

Donald Trump's Twitter and His Influence on the Media:
A Study of How Political Social Media Accounts Impact Press Coverage

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Intro

With the rise of social media, society has become increasingly interconnected and complex, as people and organizations connect with each other in new ways. Twitter, founded in 2006 in San Francisco, is currently rated the third most popular social media network in the United States and is also a widely used platform internationally (Isaac & Ember 2016). Twitter's more than 300 million users vary, from members of the public to celebrities, journalists, and politicians. The platform calls itself a "micro blogging service," where users can voice their thoughts and feelings in posts that are 140 characters or less. The social media platform tracks trending topics, trying to keep users updated on current events. As a result, Twitter has become a source of breaking news and societal reactions to present-day events. Due to Twitter's immense popularity, the site can have a huge impact, in multiple and profound ways.

A significant aspect of Twitter's impact on U.S. society involves how Twitter engages the world's political sphere. Due to Twitter's social media prominence, there are many notable and significant politicians who currently utilize the social media service. When it comes to the United States 2016 presidential election, the Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton had a Twitter account with 15 million followers (Clinton, 2017). The Republican nominee and now president Donald J. Trump has a Twitter following of over 30 million followers (Trump, 2017). Through their Twitter accounts, politicians are able to connect with members of the public, other politicians, and perhaps most significantly, journalists. With such massive followings, politicians on Twitter have the huge potential to impact their public perception.

I am interested in further understanding the intersection of social media, journalism, and politics. Although there are many studies about the power of social media in our society, further investigation is required to see the effects social media has on journalism. *The New York Times* found that on Election Day for the 2016 presidential election, Twitter was the number one source of breaking news (Isaac & Ember, 2016). If the public and even journalists are relying on Twitter for breaking news, there needs to be research about how political Twitter accounts impact news coverage.

In order to investigate if politicians can influence their media coverage through social media, Trump serves as a perfect case study considering his well-established and well-publicized Twitter presence. Trump's interactions with journalists, whether negative or positive, could provide evidence of politicians directly influencing their own media coverage through social media. Trump's tweets, or the re-tweets of his followers, could have even guided the press on what topics to cover. With this study, my goal is to strengthen the research on the links between social media's influence on politics and journalism, and vice versa.

For this project, I performed a content analysis of 98 articles from the top 100 circulated newspapers within the United States. In order to qualify for analysis, the article had to mention the Access Hollywood scandal and Trump's Twitter. For each article, I primarily analyzed each article's themes- to see if there were specific patterns of press coverage in regards to the Access Hollywood scandal and Trump's Twitter. From the content analysis, the top themes found within this case study were Horserace Coverage, the Republican Party, Women, Clinton, and Media Coverage. Specifically, there were 55 articles with a horserace coverage theme, 43 articles about the Republican Party, 19

articles that focused on women, 15 articles that focused on Hillary Clinton, and 9 articles about the media itself.

Literature Review

Twitter & Journalism

For the past decade, scholars have been studying the links between the social media service and the media. They have found evidence that journalists use Twitter as an important information source. According to a 2012 Austrian study, researchers found that 25 percent of German journalists, 41 percent of Swedish journalists, and 66 percent of British journalists use Twitter as a source (Ausserhofer & Maireder, 2013). Journalists can use Twitter as an information source in several ways: as a way to collect eyewitness accounts, receive breaking news, or even to track the public's reaction to certain events. There is evidence that journalists have also interpreted the social media platform to be a representative sample of the public. A 2015 German study found Twitter has also become an instant source for politicians and journalists to use Twitter trends as ad hoc polls, interpreting them as the public's opinion (Jungherr, 2015). Although Twitter can be a useful source of information for journalists looking for their next story, using social media as a primary source of information may be problematic considering concerns about Twitter accurately reflecting the opinion of the general U.S. public.

Twitter Demographic Polarization

Considering that Twitter is an international social media platform, with millions of users, it would be difficult for researchers to uncover the complete demographics of Twitter users. However, there have been several studies that have tried to find general demographic trends among Twitter's user base. Research from a 2015 South Korean

study found that liberals were more likely to use social media compared to conservatives (Park, Seungjin, & Kyu, 2015). As a result, conservative opinions are less likely to be trending on the micro blogging platform. In 2013, a PEW research study found that Twitter users were more likely to be younger, urban-dwelling, and non-white (Straus, Williams & Shogun, 2016). Each of these studies, however, recognizes that conservatives do utilize this micro-blogging platform. In fact, a 2010 research study shows that Republican Congressmen use Twitter more often than their Democrat counterparts (Petersen, 2012). The dynamics between conservatives and liberal groups on Twitter have led researchers to study the effects of online group polarization, or as it has more recently come to be known, the “echo chamber effect” (Sounman & Kim, 2016).

Multiple studies investigate claims that social media has led to increased societal polarization, where different groups only talk within each other and fail to seek out a diverse or differing set of opinions. A 2010 study of the U.S. House of Representatives found that politicians with more extreme or radical political views had more Twitter followers than their moderate peers. This led the researchers to conclude that messages from extremist politicians are more likely to be spread and amplified to the public and the media, due to the echo chamber created by social media (Sounman & Kim, 2016). The researchers from this study concluded that the echo chamber does exist and serves to undermine more moderate opinions in the social media sphere.

In contrast, some studies show that polarization occurs because groups interact with each other, rather than occurring due to isolation. Yardi’s (2010) study of political pro-choice and pro-life groups on Twitter dismissed the idea of the social media echo chamber, instead focusing on the positive impacts of social media. After observing the

two groups clash on Twitter over an abortion doctor's shooting, the researcher believed that "deliberation on social media should be directed in such a way that polarization is a result of learning rather than group dynamics" (Yardi & Boyd, 2010). In other words, Yardi and Boyd revealed that group polarization only occurred after the two groups had finished talking with each other over Twitter, when both parties had learned enough information on the social media platform to form an educated opinion.

Twitter & Politicians

The causes behind Twitter's polarization still need to be studied. However, studies agree that group polarization on Twitter does exist, especially within the realm of politics. Studies surrounding how politicians utilize Twitter have shown interesting interactions between politicians and their Twitter followers. Politicians have used the social media outlet to spread political propaganda and gain support from their followers, including during peak moments of an election campaign. Aragon's (2013) Barcelona study of the 2011 Spanish national election found that Twitter activities for political candidates closely followed important events during the election, such as debates and Election Day. This peak in activity not only applies to political candidates, but to their followers as well. A recent study of the presidential election studied Trump's tweets during the Republican primaries and found that they were vocally amplified and defended by his loyal Twitter followers, who ensured that their candidate was always trending on Twitter and other forms of social media (Wells, Shah, Pevehouse, Yang, Pelled & Boehm, 2016). Utilizing social media during peak moments of their campaign allows politicians to garner support from their followers when they need it most. In return,

platforms like Twitter also notify politicians on what issues are currently affecting their constituents.

Political candidates and their teams have been observed to closely monitor the feedback they receive through social media. In Geoffrey Craig's book *Performing Politics*, which analyzed the 2012 U.S. presidential election, the author recounted an incidence where the Republican nominee Mitt Romney made a "birther" joke regarding Obama's birth certificate. His joke began to be circulated around social media within three minutes and appeared on news outlets only a few minutes afterwards. After noticing that the joke was trending on Twitter and other media outlets, the Romney campaign released a clarification statement within 21 minutes of the initial comment, attempting to mitigate potential backlash (Craig, 2016). Overall, studies have found that politicians and their teams are utilizing Twitter and the feedback they receive to tightly control their public image.

Twitter Politics & Press

Regarding how the Twitter accounts of politicians can interact with members of the press, there is still a large amount of research needed. However, research has shown that the social media accounts of politicians and the media often interact with each other. A 2016 Swiss study found that journalists are amongst the actors who are most frequently addressed by politicians on Twitter. Researchers found that on average 70 journalists follow a Swiss politician on Twitter, while in contrast Swiss politicians only follow 41 journalists (Rauchfleisch & Metag, 2016). There is also research that investigates the power of media influencers on social media political discussion. Park (2015) analyzed the 2012 Republican primaries and found that media and political elites have a greater

influence on public political discussion on social media platforms (Park, Seungjin, & Kyu, 2015). The interactions between politicians and the media do have the potential to influence members of the public, and thus political elections and government policy.

Methods

In order to investigate if politicians can influence their media coverage through social media, Trump serves as a perfect case study considering his well-established and well-publicized Twitter presence. Many of his tweets were widely reported on by media outlets, amplifying their visibility to the public. During the first two weeks of the Access Hollywood scandal, Trump tweeted over 300 tweets, some of which received major media attention. Trump's tweets, or the re-tweets of his followers, could have even guided the press on what topics to cover.

In order to study how politicians utilize Twitter to change their public perception, my research study focused on how the 2016 Republican nominee Donald Trump leveraged his often-controversial Twitter account during one of the larger scandals of his presidential campaign: the release of the Access Hollywood recordings. The Access Hollywood scandal centered upon the release of tapes from 2005 in which Donald Trump made remarks about women, including how he could reportedly "grab women by the pussy" without facing any consequences (Jacobs, 2016). After the release of the tapes, many members of the public, fellow politicians, and media commentators accused Donald Trump of describing and promoting sexual assault (Fahrenthold, 2016). The scandal was even brought up during the second national presidential debate, with Donald Trump being repeatedly questioned about the recordings by the moderator, Anderson Cooper. Although Trump dismissed the tapes as regrettable "locker room talk" and

quickly tried to move on to other topics, the scandal attracted significant media attention and coverage during the final campaign month of October 2016.

Sample

In order to study how Donald Trump's Twitter account impacted his media coverage during the Access Hollywood scandal, I conducted a content analysis on print media reporting on the scandal: specifically articles from the top 100 highest circulated American newspapers (Infoplease, 2017). Specifically, I chose to use content analysis for this study because I wanted to know the overall themes of the newspaper coverage during the Access Hollywood scandal. Since I would be reading a large amount of articles, performing content analysis of the major themes that I came across seemed to be the best way for me to keep track of the newspaper reactions to the Access Hollywood scandal.

Originally, the case study was only going to focus on newspaper articles from the top ten newspapers from the United States, however, after careful analysis I realized these newspapers were primarily all from East Coast blue Democratic states, which could lead to skewed coding results. As a result, I expanded the case study's scope to the top hundred circulated U.S. newspapers, since it would allow for newspapers from outside the East Coast and from red Republican states. These newspapers are the most popular newspapers within the United States, which means they contain articles that are the most likely to be read by the American public.

The case study covers articles written during the first two weeks of the Access Hollywood scandal, from October 7th to October 21st, 2016, when journalists were the most focused on the scandal and thus produced the most written material. In order to

qualify for content analysis, an article will have to mention Donald Trump's tweets, of which Donald Trump wrote over 300 during those two weeks, providing ample material for journalists (Trump, 2017). Through analyzing content written about Donald Trump's Twitter account during the first two weeks of this controversy, the case study focuses on if and how Donald Trump's Twitter use affected his media coverage.

I used specific search terms to find newspaper articles about Donald Trump's Twitter and the Access Hollywood scandal, while also recording article analysis data in a coding sheet. The specific search phrases that I used were: *Access Hollywood Trump Twitter*, *Access Hollywood Trump Tweets*, *Billy Bush Trump Twitter*, *Billy Bush Trump Tweet*, *Tape Trump Tweet*, *Tape Trump Twitter*, *2005 Trump Tweet*, *Recording Trump Twitter*, *Recording Trump Tweet*, *Grab Trump Tweet*, and *Bus Trump Tweet*. Using these search terms, I looked up newspaper articles from the University of Washington's three newspaper databases, which were Access World News, LexisNexis Academic, and ProQuest Newsstand. After selecting these articles, I recorded article information within a coding sheet: including newspaper name, date of article, a link to the article, type of article, author, whether it came from a Republican or Democratic state, and the main article theme. The coding sheet was color-coded by main theme. To prevent duplicate articles, since newspapers often reprint stories, I constantly re-checked my coding sheet using the article's name and author. If the article were a duplicate, I would keep only one copy from the original newspaper. In total, 98 articles were coded.

While reading the articles that qualified for this case study, I recorded and coded the major themes found within the article. From this case study, I identified five major

themes within the 98 articles analyzed, which were: Horserace Coverage, the Republican Party, Women, Clinton, and the Media.

Coding Categories

Horserace Coverage- Newspaper articles that focused on each presidential candidate's performance. In terms of this case study, these were the articles that focused on the candidates' polling numbers, debate performance, rallies, and strategy during the Access Hollywood scandal.

Republican Party- The newspaper articles that fell into this coding theme focused on how the Republican Party was reacting to the Access Hollywood scandal. In particular, they kept track of which Republicans condemned or dropped their support of Trump, the most notable being John McCain and Paul Ryan. Notably, these articles talked about Trump's angry tweets against the Republican Party after these members dropped their support. Besides that, articles within this category often interviewed local Republicans to see what their reaction was to the scandal.

Women- The newspaper articles that centered on how this scandal affected women. The articles within this theme mostly talked about the scandal as an example of the constant sexual harassment women face in America. A few of the articles within this theme also focused on how this scandal was only one incident out of multiple sexual harassment claims against Donald Trump. Finally, there were several articles within this theme that focused on Melania Trump's reaction to the scandal, since she was married to Trump when he had made those original remarks.

Clinton- Articles that focused on how Clinton could leverage the scandal during the presidential campaign. These articles are centered on Trump’s tweeted accusations against Clinton, Clinton’s remarks, and Clinton’s campaign strategy.

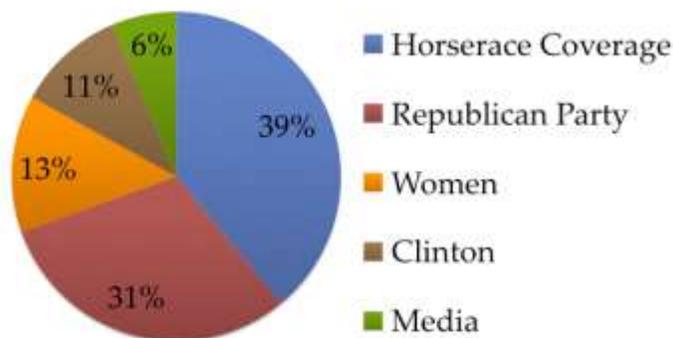
Media- A very limited number of articles within this case study focused on how the media was covering the Access Hollywood scandal. In particular, a few articles wondered how Saturday Night Live would parody the incident. Besides speculation about comedy shows, a few articles focused on general media coverage of the incident.

Findings

TB 1: Coding Themes and Frequency

Coding Theme	# of Articles
Horseshoe Coverage	55
Republican Party	43
Women	19
Clinton	15
Media	9

Coding Theme and Frequency



TB 2: Multiple Theme Articles

	Republican Party	Women	Clinton	Media
Horserace Coverage	17	8	11	3
Republican Party		2	2	1
Women			5	2
Clinton				1

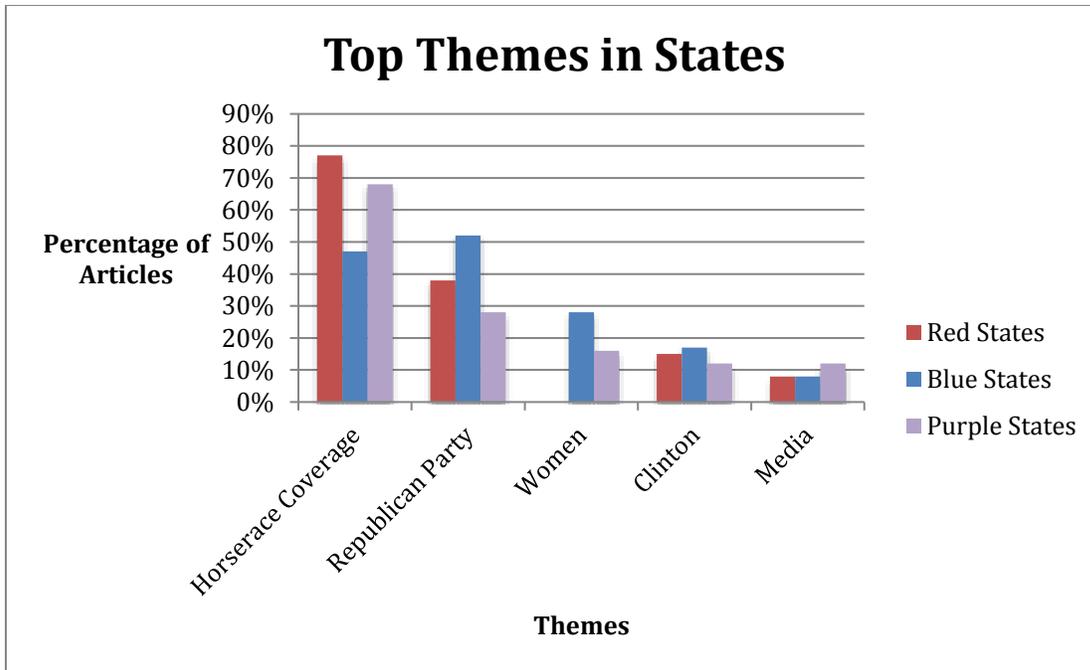
Both Table 1 and Table 2 examined the frequency with which the five coding themes occurred within the set of articles selected for this case study. As both tables indicate, Horserace Coverage was the most prevalent of all the coding themes. Of the 98 articles that qualified for analysis within this case study, 55 of the articles fell under the Horserace Coverage theme, focusing on how the Access Hollywood scandal was affecting Trump's polling numbers or campaign strategy. Next, the Republican Party coding theme was the second most popular theme, with 43 of the articles focusing on how Trump's tweets were attacking the Republican Party after they distanced themselves from him after the scandal. It is striking that the coding theme for women was significantly less prevalent, with only 19 of the articles focusing on women after the Access Hollywood scandal. Finally, a small number of articles fell into the Clinton or Media coding themes, with 15 and 9 of the articles respectively.

Table 2 focuses on the theme combinations that were found within the articles. There were a total of 52 articles that had multiple themes. Of the combinations, 39 of the article combinations involved horserace coverage, 13 combinations involved the Republican Party, 17 combinations involved women, 19 combinations with Clinton, and 7 combinations involved the media.

TB 3: States & Their Themes

	Red State Articles	Blue State Articles	Purple State Articles
Horserace Coverage	10	28	17
Republican Party	5	31	7
Women	0	15	4
Clinton	2	10	3
Media	1	5	3

Table 3 focuses on the popularity of the coding themes based on their article’s political association. There were 13 red state articles, 60 blue state articles, and 25 purple state articles that qualified for content analysis within this case study. In order to have a more accurate picture of coding theme popularity, there needs to be more red state and purple state articles that are analyzed. However, there was only a relatively small portion of articles from red or purple states that qualified for content analysis in this case study, only 38 of the qualifying articles were from a non-blue state.



TB 4: Percentage of Articles with Theme in Red States (Out of 13 articles)

Coding Theme	Articles
Horserace Coverage	77%
Republican Party	38%
Clinton	15%
Media	8%
Women	0

TB 5: Percentage of Article with Theme in Blue States (Out of 60 articles)

Coding Themes	Articles
Republican Party	52%
Horseshoe Coverage	47%
Women	28%
Clinton	17%
Media	8%

TB 6: Top Themes in Purple States (Out of 25 articles)

Coding Theme	Articles
Horseshoe Coverage	68%
Republican Party	28%
Women	16%
Clinton/Media	12%

Tables 4, 5, and 6 rank the top coding themes amongst red, blue, and purple states separately. Although there are minor differences between the tables, Horseshoe Coverage and the Republican Party themes are the top two coding themes for all of the types of states. But it should be noted that there were zero articles under the Women coding theme

in red states. However, the lack of articles could be due to the low number of red state articles that qualified for analysis- so further research is needed.

Discussion

Out of the five coding themes, horserace coverage was by far the most popular coding theme, with horserace coverage articles taking up 55 of the 98 articles that were analyzed within this study. However, horserace journalism dominating press coverage is typical in American journalism during election seasons. A Harvard University analysis of coverage in 2007 found that sixty-three percent of campaign stories focused on political or tactical aspects (Nisbet, 2007). As a result, this case study's results indicate that even with Trump's heavy Twitter usage during the Access Hollywood scandal, it did not affect the press from reporting from a common horserace coverage standpoint.

However, the media's continuing focus on horserace coverage is alarming, due to the unintended consequences of following this theme. A content analysis firm Media Tenor report found that "the media's tendency to allocate coverage based on winning and losing affects voters' decisions. The press's attention to early winners, and its tendency to afford them more positive coverage than their competitors, is not designed to boost their chances, but that's a predictable effect." (Frontline, 2016). By reporting on Trump's tweets from a horserace perspective, the press limited the amount of time dedicated towards discussing the real issue behind the Access Hollywood scandal, such as the many incidents of sexual harassment that occur around the country every year.

After horserace coverage, the overall most popular coding theme went to the Republican Party. After the Access Hollywood tapes had been released, several prominent Republicans released statements that condemned Trump's actions, which led

to Trump tweeting against top Republican leadership for their lack of support. Naturally, Trump's angry tweet storm attracted the press, which led to this case study's findings that 43 of the 98 articles focused on the Republican Party. Although it is not surprising that Trump's angry tweets against top Republican leaders attracted press coverage, it is surprising that in the context of the Access Hollywood scandal, the resulting Republican feud is what became the second leading story. After Trump's angry tweets, the focus of the Access Hollywood scandal shifted to how the scandal affected Trump's relationships with the Republican Party instead of how the scandal affected women, which was the group that Trump was making derogatory remarks about in the first place.

With that being said, it is not surprising that the Republican Party received a large amount of press coverage since the Republican Party had been receiving a huge amount of public attention during the election. A 2015 study found that the Democratic race had received less than half of the coverage of the Republican race during the primaries (Research, 2016). Ultimately, Trump's angry tweets about the Republican Party just attracted even more press attention to an already over-covered topic, distracting the press's attention from the more damaging aspects of the Access Hollywood scandal.

An alarming finding of the case study is the low level of coverage regarding women. Overall, only 19 of 98 articles in this case study focused on women, with none of these articles coming from red states. Since the Access Hollywood scandal was centered on Donald Trump's derogatory behavior towards women, I expected there to be many more articles within the women coding category. For example, the articles could have focused on the sexual assault accusations against Trump, the multiple women who've been insulted by Trump's tweets, the reaction of Republican women to the scandal, or

even Melania Trump's response to the Access Hollywood scandal. There were multiple topics journalists could have focused on, yet women were only the third most popular coding theme within this category.

There are multiple reasons that could explain why women were generally ignored when it came to the Access Hollywood scandal. A leading reason as to why the scandal's effect on women was ignored despite Trump's multiple derogatory remarks could be due to inherent newsroom bias. A 2016 survey by the American Society of Newspaper Editors found that two thirds of newsroom employees were male (Oremus, 2017). As a result, stories about women may be less likely to be created simply because they do not interest the male-dominated newsroom. A 2015 study from the American Sociological Review found that the ratio of male to female names across 2000 English-language newspapers and online news websites over five years was five to one (Morris, 2016). Stories about men are much more likely to dominate press coverage.

Even with stories about sexual harassment, the media tends to focus on the male perspective. A Women's Media Center 2015 report noted that coverage of U.S. campus rape and sexualized violence is significantly skewed toward the bylines and voices of men (Women's Media Center, 2015). The inherent male bias of the press contributes to the inadequacy of the press's sexual harassment coverage, which includes the failure of the media to report about how women were affected by the Access Hollywood scandal and Trump's derogatory tweets towards women. The media's failure to fully report on cases of sexual harassment unfortunately enables sexual harassment to continue since perpetrators are less likely to be held accountable for their behavior by the press.

Following women, Clinton was overall the second least popular coding theme, with 15 of 98 articles talking about how Clinton could use the scandal for her advantage during the campaign. However, this is not surprising since the Access Hollywood scandal was focused on Trump's actions. In general, Clinton received less press coverage than Trump overall. A 2016 analysis of the presidential campaign from the data analysis company, Data Face, found that between July 2015 to August 2016, Clinton received less than half of the press coverage of Trump (Sides, 2016). Therefore, the case study's results do not find anything surprising in regards to the lack of press coverage surrounding Clinton during the scandal. Even with Trump's multiple tweets attacking Clinton during the Access Hollywood scandal, the media did not seem to give Clinton any additional press coverage.

Yet even with the smaller amount of press coverage Clinton did receive, many of the articles were negative. In general, female political candidates receive more negative coverage in the press- with the negative coverage more likely to focus on their appearance, marital history, than their actual policies. For example, two female researchers found that Clinton received more negative coverage than Obama during the 2008 election (Political Party, 2015). Of Trump's 300 tweets in the first two weeks of the Access Hollywood scandal, a majority of the tweets attacked Hillary Clinton. Although the press did not seem to give Clinton any additional press coverage during the Access Hollywood scandal, Trump's tweets may have been utilized as extra source material for negative articles about Clinton.

An unexpected coding theme that appeared during this case study was the focus on media coverage. Although only 9 of the 98 articles focused on media coverage, it was

still unexpected that the press would even focus on its own coverage of the presidential election. These articles typically focused on how Donald Trump's Twitter had increased the importance of social media and even how SNL would parody Trump's tweets. However, there were multiple articles that complained how media press coverage during the election had become increasingly nastier. In fact, Americans seemed to also dislike the increasingly negative press coverage, with 27 percent of the country actively trying to avoid the news after the election according to The Washington Times (The Washington Times, 2016). Even though media coverage was not a prominent coding theme within this case study, it is interesting that the media became a story itself in regards to how it utilized Trump's Twitter.

Finally, the last unexpected result from the data analysis of this study does not come from the themes, but actually from where the articles occurred. Of the 98 articles that qualified for content analysis, only 13 articles came from red states. Although the exact reasons for this disparity are not completely known, it is likely that the inequality is partly due to the fact that this case study only analyzed articles from the top one hundred circulated newspapers within the United States. As a result, newspapers from metropolitan (and thus often blue) areas were more likely to be used in this study, since urban newspapers usually have higher circulation numbers. However, it is possible that red state newspapers were just less likely to qualify for analysis because they did not quote Trump's Twitter as much as blue state newspapers. Further research is needed in this area to draw any conclusions.

Next Steps

In terms of future research, this case study points to several areas within the political social media sphere that still need to be explored. In terms of this case study, there needs to be more research done on how newspapers from red or purple states covered the Access Hollywood scandal. The sample size selected within this case study was too small to make any definite conclusions about non-blue state coverage of the Access Hollywood scandal.

Although this case study focused on how newspapers reacted to Trump's Twitter feed, it neglected to study how any other media sources reacted to Trump's tweets. Future research could focus on how broadcast news, blogs, or even online news outlets reacted to Trump's Twitter feed during the Access Hollywood scandal to see if there was a difference in coverage between different types of media outlets.

Besides expanding the study's content selection, a critical area that needs more research is the use of social media channels as a political resistance tool. Throughout this case study, I found articles about people using Twitter to criticize Donald Trump during the Access Hollywood scandal, but they did not qualify for this case study's content analysis since the articles never quoted Trump's tweets. There were several notable examples of Twitter being used as a political resistance tool during the Access Hollywood scandal. Writer Kelly Oxford organized a Twitter backlash against the presidential candidate by encouraging women to tweet their sexual assault stories, leading to over thirteen thousand tweets of sexual assault stories being posted on Twitter (NPR). In another example, professional athletes who were offended by Trump claiming that the tapes were just an example of "locker room" talk attacked Trump from their personal

Twitter accounts, claiming that they never used similar language in their locker rooms. In order to see the true impact of political social media, research needs to be expanded to how opposition members utilize social media tools to gain political power or attention.

In addition to studying oppositional social media, researchers interested in Donald Trump's Twitter usage should also focus on how the Twitter public interacts with his account. Throughout this case study, the public interacted with Trump's Twitter feed in a variety of ways. Trump supporters would enthusiastically like and re-tweet Trump's tweets, while his detractors would often use Trump's tweets to mock him or attack his political positions. In order to have a full grasp on how political social media accounts impact political discussion and society, researchers need to study how the political social media public sphere differs from and affects public life.

Finally, the last suggested avenue of study for future researchers would be to expand the time scope of this case study. Due to limited time and resources, the scope of this case study was focused on the first two weeks of the Access Hollywood scandal, from October 7th to October 21st. However, future studies could focus on how newspapers interacted with Donald Trump's Twitter throughout the 2016 election, or even once Trump became president.

Conclusion

This research project was just one case study in how political social media accounts can impact their press coverage. Although this case study cannot definitively conclude that Trump's Twitter distracted the media during the Access Hollywood scandal from the real issues, the study found several results that should be noted. Horserace coverage was the top theme when reporting about Trump's Twitter during the Access

Hollywood scandal, which is a common theme during election seasons. However, the Republican Party was the second top theme, which is more significant. There were over two times more articles about Trump's angry tweets against the Republican Party than there were articles about how women were affected by the Access Hollywood scandal. Although stories about how women are affected by sexual harassment are historically underreported, Trump's angry tweets against the Republican Party attracted more media attention than the victims of the Access Hollywood scandal, who were women.

Based on the results from this case study, newspaper coverage was impacted by Donald Trump's Twitter account. Although articles about Trump's polling numbers or his angry tweets against Republican leadership were interesting, they were not significant issues that warranted 70 percent of the overall coverage of the Access Hollywood scandal and Trump's tweets. The fact that so little coverage was dedicated towards women or even towards Clinton indicates that Trump's tweets impacted his newspaper coverage. For the future, especially when covering Trump's Twitter account, journalists must endeavor to focus more on the main issues at hand rather than reporting on the latest shocking political tweet.

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