Media Critic Assignment Reflection

Writing about the unsure future of print newspapers helped in better understanding the current state of the media and where the business is likely headed in the coming years. It was fascinating to find that readership among print newspapers is steadily declining, as this was majorly the most popular way of regularly receiving and digesting information for such a long time in society. In an essay published in a 2005 issue of the Columbia Journalism Review, business consultant of the Louisville Courier-Journal Vin Crosbie unveils that the number of Americans who read a daily newspaper plummeted from 81% in 1964 to 54% in 2005, (Cornog). What might be even more concerning is the disinterest of younger readers, with Crosbie reporting that in 2001 only 26% of Americans 18-24 years old read a daily newspaper regularly (Cornog). With newspapers not having the appeal of the instant gratification that the Internet can supply, the future of how citizens will receive information is left up to question. Especially since most people merely skim when reading online articles, it is equally as concerning as it is interesting to think how society will begin to change as consumers, as readers, as watchdogs for democracy.

Online news content does provide some benefits, however. News sources on the Internet not only update information and release breaking news with a click of the mouse, providing the most immediate, instantaneous news experience, but can lend a greater community hand in distributing information in times of crisis or disaster. In addition, online publications can provide a more interactive experience. With the option for readers to comment and respond directly onto an article, one that might be longer and more concise than a newspaper would allot in regards to space constraints, or with the capability to click embedded links to related content within an article, the needs and wants of the consumers are more easily and accessibly met—something that a print newspaper might not be able to do.