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Understanding Media

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### American Forum Reaction Paper

The American Forum last Wednesday night at American University was an interesting question and answer period filled with two hot blooded politicians answering students' questions with a moderator shifting the discussion to media every few questions rather than the discussion of political material. The general consensus was that media has definitely shaped the way that news occurs in the world today, and has especially affected young voters who are most susceptible to this new form of media.

Everything in this day and age is quickly accessible to society because of new innovations in technology and the demand that society pushes forward. News is now online, and almost everyone has a smart phone or laptop quickly updating them with the newest happenings. There is so much pressure to beat the news and break news before other news organizations that it is destroying what the industry stood for in the first place. With journalists fighting to report news before one-another many false reports are made, disrupting the idea that news should always be true and honest. In 2008, there was a huge change in that there were 6-7 versions of one newspaper printed each day. Both politicians also referenced both texting and twitter while talking about this. Texting has created a world where everything is just a send button away. People can even update their twitters by sending a text. In fact, during the whole American

Forum there was a man sitting to stage left updating and reading interesting Twitter posts about the forum to engage the audience. These posts commented on interesting points that were made during the discussion, as well as questions and statements from people watching the forum.

Media has also been a problem for Barack Obama, according to the democrat panelist. The idea that news can be generated so quickly and spread throughout the internet has created problems for the President because rumors and false news are so easily spread. The Democrat speaker mentioned that this new form of media created ugly rumors about the President and had a negative effect on rhetoric. The Republican speaker had an interesting point and noted that it was passe to refer to “new” media as new, because it has been around for an increasing amount of time and in the time that has been around has been so prevalent that it is far from new and alien to society. It is now common place to use all forms of media to spread the news and the use of Facebook and Twitter is becoming more and more relevant. Blogs have also become extremely prevalent and have in some cases hurt politics and the spreading of news because they are often full of opinion from the writer instead of facts. Some readers use this information incorrectly and therefore spread false information.

The media is growing more and more relevant in elections as well, especially with young voters. In the last presidential election, there was a more vigorous strategy for Facebook and Twitter to connect to the young voters. Both parties used both Facebook and Twitter to publicize events and other happenings particular to voting. It has found to be extremely to use this approach with young voters because it is able to send the message to them in a media that they use very regularly, even daily. In future elections it would not be abstract to think that the internet will play an important role in getting young voters not only to vote, but to sway opinions

that their parents force upon them, and let them retrieve information so that they can create their own ideas about politics.