

Rating the news sites

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Rating News sites The trial of Casey Anthony has intrigued the nation over the last few months. Everyone seems to have an opinion on the matter and thinks that they are right. This story is perfect for news sites because of the interest generated by a mother potentially murdering her own child. The main news networks, CNN, Fox News, and MSNBC, have each provided slightly different coverage of the event. While some of the information is the same, there are small differences in the reporting of information. For example, each of these three networks received an opinion on the case from an alternate juror, Russell Huekler. The main point that Huekler was trying to get across was that he agreed with their verdict wholeheartedly (Hayes). Huekler gave three reasons for why he believed this to be the truth: (1) the prosecution did not present enough evidence required for a murder or manslaughter charge; (2) the prosecution failed to show a motive. Just because she was a party animal does not mean she killed Caylee; and (3) the prosecution could not determine how Caylee actually died (NBC News, ABC News, and Associated Press). Furthermore, Huekler told of how he was shocked to hear of the public's anger to the not guilty verdict (Lush). All three of these news sites had access to Huekler—probably because he gave a press conference and all three news networks happened to be there because of the high profile case. In this case, we can say that all three news sources did their job well because their reporting of Huekler matches up, removing any doubt and confusion. However, there was one noticeable difference between all three news sites reporting over the identity of the twelve jurors made up of seven women and five men (NBC News, ABC News, and Associated Press). CNN reported that Orange County Chief Judge Belvin

Perry Jr. barred the release of the names of the jurors (Hayes). In contrast, the other two news sites, Fox News and MSNBC, both revealed the identity of juror number 3, Jennifer Ford. Both news sites contain comments made by Ford, but Fox News provides a longer description of Ford's thoughts. Ford said that the reason why the jurors were not interested in talking to the media immediately after the verdict was because "we were sick to our stomach to get that verdict" (Lush). Both sites reported that Jennifer Ford was a 32-year old nursing student and noted that she felt there was not enough proof to find Anthony guilty, even though her own personal feelings may have led that way. The news sites also differ on the storylines presented in their articles. The CNN article mainly focuses on a summary of the case and also includes key quotes from all the relevant people. The MSNBC article has more to do with the reactions of the jurors, especially Russell Huekler and Jennifer Ford. Lastly, even though the Fox News article gives a summary of the key facts of the case, it also makes predictions on what the future may hold for Anthony. Fox News was the only news site to look ahead at what may happen now that Anthony looks like she will be released. The look of the three news sites' web pages differs in how they are presented. First of all, CNN has a video at the top of the page, followed by story highlights just underneath. This is strategically done for those who do not feel as though they can read the whole article, and instead want just the main points in bullet form. Also, along the right-hand side of the article there is a list a links to other stories connected with the trial. Additionally, throughout the article are small videos that show testimonies from all the appropriate individuals. Similarly to the CNN article, MSNBC also has a video displayed at the top,

showing the interview of Russell Huekler. There is a photo of Anthony displayed on the right-hand side of the text. In contrast to the CNN article, MSNBC has links to other related articles throughout the text of the article. Unlike the other two news sites, MSNBC has a graphic at the bottom of the page detailing the key players involved as well as a timeline of events. The final news site, Fox News, is radically different from how the other two sites are displayed. This site has plain text but no pictures or videos. The layout of this article is more traditional because the main focus is on the words of the text. Also, unlike the other two news sites, Fox News has no links to other related articles. One thing in common for all these news sites was the use of advertised links sporadically along the sides of the text. Works Cited Hayes, Ashley. "Casey Anthony not guilty of murder, other charges in daughter's death." CNN. com. Cable News Network, 6 Jul. 2011. Web. 7 Jul. 2011. Lush, Tamara. "Casey Anthony, acquitted, now must rebuild life." Foxnews. com. Fox News, 6 Jul. 2011. Web. 7 Jul. 2011. NBC News, ABC News, and Associated Press. "Anthony juror: 'Sick to our stomach' over verdict." MSNBC. com. MSNBC Digital Network, 7 Jul. 2011. Web. 7 Jul. 2011.