

JRN 101-103

Fall 2011

Professor Klurfeld R-08

Excerpts from Black Out Assignment

I went back to my room and sat down in my chair. I stared at my empty desk and pondered about how life would be without news. I realized that life becomes very mundane and boring without the constant updates on news.

Furthermore, throughout the day I am highly dependent on Facebook, Twitter and checking my E-mail. Not being able to check someone's or something's current individual 'status' was difficult. In the twentieth century many universities, news programs, celebrities and friends use twitter and Facebook as a way of comminuting their life to the public and not being able to obtain that information gives one a sense of 'not knowing' or feeling oblivious, which at times can be very aggravating.

Society uses a widely familiar statement, "You don't know what you have until it's gone". However, in my case, I wasn't too sure if I was positive in knowing what I had to begin with. The ponderings and major headlining news of our world are a simple Google search away, yet this idea had not seemed so real and inspiring as it did before the actual experiment. I compared each opposing lifestyle, suddenly understanding how much news media affects the lives of not just our general public as a wholesome, but also including the sole existence of an individual.

As my journey slowly reached its termination, I began considering the alternatives to news media. If news media were ever to be banned, then what would our society use in terms of searching for valid and accurate news. The fact is that news media isn't limited to solely the radio, Internet, etc. The term is too broad to be constricted to specific devices or ways of being interpreted. I came to the assertion that news media is an actual need of the public. Not only does news media allow the opportunity to acknowledge the population of what happens within the world, but also stresses the importance of people to express their ideas and opinions. Given any individual willing to share what they know with the rest of us, where would he or she turn to if not to news media? Also another thought, how effective would its content be if it weren't perceived as "news"?

As I reached the end of my 48-hour Blackout experiment, two major thoughts processed into my mind. On one hand, I was finally able to understand on a personal level the importance of news media and why it pertains to so many different

Berouti 3

elements of everyday life as it does and how a life without news media would leave our colorful world in shades of black and grey. The experience left an embarking impression of what the true definition of news media is. Furthermore, on second hand, I couldn't phantom the joy I felt in finally being able to sign back into my Facebook account after that final hour of the Twilight Zone. News media had never brought me such happiness as it did then and will continue to do so now.

As sad as it is to say this I really did not realize how attached to Facebook I was. Not being able to go on to the site through my phone or computer was very challenging because I found that was all I wanted to do. Through this assignment I have found how things like Facebook actually make people more anti-social or less needing of personal interaction. I believe that this is because Facebook makes it so easy for us to just go to our phones or PC and see how our friends are. Its not that we purposely don't want to physically talk or see our friends just that Facebook makes it easier to find the information we seek. You can just log on and scroll through all of your friends post and see how their day has been. I do feel that Facebook could be a little bit of an addiction because it was a struggle to not go on.

I found myself at the gym or in the library at night to avoid any confrontation with the news. It was especially arduous trying to fall asleep when all I could think about was checking my Facebook. Apparently, staying off websites like Youtube, Twitter and Tumblr were much more challenging than I had anticipated.

“”””MORE ON BENG CUT OFF.

After the news blackout, even though I understood that staying connected with the news was an important aspect of my normal life, I came to the realize that I truly did rely on news throughout my daily life.

“Did you see her status?” my friend asked me. I shook my head, indicating that I missed out on what funny statement one of our friends had written. I felt disconnected with the world. I felt like a caveman. I felt left out. When my friends gossiped about what happened on campus and off campus, they shared information with each other. I had to stay on the opposite side of the room to make sure that I didn't listen. The loneliness was not a great feeling.

Overall, a blackout is not something I would enjoy going through again. Being the somewhat sociable person that I am, not being able to talk about certain topics felt like being handicapped, a selective mute/hearing impaired against my will. A handicap is something very sensitive to relate to, but it's true. You have this want to know what is going on in the world, but you're not allowed to talk about or hear about the news; it leaves you with this frustrated feeling that stays in your stomach until the 48 hour chains are finally lifted and you can return to being aware and active.