

## JRN 4425 News Stories about Media and the First Amendment

**The Assignment**

Eight (8) times during this semester (about every two weeks), you will submit a 150-200-word summary of a news story from any **reputable state or national** news source in print, on radio, on TV, or online. Use Times New Roman, 12-pt. type, double-spaced. The story will be about the intersection of media and the First Amendment in the United States—no stories from foreign countries. Not part of the 150-200 words will be a description of where you found this news item (*N.Y. Times*, *CNN* on TV, etc.), the title of the story, the date, and URL, if applicable. The story must appear in the news media during the week you will be submitting it. **In addition to the summary of the story, I'm looking for any insights you might have on why this is an important case or issue and any implications for journalists, organizations, the media in general, corporations, etc.**

There will be **NO** ability to submit to a particular week once that week's deadline has expired. Difficulties with Turn-It-In are no excuse. If you do not receive a receipt from Turn-It-In, assume that your summary was **NOT** successfully submitted. I will not accept e-mailed summaries unless I have made an error. In that case, I will alert you to it. As we get closer to the end of the semester, and your grade is close to an A, but you did not submit any or enough summaries, please do not complain. There will be no exceptions made for anyone. **PERIOD!**

You will submit these through Turn-It-In links I will provide on our Blackboard page under "assignments." I will read all of them, but will comment on only those that show a lack of understanding of the assignment or those that show exceptional critical thinking. You will not be graded per se on the individual summaries, but, as a whole, they will contribute to your participation grade. If you write one, but are too late getting it into Turn-It-In, it will **not** count for that week. **(No excuses.)** That means that you cannot submit it for another week. The story **MUST** come from a news item from that particular week. **(No excuses.)** Do not e-mail them to me directly. You will earn 10 pts. per summary up to 7 summaries. If you complete an 8th summary, that one will earn 30 pts. for a total of 100 pts. for the 8 submissions. If you submit a summary that is plagiarized, doesn't pertain to the media and the First Amendment, or is inferior in some other way, you will receive **NO** pts. for it.

If there is anything you do not understand about this assignment, please ask questions about it in class so everyone can become informed! The due date and time will be on Fridays at 11 p.m. beginning on Friday of the **first week** of classes. The link for the following week opens at 8 a.m. on Saturdays.

**Example of a Good Summary:** This could have been improved by mentioning that this is an invasion of privacy as well and by indicating other repercussions besides suicide, such as job losses, divorces, etc.

Ashley Madison is a Canadian-based website catering to people who are married and looking to have affairs. The site was recently hacked, leading to the exposure of detailed

information belonging to all of Ashley Madison's clients. Clients' information was released worldwide by the hackers, deeming the situation one of the most successful attempts of data breaches worldwide. The company responsible for [Ashley Madison](#) was broken into last month and this hack follows. Those caught up in the scandal include United States government employees who have jobs in law enforcement and national security. Those employees are said to have used their work networks to access the website. Ashley Madison's parent company will pay 500,000 Canadian dollars for any information that could lead to the arrest of the hackers. The FBI has been asked to assist with the investigation of the hack. Two suicides have been linked to the case since the incident surfaced, but they have not been verified as a result of the breach.

[http://www.dothaneagle.com/news/ap/business/police-ashley-madison-hack-might-have-led-to-suicides/article\\_f4d37727-0400-53b1-888d-401d51db973d.html](http://www.dothaneagle.com/news/ap/business/police-ashley-madison-hack-might-have-led-to-suicides/article_f4d37727-0400-53b1-888d-401d51db973d.html)

**Example of a Fair-to-Poor Summary:** This would have been improved by mentioning how this pertains to the First Amendment. For example, what are the “fundamental rights” she was referring to, and how do they have an effect on this Supreme Court decision? In addition, the link to the original article is not given. It is also almost twice as long as instructed.

#### Kentucky Clerk Defies Court on Same Sex Marriages

Kim Davis, the county clerk at Rowan County Court house, dramatically brought all activities in the courthouse to a standstill. This is because she defiantly refused to issue couples of the same sex, a marriage certificate despite a clear law from the Supreme Court approving such unions. The courts house was jammed by angry gay and lesbian couples who felt Ms. Davis was infringing into their fundamental rights. Despite this pressure from the many couples, Ms. Davis did not budge or relent; in fact she told the journalist present that she was following a directive from God. Having taken office in January, from her mother who had served in a similar

capacity for 37 years, Ms. Davis reiterated that same sex marriages opposed her religious views and she would never sanction them as long as she was the clerk (Blinder & Pérez-Peña, 2015).

Early in the week, Ms. Davis had gone to court to object on the issuance of marriage certificates to gay, lesbian and even straight couples, arguing it was against religious backgrounds. The case was heard by the Supreme Court, but it was not obliged. The same Supreme Court in June, 2015 following a case of Obergefell vs. Hodges, established a law to be followed nationwide where it makes same sex marriages a constitutional right. This directive has been met by heavy opposition, especially by the religious faithful, Ms. Davis acting as an example. Other states like Alabama have experienced over 11 counties where the administration refused to issue same sex marriage licenses. Legal experts have termed what Ms. Davis and other administrations are doing as illegal and actually denying Americans their constitutional rights. Ms. Davis and similar minded people could be held in contempt of court and risk being jailed or fined. The advice from the experts is that the times are changing and we should not be held back by religious connotations.

**Example of a Poor Summary:** This could have been improved by mentioning how this pertains to the First Amendment. For example, does the First Amendment protect the press from criticism by Trump? What does the First Amendment say about the press? Twenty-five percent of this was plagiarized from the original source. The typeface is not Times New Roman, 12 pt., and it is single-spaced. Also, the grammar and punctuation are poor, and the plural of “journalist” is “journalists.” DO NOT FORGET THIS. Legal cases are always italicized.

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar wrote an article for the Washington Post comparing Presidential Candidates Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders. The portion of the article that discussed Donald Trump interested me the most. Kareem Abdul-Jabbar reported this week that Donald Trump, US Presidential candidate, consistently attacks the First Amendment’s protection of a freedom of press. Donald Trump menaces journalist who attend his campaign in hopes to stifle other journalist who might want to ask tough but reasonable questions towards the candidate.

In the most recent event, Fox correspondent, Megyn Kelly, went on planned vacation after Trump threatening her, “I’ve been very nice to you, although I could probably maybe not be, based on the way you have treated me. But I wouldn’t do that.” He also stated that she had

an attitude during the GOP debate on Fox. This was not the first time Trump had conflict with the press. Trump refused to give Des Moines Register's reporters credentials to attend his campaign even in Iowa in July after the paper suggested Trump should withdraw from the campaign. Donald Trump has also referred to journalists as "losers" or "unintelligent" because he felt they treated him harshly since their views did not agree with his.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/posteverything/wp/2015/09/02/kareem-abdul-jabbar-this-is-the-difference-between-donald-trump-and-bernie-sanders/>