



Millenials and Media: New Messages or New Perception

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Abstract

In this paper authors deal with the relationship between young people i.e. the generation of the 80's and 90's, known as millennials, and the media. The question is how daily news attract young people and if there is mutual trust? Does the media today have to find a new approach in order to shape the news and how millennials participate (or not) in its transformation? Study conducted in the U.S. indicates a significant increase in daily news monitoring on the Internet, especially in the population under 35 years of age. At the same time there was an increase in distrust of the media, and the lack of interest in national politics. This paper considers the possibility that the future generations will be completely uninterested and uninformed. However, it can not be said that millenials have no need for information and communication. Their digital networking shows that they constantly communicate.

1. Introduction

In age of virtual reality, digital devices (a smart phone, a tablet, desktop computers/laptop) have become the main intermediary between media and young adults. But, as millennials, other generations are turning as well to communication technologies at an ever-expanding level. People around the world are connected via the web, wherever they are.

New generations are able to take multiple sources of information, synthesize them, and make rapid decision. But, digital news consumers have a very different set of behaviors and thinking.

This paper deals with the question of why young people are uninterested in the daily news with emphasis on the political news. This paper, also, deals with theoretical background about millennial generation and digital devices and is based on Pew Research Center' research conducted between 2011 and 2012. According to idea that the way from collective unconscious to collective intelligence is very long authors deal with some predictions about new perception in the new millennium which re-enters the world of Plato's ideas.

2. Daily news, digital media and distrust

According to the Pew Research Center [1], in a report in early 2011, the number of Americans who follow the news on the Internet (41%) is increasingly approaching the number of those who follow the news through television (59%) as Americans' main source of national and international political information (news). Although, young adults, i.e. the generation of the 80's and 90's, known as millennials, are increasingly continue to cite the internet as a main source of news (since 2007, the number has nearly doubled, from 34% to 65%) the internet also has grown as a new source of national and international news pool for people aged 50 to 64 [1]. According to study, TV news still dominates among those who are less educated and with household incomes under \$30,000. But, in 2011, the digital revolution entered a new era - the age of mobile and multi digital devices.

In Pew Research Centers' annual report on American journalism (2012) was published research about how news consumers use social media and how mobile devices could change the news business. The research is as well about rapid changes in community news [2]. In this study it was observed how mobile devices introduce the new kind of consumption, strengthening the lure of traditional news brands and providing a boost to long-term journalism, but also researchers talk about influence of technology intermediaries who now control the future of news. According to study, more than three-quarters of U.S. adults (77%) own laptop or desktop computers, a number that has been stable for some years: "Now, in addition, 44% of adults own a smart phone, and the number of tablet owners grew by about 55% since the summer of 2011" [2]. This suggests that more and more Americans are becoming multiplatform digital news consumers.

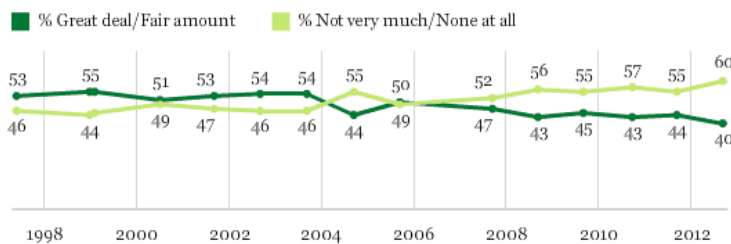
"Traditional" digital news consumers are looking for what they need or want to know right now, which titled influence toward aggregators such as Google or social media networks like Facebook or Twitter. But, there are some signs that the way people interact with news on mobile devices is quite different



(time consumption compared short or long-form news articles) than behavior on the desktop-laptop computers [2]. According to the study, the most common way that people (desktop/laptop) get news is by going directly to a news organization’s website or app (38%), but the number of consumers who get news on multiple digital devices is growing. Social media, while clearly being a part of the digital news experience, are not nearly driver of news that many have been suggested, but for those who get news on both the smart phone and tablet, social networking is a much more popular way to get news. Also, people using mobile devices tend to spend more time with news on mobile devices than they do on computers. They go to news sites more often, spend more time per session and read more articles per session [2].

On the 21st of September, 2012, *Gallup Politics* released the results of research on the issue of the American people trust in the media. In article titled U.S. Distrust in Media Hits New High, Lymari Morales said that Americans’ distrust in the media hit a new high in 2012 with 60% (20%, the current gap between negative and positive views). According to Morales distrust is going up from the past few years, when Americans were already more negative about the media than they had been in years prior to 2004. The record distrust in the media, based on a survey conducted in September, also means that negativity toward the media is at an all-time high within a presidential election year (Figure 1) [3]. Figure 2 shows that the confidence expressed to the national policy is closely related to lack of distrust in the media.

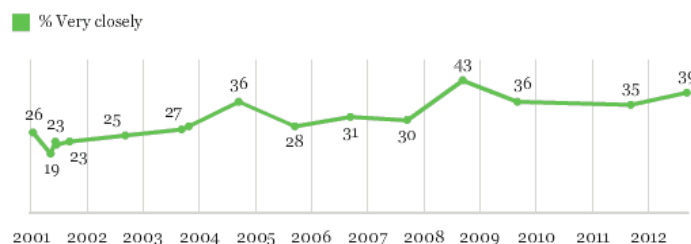
In general, how much trust and confidence do you have in the mass media -- such as newspapers, TV, and radio -- when it comes to reporting the news fully, accurately, and fairly -- a great deal, a fair amount, not very much, or none at all?
Gallup trend since 1997



GALLUP

Figure 1. Americans’ (dis)trust in the media, 1998-2012.

Overall, how closely do you follow news about national politics -- very closely, somewhat closely, not too closely, or not at all?
2001-2012 trend



GALLUP

Figure 2. Americans’ attention to political news, 2001-2012.

The fact is that 23% of U.S. young adults now get news on at least two digital devices [2]. Also, distrust in the media hit a new high in 2012 (60%). Because, millennials describe (political) news as garbage, lies, one-sided propoganda, repetitive and boring [4], the question is: What is unknown in digital culture with the rapid changes in community news and influence of technology as an intermediary which now controls the future of news?



3. Millennials and daily news

The generation born in 80's and 90's are known as millennials or, sometimes, *go-nowhere generation* [5], generation Y, or *Homo Zappiens* [6]. A new kind of millennials' hyper connected [7], multitasking life is associated with screen time and a sedentary lifestyle. The Great Recession, which has hit young college-educated Americans as well as those without high school degrees, also created a risk aversion trend [5]. Their common feature is that they were grown up and developed under the influence of digital culture so different from analogue generations that had gone before. But, for a quick-acting, multitaskers who count on the Internet as their external brain [7], digital literacy and permanent connection are essential.

Poindexter, in a book *Millennials, News and Social Media: Is News Engagement a Thing of the Past?* [7], talks that in future we may not have anybody consuming news: "We can't continue to ignore the problem. The older generation is dying out. Who will be the role model encouraging future generations to be informed?" [4]. Through a national survey on news engagement, Poindexter has found some major factors affecting millennial's news consumption: Most millennials give the news media average to failing grades when it comes to reporting on their generation; When they consume news, millennials are more likely to access news with smart phones and apps and share news through social media, texting and emailing; Most millenials do not depend on news to help with their daily lives; The majority of millennials do not feel being informed is important [4].

In April 2012, The Millennials, News, and 2012 Presidential Election Summit, was organized by UT Austin professor Poindexter. The Summit aimed at investigation of best practices for engaging the millennials with news about the 2012 presidential election. Poindexter says: "Every four years, the news media has another chance to engage young people in news on the presidential electoral process and every four years, the news media fails to make a passing grade." [9]. Poindexter believes that problem can not be ignored because of the risk that nation becoming a nation of news illiterates.

In two videos: *Millennials and News: What Kids Say about the News* [10] and *Millennials and News: How Young People Consume News*, Poindexter was interviewed the middle-school and the college students in order to determine their level of interest in the daily news [11]. She suggested few ways to bring news to millennials. One approach is Facebook page *Millenials and News* that would be daily updated with news stories about millennials and with other different important news for them.

Young adults are constantly communicating, but their messages (stories, photos) are related to their daily lives and not to politics. Their habits differ from those of previous generations and, because of that, they're shaping the ways in which news exists [13]. Also, changes in intellect (the youngest generation of voters) lead to changes in values and in the political landscape. Similarly, John Pike observed that the world becoming more complex, and yet both old media (cable TV news) and new media (Twitter) are becoming increasingly simplistic. His satirical commentary describes this relationship as follows: "What passes for politics is increasingly a charade detached from actual governance" [7].

4. Conclusions

According to the Pew Research Center, the proportion of young adults who spend a lot of time at home nearly doubled between 1980 and 2008 [4]. Young people spend time on internet, connected to a virtual world, but they actually are reading and responding to news constantly. Also, compared to previous generations, millennials don't seem to enjoy purchasing things. "As all forms of media make their journey into a digital, de-corporeal space, research shows that people are beginning to actually prefer this disconnected reality to owning a physical product" [12].

Some of predictions about millennials talks about their new skills: Millennials' brains are being rewired to adapt to the new information-processing skills they will need to survive in this environment; The essential skills will be those of rapidly searching, browsing, assessing quality, and synthesizing the vast quantities of information; The ability to read one thing and think hard about it for hours will not be of no consequence, but it will be of far less consequence for most people; Reform of the education system could start by recognizing that distractions of all kinds are now norm. Educators should teach the management of multiple information streams, emphasizing the skills of filtering, analyzing, and synthesizing information [7].



But, humanity is experiencing an evolution in consciousness. “We are becoming ‘persistent paleontologists’ of our own external memories, as our brains are storing the keywords to get back to those memories and not the full memories themselves” [7]. Thinking becomes more lateral as multitasking and hyper connectivity become part of everyday life. Society of the new millennium re-enters the world of Plato’s ideas.

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