

**WEBLOGS AND THE TRADITIONAL NEWS MEDIA IN THE U.S.A: A
COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE CHANGING ROLES OF WEBLOGS IN THE
NEWS COVERAGE OF 9/11 AND HURRICANE KATRINA**

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Abstract

This report is a preliminary exploration of the issues concerning traditional media and weblogs at two points in time. It examines the difference between the American mainstream media's utilisation of weblogs during the 9/11 terrorist attacks in 2001, and the utilisation of weblogs in the hurricane Katrina disaster in 2005. The mainstream media's response to the weblog form during the attacks in September 2001 and the hurricane Katrina disaster in 2005 are examined, together with an exploration of the traditional coverage. It reveals how weblogs have become a more significant part of disaster coverage by mainstream media in the United States. These processes and the implications of these changes are explored for an understanding of how the weblog is altering our understanding of the construction and dissemination of news for the traditional media institution in the United States.

Keywords

Weblog	Blogosphere
Blogger	Agenda Setting
Gate Keeping	9/11
Katrina	Mainstream
History	News

Declaration

I declare that this research report is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Master of Arts in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination in any other university.

_____ day of _____, 2007.

To my family
with sincere thanks
for their love and encouragement
during the writing of this report.

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