (2004). More than ink-stained wretches: The resocialization of print journalism in converged newsrooms. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 81(4), 838-856.
Singer, J. B. (2010). Quality control: Perceived effects of user-generated content on newsroom norms, values and routines. *Journalism Practice*, 4(2), 127-142.
Singer, J., & Ashman, I. (2009). "Comment is free, but facts are sacred": User-generated content and ethical constructs at the *Guardian*. *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, 24, 3-21.
Stelter, B. (2009, June 28). Journalism rules are bent in news coverage from Iran. *New York Times.*
Surface, B. (1972). The shame of the sports beat. *Columbia Journalism Review*, (January/February), 48-55.
Telander, R. (1984). The written word: Player-press relationships in American sports. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 1, 3-14.
Theberge, N., & Cronk, A. (1986). Work routines in newspaper sports departments and the coverage of women's sports. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 3(1), 195-203.
Thornton, P. (2009, March 30). *Leaderboard for week of 3-30-09: Sports reporter edition*. Retrieved from http://beatblogging.org/tag/derrick-goold/
Tuchman, G. (1972). Objectivity as strategic ritual: An examination of newsmen's notions of objectivity. *American Journal of Sociology*, 77(4), 660-679.
Tuchman, G. (1978a). *Making news: A study in the construction of reality*. New York: The Free Press.
Tuchman, G. (1978b). Professionalism as an agent of legitimation. *Journal of Communication*, 28(2), 106-113.
Tuchman, G. (2002). The production of news. In K. Jensen (Ed.), *A handbook of media and communication research*. New York: Routledge.
Utts, J., & Heckard, R. (2006). *Statistical Ideas and Methods*. Belmont, CA: Thomson Brooks/Cole.

Vincent, J., Pedersen, P. M., Whisenant, W. A., & Massey, D. (2007). Analyzing the print media coverage of professional tennis players: British newspaper narratives about female competitors in the Wimbledon Championships. *International Journal of Sport Management and Marketing*, 2(3), 281-300.
Visweswaran, K. (1994). *Fictions of feminist ethnography*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
Vivian, J. (1997). *The Media of Mass Communication*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
Ward, L. S. (1966). *Professionalization among advertising agency personnel*. Unpublished master's thesis, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WS.
Wasserman, S., & Faust, K. (1994). *Social network analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Weaver, D. H., & Wilhoit, G. C. (1986). *The American journalist*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
Weaver, D. H., & Wilhoit, G. C. (1996). *The American journalist in the 1990s: U.S. News people at the end of an era*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
Weinthal, D. S., & O'Keefe, G. J. (1974). Professionalization among broadcast newsmen in an urban Area. *Journal of Broadcasting*, 18, 193-209.
Wellman, B., & Berkowitz, S.D. (1997). *Social Structure: A Network Approach*. Greenwich, CT: JA1 Press.
Williams, A., Wardle, C., & Wahl-Jorgensen, K. (2011). "Have they got news for us?" Audience revolution or business as usual at the BBC? *Journalism Practice* 5(1), 85-99.
Wilson, K. (2008). In your Facebook. *American Journalism Review*, 30(1), 12-13.
Wilstein, S. (2002). *Sports writing handbook*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
Witschge, T., & Nygren, G. (2009). Journalism: A profession under pressure? *Journal of Media Business Studies*, 6(1), 7-36.
Wimmer, R., & Dominick, J. (2006). *Mass media research*. Boston: Wadsworth.
Wright, D. (1976). Professionalism levels of British Columbia's broadcast journalists: A communicator analysis. *Gazette*, 22, 38-48.
Wulfemeyer, K. T. (1985). Ethics in sports journalism: Tightening up the code. *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, 1(1), 57-67.
Yahoo!News (2010, February 2). *Oregon Coach boots receiver after Facebook posting*. Retrieved from http://news.yahoo/com/s/ap/20100222/ap_on_sp_co_ne/fbc_oregon_player_dismissed/print

## Appendix A
## E-mail #1 to potential participants

**Subject Line**: Upcoming survey for sports writers

**Body of e-mail:** Hello. I am writing to request your participation in the Sports Journalism and Social Media Survey for Sports Writers. This study is conducted by Sada Reed, master's student, through the University of Minnesota's School of Journalism and Mass Communication. The purpose of this survey is to assess sports writers' use of social media (i.e., Facebook, Twitter) and how usage has challenged standards of professionalism (which includes assessing sports writers' relationships with athletes) and gatekeeping. The results of this survey will be used to show news organizations how social media use is changing professionalism and gatekeeping roles, and in turn, help organizations adjust to the changing media environment.

Within the next several weeks, I will send you an e-mail with a link to the survey. The survey should take no longer than 5 minutes to complete. You will be asked to answer questions about your use of social media (i.e., Facebook, Twitter) and your opinions regarding how social media has changed your profession.

There are no immediate or expected risks for participating in the survey. The survey is completely anonymous and confidential. Once your responses are entered into an electronic file, the original survey form will be destroyed. There are also no immediate or expected benefits for you for participating in the survey. The records of this study will be kept private. No reports will be published or publicly available. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

Should you have any questions, concerns, or comments, please contact Sada Reed at konk0019@umn.edu, or at 612-625-3421.

Thank you for your time and help. I hope you are interested in participating.
Sada Reed

**Appendix B**
**E-mail #2 to potential participants**

**Subject Line:** Sports Journalism and Social Media Survey for Sports Writers
**Body of e-mail**:

Hello. I am following up on an e-mail I sent earlier about the Sports Journalism and Social Media Survey for Sports Writers. The survey is conducted by University of Minnesota School of Journalism and Mass Communication master's student Sada Reed. The purpose of this survey is to assess sports writers' use of social media (i.e., Facebook, Twitter) and how usage has challenged standards of professionalism (which includes assessing sports writers' relationships with athletes) and gatekeeping. The results of this survey will be used to show news organizations how social media use is changing professionalism and gatekeeping roles, and in turn, help organizations adjust to the changing media environment.

**You must be a sports writer who is employed full-time in order to participate.** There are no immediate or expected risks for participating in the survey. The survey is completely anonymous and confidential. Once your responses are entered into an electronic file, the original survey form will be destroyed. There are also no immediate or expected benefits for you for participating in the survey. The records of this study will be kept private. No reports will be published or publicly available. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

This is an on-line survey that should take 5 minutes to complete. You will be asked to answer questions about your use of social media (i.e., Facebook, Twitter) and your opinions regarding how social media has changed your profession.

To access the survey, please go to:
http://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/403341/Sports-Journalism-and-Social-Media-Survey-for-Sports-Writers

Should you have any questions, concerns, or comments, please contact Sada Reed at konk0019@umn.edu, or at 612-625-3421.

Thank you,
Sada Reed

**Appendix C**
**E-mail #3 to potential participants**

**Subject Line**: Reminder of Sports Journalism and Social Media Survey for Sports Writers

**Body of e-mail:** Hello. I send this e-mail to follow-up my previous e-mail regarding the Sports Journalism and Social Media Survey for Sports Writers. This study is conducted by Sada Reed, master's student, through the University of Minnesota's School of Journalism and Mass Communication. I hope you are still interested in participating. **If you already completed the survey, thank you for your participation.**

This is an on-line survey that should take 5 minutes to complete. You will be asked to answer questions about your use of social media (i.e., Facebook, Twitter) and your opinions regarding how social media has changed your profession.

There are no immediate or expected risks for participating in the survey. The survey is completely anonymous and confidential. Once your responses are entered into an electronic file, the original survey form will be destroyed. There are also no immediate or expected benefits for you for participating in the survey. The records of this study will be kept private. No reports will be published or publicly available. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

To access the survey, please go to:
http://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/403341/Sports-Journalism-and-Social-Media-Survey-for-Sports-Writers

Should you have any questions, concerns, or comments, please contact Sada Reed at konk0019@umn.edu, or at 612-625-3421.

Thank you,
Sada Reed

**Appendix D**
**Survey**

# Sports Journalism and Social Media Survey for Sports Writers

**Page One**

**1. Do you use Facebook for professional purposes? ***

- Yes
- No (If so, skip to question No. 4)
- Used to, but no longer (If so, skip to question No. 4)

**2. On average, how many times per day do you check your professional Facebook account?**

- None. I rarely check my Facebook account.
- 1 time
- 2-4 times
- More than 5 times
- Don't know

**3. On your professional Facebook account, are you "friends" with athletes, coaches, or anyone else you cover as a sports writer?**

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

**4. Do you use Twitter for professional purposes? ***

- Yes
- No (If so, skip to question No. 7)
- Used to, but no longer (If so, skip to question No. 7)

**5. On average, how many times per day do you check your professional Twitter account?**

- None. I rarely check Twitter.
- 1 time
- 2-4 times
- More than 5 times
- Don't know

**6. Do you "follow" the Twitter feeds of any athletes, coaches, or anyone else you cover as a sports writer?**

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

**7. Do your superiors at work encourage you to use social media (Facebook and/or Twitter) for professional purposes? ***

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

**8. Have you discovered story ideas and/or breaking news items because of something you saw on someone's Facebook profile or Twitter feed? ***

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

**9. Have you ever quoted directly from the Facebook profile or Twitter feed of an athlete, coach, or anyone else you cover as a sports writer, and used it in a story? ***

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

**10. "Professionalism" in sports journalism is difficult to define. As honestly and as carefully as possible, check which of the following characteristics you believe most accurately summarizes your definition of professionalism. (Check one) Professionalism is… ***

- ☐ To ask tough questions, to conduct investigations, and to take community complaints seriously.
- ☐ To tell the truth and to test information so personal and cultural biases do not undermine the accuracy of work.
- ☐ To serve the public interest and to provide reports and analyses of events through narratives.
- ☐ To make decisions about the newsworthiness of daily news and to keep pace with the speed of media consumption and the increasing demand for information services.
- ☐ To listen to instinct, to know sources, and to generate stories that meet organizational needs and standards.

**11. Has your relationship with athletes, coaches, or anyone else you cover as a sports writer changed since you began using social media? ***

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No (If so, skip to question No. 13)
- ☐ Don't know (If so, skip to question No. 13)
- ☐ Not applicable

**12. How have these relationships changed?**

- ☐ (Please describe) Please enter an 'other' value for this selection.

**13. Has your definition of gatekeeper (someone who decides if and how a message will be distributed by mass media) changed since you began using social media? ***

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No (If so, skip to question No. 15)
- ☐ Don't know (If so, skip to question No. 15)

- ☐ Not applicable

**14. How has your definition of gatekeeper changed?**

- ☐ (Please describe) Please enter an 'other' value for this selection.

**15. How has your use of social media changed the quality of your work? ***

- ☐ Social media has improved the quality of my work.
- ☐ Social media has decreased the quality of my work.
- ☐ Social media has not influenced the quality of my work.
- ☐ Don't know
- ☐ Not applicable

Demographics questions

**16. What is your age? ***

- ☐ (write number): Please enter an 'other' value for this selection.

**17. What is your sex? ***

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

**18. What is your race/ethnicity? (Check all that apply)**

- ☐ White
- ☐ Black/African-American
- ☐ American Indian/Native Alaskan
- ☐ Asian/Asian-American
- ☐ Hispanic
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- ☐ Other: Please enter an 'other' value for this selection.

**19. What is the highest level of education you have completed at this time?** *

- ☐ High school diploma/GED
- ☐ Two-year vocational/community college degree
- ☐ Four-year undergraduate degree
- ☐ Master's degree or higher

**20. In what sector of sports journalism are you primarily employed?** *

- ☐ Newspaper
- ☐ Online news
- ☐ Magazines
- ☐ Radio
- ☐ Television

**21. What professional sports do you cover? (Check all that apply)** *

- ☐ Baseball
- ☐ Basketball
- ☐ Football
- ☐ Hockey
- ☐ Other (Please write) Please enter an 'other' value for this selection.

**22. What is your title (i.e., sports writer, sports editor)?** *

- ☐ (Please write) Please enter an 'other' value for this selection.

**23. What is your news organizations' market size/circulation?** *

- ☐ Less than 10,000
- ☐ 10,001 to 50,000
- ☐ 50,001 to 100,000
- ☐ More than 100,001

**24. Do you work at a daily or weekly newspaper? ***

- Daily
- Weekly
- Other Please enter an 'other' value for this selection.

**25. How many years of full-time, professional journalism experience do you have? ***

- Write number (X years, Y months) Please enter an 'other' value for this selection.

**26. To which professional associations do you belong? (Check all that apply) ***

- American Society of Journalists and Authors
- Asian American Journalists Association
- Associated Press Sports Editors
- Association for Women in Sports Media
- Baseball Writers Association of America
- Boxing Writers Association of America
- Football Writers Association of America
- Golf Writers Association of America
- International Tennis Writers Association
- National Association of Black Journalists
- National Association of Hispanic Journalists
- National College Baseball Writers Association
- National Collegiate Baseball Writers
- National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association
- National Newspaper Association
- National Turf Writers Association
- Native American Journalists Association
- Newspaper Association of America

- Pro Basketball Writers Association
- Pro Hockey Writers Association
- Professional Football Writers of America
- Society of Professional Journalists
- United States Basketball Writers Association
- Other (write answer) Please enter an 'other' value for this selection.

**27. Do you have any further comments or suggestions?**

- (Write answer) Please enter an 'other' value for this selection.

**Appendix E**
**Participant professional demographics**

| | All Participants (n = 77) (%) |
|---|---|
| Newspaper Circulation size | |
| Less than 10,000 | 1(1.3) |
| 10,001 to 50,000 | 18 (23.4) |
| 50,001 to 100,000 | 15 (19.5) |
| More than 100,001 | 43 (55.8) |
| Sector primarily employed | |
| Newspaper | 71 (92.2) |
| Online news | 6 (7.8) |
| Professional sports coverage | |
| Baseball | 38 (26.4) |
| Basketball | 20 (13.9) |
| Football | 51 (35.4) |
| Hockey | 19 (13.2) |
| Other | 19 (11.1) |
| Title | |
| Sports editor | 19 (24.9) |
| Sports writer | 43 (55.8) |
| Staff writer | 2 (2.6) |
| Columnist | 6 (7.8) |
| Other | 7 (8.9) |
| Publication | |
| Daily | 67 (92.2) |
| Weekly | 6 (6.8) |
| Professional associations | |
| American Society of Journalists and Authors | 1 (1.09) |
| Associated Press Sports Editors | 20 (21.9) |
| Association for Women in Sports Media | 2 (2.19) |
| Baseball Writers Association of America | 12 (13.18) |
| Football Writers Association of America | 21 (23.07) |
| Golf Writers Association of America | 1 (1.09) |
| International Tennis Writers Association | 1 (1.09) |
| National Association of Black Journalists | 3 (3.29) |
| Pro Basketball Writers Association | 2 (2.19) |
| Pro Hockey Writers Association | 3 (3.29 |
| Professional Football Writers of America | 15 (16.48) |
| Society of Professional Journalists | 6 (6.59) |
| United States Basketball Writers Association | 2 (2.19) |
| Other | 2 (2.19) |

**Appendix F**
**Participants written responses**

12.) How have these relationships [with athletes, coaches, or anyone else you cover as a sports writer] changed?

| Respondent Number | Response |
|---|---|
| 111 | "More interaction in 'down' times, mostly in a positive fashion." |
| 124 | "A player was upset because I posted info from his Facebook page." |
| 126 | "They've improved on a personal level; not that they were bad to start with, but they're more one-on-one friendly now." |
| 129 | "Had a source limit access to him because of something I tweeted and blogged that he didn't want spread to a larger audience." |
| 130 | "A little more personal interaction with athletes through Twitter, including some back and forth." |
| 131 | "There is an increased interaction involving exchanges via Twitter." |
| 132 | "I'm a lot more casual on Twitter and can get away with more than I could in the newspaper, so players do get sensitive to what I put on Twitter and the blog." |
| 138 | "With some athletes it gives you additional access to communicate in another medium." |
| 146 | "It actually has helped me develop sources and given me a talking point with sources about social networking. I've also done an interview via Twitter before and direct message sources." |
| 150 | "The rise of Twitter in general has made athletes even more guarded around us; though that would be the case regardless of whether or not I used Twitter myself." |
| 154 | "Slightly more insight into their personal lives and typical tone of voice. Makes it easier to strike up casual conversation and know sarcasm when I hear it." |
| 157 | "More contentious." |
| 180 | "I believe the athletes that I interact with on a regular basis are made more comfortable once they've seen me as a person rather than a part of 'the media.'" |

14.) How has your definition of gatekeeper changed?

| Respondent Number | Response |
|---|---|
| 117 | "Supervisory editors pay much more attention to Twitter and Facebook and have made it a more mainstream source of info." |
| 126 | "I never post anything that one of my competitor's can steal until it's been published/posted for a little while." |
| 129 | "I think the standards for accuracy have diminished overall in the business because of the practice of re-tweeting others work. It's common practice now and I do it to keep up with what's trending that day, but it endorses work that I personally haven't verified. Occasionally, I have passed on news that was either inaccurate or incomplete or later clarified because of the rush for immediacy." |
| 130 | "A little less fact checking in the name of speed. This is true in retweets rather than personal posts." |
| 131 | "Social media allows for distribution of news that readers would have never seen 10 years ago. Quick opinions, brief observations, etc. now make it to readers where they were often lost in the shuffle in the past." |
| 136 | "As a gatekeeper prior to the advent of social media, you got your story and developed it over the course of an entire day then hit the public with one completely detailed story the next morning. Now, it's done in drips and drabs, sending out breaking news in one or two sentences and updating it throughout the course of the day as more information becomes available." |
| 137 | "Because of social media, you can add publisher to the list of hats I wear. In today's world, we are building our own audience rather than relying on a circulation director to do it." |
| 141 | "With no space minimums or maximums, every little tidbit can be considered for publication. And there is a greater need to get the information out quickly." |
| 146 | "The athletes can directly communicate to the fans without going through us." |
| 149 | "I think the public dictates the news more often. If a subject gains heavy traction on Facebook or Twitter, the mass media is virtually compelled to address it." |
| 150 | "First off, I'm not real comfortable with that term. Sounds ... Elitist? Fascist? ... Anyway, the biggest change since the rise of social media is the way it has fragmented the message. Is there breaking news? Get the very first inkling of it out there before you do anything else. Then release information as it comes, instead of presenting a cohesive whole. I feel like we all need to be on Ritalin." |
| 155 | "There are few gatekeepers now – many people can distribute information, regardless of their credentials and credibility." |
| 156 | "In the past an editor was in effect my gatekeeper. Now, increasingly, I serve that role myself with my blog and Twitter account." |
| 158 | "I have to be leery of comments and make sure they are appropriate for our site." |
| 159 | "Twitter (with links) is a great way to distribute news." |

| | |
|---|---|
| 160 | "From newspapers and the accepted professional 'media' to anyone, anywhere today." |
| 168 | "There's more info to sift through and ultimately pass on." |
| 170 | "Simply by the need to quote from such media if the person in question cannot be contacted directly." |
| 172 | "Players can get out a message on their terms and with their spin. My job involves more analysis." |
| 179 | "Stories and news is pursued sometimes whether relevant or not because it's already in the public arena." |
| 181 | "We make editorial judgments on newsworthiness of stories by what we Twitter or Facebook and how we present it." |
| 182 | "News judgment decisions often are made these days based on social media updates." |
| 183 | "Athletes don't need the media to deliver their message, they do it themselves, many quite poorly." |
| 185 | "Tougher to distinguish accuracy." |
| 186 | "You feel like only a partial gatekeeper – if it's on someone else's Twitter account, sometimes, you wind up retweeting the information just to let folks know the information's out there." |