



HARVARD Kennedy School
SHORENSTEIN CENTER
on Media, Politics and Public Policy

From the Director



Listen to students, fellows,
and faculty share why
the Shorenstein Center
matters to them.
Watch the video at
[shorensteincenter.org/
annual-report](https://shorensteincenter.org/annual-report).

IT USED TO BE THAT PEOPLE KEPT “COMMONPLACE BOOKS”—ways of collecting knowledge that you could refer to over time. Both Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau were taught to keep commonplace books at Harvard University; over at Widener Library you can still find their commonplace books in published form. This annual report is a bit of a commonplace book, collecting the work of our 30th year of teaching, research, and engagement with the broad topic of media, politics, technology, and public policy. My first year as director has been exhilarating, and I hope that is reflected in this annual report, as well as the video that accompanies it.

Following the most contentious election campaign in modern history, the mission of the Shorenstein Center—to explore and illuminate the intersection of media, politics, and policy—has never been more important. Tom Patterson, Bradlee Professor of Government and the Press, researched and wrote four stellar reports on media coverage of the campaign that have been widely circulated and discussed. Along with the Institute of Politics, we co-sponsored the Harvard Kennedy School’s (HKS) quadrennial Campaign Managers’ Conference. For the first time, we assembled a team of Harvard College and HKS students who provided all of the research and background material for the conference moderators. And Harvard President Drew Faust, in the wake of the election results, invited the Nieman Foundation and the Shorenstein Center to co-sponsor a major event in January on The Future of News in Sanders Theatre, along with the President’s Office.

What do I love about returning to the Kennedy School? Students! We have hired more students as research assistants than ever before. A new summer internship program will place students at media and technology companies across the U.S. Our visiting speakers now fill their day with student meetings, in addition to their formal talk. Our fellows have spent an increasing amount of time with students this year. We launched a new entrepreneurship fellows program at the Center and they have been deluged with student requests for advice on careers, new startups, and social entrepreneurship. And our major events—the Theodore H. White Lecture, Salant Lecture, and Goldsmith Awards—all included large dinners where half of the attendees were students. One of my goals is to make the Shorenstein Center *the* place to be for Kennedy School students.

We have expanded the Center’s advisory board and increased our fundraising push. A new faculty affiliates program has expanded our research component. Matt Baum, Kalb Professor of Global Communication, spearheaded an executive session on fake news in February and I was glad to be able to provide some financial assistance for this early look at research on fake news in the Trump era. More research initiatives will be announced soon.

I’d like to thank all of the students, scholars, reporters, donors, conference participants, speakers, visiting fellows and faculty, and our great staff, who make the Shorenstein Center a collegial and vibrant community. And to the Shorenstein family and many donors I have gotten to know this year, a special thank you for your confidence and your support. I look forward to expanding the Shorenstein Center in many directions over the coming years, and will rely on all of you for advice and assistance.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Nicco Mele'.

Nicco Mele

BY THE NUMBERS



26

Courses taught
by Shorenstein
Center faculty
affiliates

900

Students who
took courses
taught by faculty
affiliates

30

Years
1986–present

45,000

Subscribers
to Journalist’s
Resource weekly
email

4.6 million

Pageviews for
Shorenstein Center
& Journalist’s
Resource websites

123,000

Podcast streams
and downloads





Fall 2016 Fellows

12
Fellows from
around the world

46
Events sponsored
by the Center

4,200
Event attendees



Masha Gessen, journalist



Nicco Mele addresses students at the fall 2016 open house.

Enriching the Student Experience

Learning opportunities inside and outside the classroom allow students to connect with leaders working in the field, think critically about timely issues, and develop practical skills.

STUDENTS COME TO HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL from around the globe and with a variety of academic and professional backgrounds. Some are journalists or aspire to work in media, while others will go on to work in public service or for NGOs. Whatever their background, the Shorenstein Center strives to help students develop a deep understanding of the impact of media and technology on government and society—an invaluable tool as they set out to solve some of the world’s biggest challenges.

INTERNSHIPS

In 2017 the Center launched a new summer internship program. The program places HKS students at some of the nation’s leading media, technology, and digital governance organizations. The Center has helped 11 students find internships and is providing stipends for living expenses for many of them. For summer 2017, students will be working at Facebook, *The New York Times*, ABC News, CNN, NBC News, NBC Universal, VICE News, *The Texas Tribune*, Civic Hall, and Democracy Works (TurboVote).

The Center also sponsors the Lynette Lithgow Internship, which awards a stipend to an HKS student who has secured a summer internship at a news organization. Shanoor Seervai, Master in Public Policy candidate, used the Lithgow Internship to support

her internship at STAT News, a health and science news outlet produced by Boston Globe Media.

“It was the best internship I could have expected,” said Seervai. “It really gave me a chance to work in the field, reaffirm my commitment to working in the media, and use some of the skills and experiences that I’d had at the Shorenstein Center in my first year in a professional setting.”

“The Shorenstein Center extending its support to me to do this internship was like a dream come true.”

— *Shanoor Seervai, HKS student*

CLASSES

Faculty affiliated with the Center teach courses such as “Media, Politics, and Power in the Digital Age,” “Controversies in Climate, Energy, and the Media: Improving Public Communication,” and “Internet and Society: The Technologies and Politics of Control.” Several of the Center’s faculty affiliates (Thomas Patterson, Jeff Seglin, Steve Jarding, Richard Parker) have received HKS’s Manuel C. Carballo Award for Excellence in Teaching, an annual award recognizing dedication to students

STUDENTS

and commitment to public service. Nominations are submitted by the graduating class and selected by the class marshals.

STUDY GROUPS AND INFORMAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Study groups and workshops allow students to participate in a flexible learning experience focused on a timely topic. In the fall, Michael Phillips Moskowitz,



Entrepreneurship Fellow, hosted a workshop on design and entrepreneurship. In the spring, Rick Stengel, Walter Shorenstein Media and Democracy Fellow (spring 2017), led a series of study groups on “The Global Information War.” Discussion topics included global free speech issues, ISIS and the weaponization of information, Russia’s disinformation campaign, and fake news in the U.S.

Students also had the opportunity to have informal dinners with Stengel, and Bob Schieffer, Walter Shorenstein Media and Democracy Fellow (fall 2015–fall 2016). New for the 2016–2017 academic year, all fellows began hosting office hours, giving students a chance to meet with them one-on-one.

Students have also had the opportunity to help with events. For example, in fall 2016, students created an election timeline and helped coordinate the Campaign Managers’ Conference, an event co-hosted with the Institute of Politics at Harvard Kennedy School, which

brought together campaign managers from all of the presidential campaigns, as well as leading media figures.

RESEARCH ASSISTANTS

With each new semester come opportunities for students to work as paid research assistants to fellows and faculty. Students work closely with fellows, assisting them with research, content analysis, fact-checking, literature searches, and other tasks. During the 2016–2017 academic year, the Center employed a record number of 15 research assistants.

Emily Moore, Master in Public Policy candidate, worked as a research assistant for fellow Derrick Z. Jackson during the fall semester, and for Farai Chideya in the spring.

“My experience working with Derrick taught me that when the national media ignores an issue, as it did for a while in the Flint Water Crisis, people’s lives can be horribly impacted, but if the media can get involved and shine a spotlight on that issue, there’s real potential for positive change,” said Moore. “I think working on such an important topic made me realize how as a consumer of news media, I need to be much more informed in spotting biases in the news that I read, and seeing my own biases.”

“It’s a unique opportunity to be able to be a research assistant at the Shorenstein Center because you have the chance to work with leaders in journalism, communications, and media that you otherwise wouldn’t.”

— Emily Moore, HKS student

EVENTS

As demonstrated in the following section, events are one of the components that comprise the core of the Center. Students from HKS and across Harvard have the opportunity to see prominent journalists, authors, political consultants, pollsters, technology leaders, and others—and ask questions and for advice.

In addition to larger public events, students are also invited to exclusive dinners, breakfasts, and other gatherings to meet with Shorenstein Center visitors. For example, Professor Yochai Benkler, co-director of the Berkman Klein Center for Internet and Society at Harvard, met with students over breakfast to present his new research on the conservative media ecosystem.

“When I came to the Kennedy School...I spent most of my time at the Shorenstein Center. I felt they ‘got’ me best, that here were ‘my people.’”

— *Eugene Scott, HKS 2015, reporter for CNN Politics*

Opposite page: Rick Stengel, Walter Shorenstein Media and Democracy Fellow (spring 2017), meets with students at dinner.

Top: Students take photos with Bob Schieffer, Walter Shorenstein Media and Democracy Fellow (fall 2015–fall 2016), after an event.

Middle: Jorge Ramos, Noticiero Univision anchorman, meets with students.

Bottom: Students meet with Steve Jarding, Lecturer in Public Policy.





Speaker Series

This weekly series brings leading journalists and practitioners to the Center to discuss pressing topics.

COVERAGE OF THE 2016 ELECTION AND PRESIDENT TRUMP'S ADMINISTRATION, demographics of the U.S. electorate, the future of the Republican Party, technology and social movements, the power of big data and algorithms, and news business models are just some of the topics that students discussed with speakers at the Shorenstein Center this academic year. **Listen to podcasts of past events at shorensteincenter.org/podcast.**



Amy Walter, *The Cook Political Report*



Patrick Ruffini, Republican digital strategist

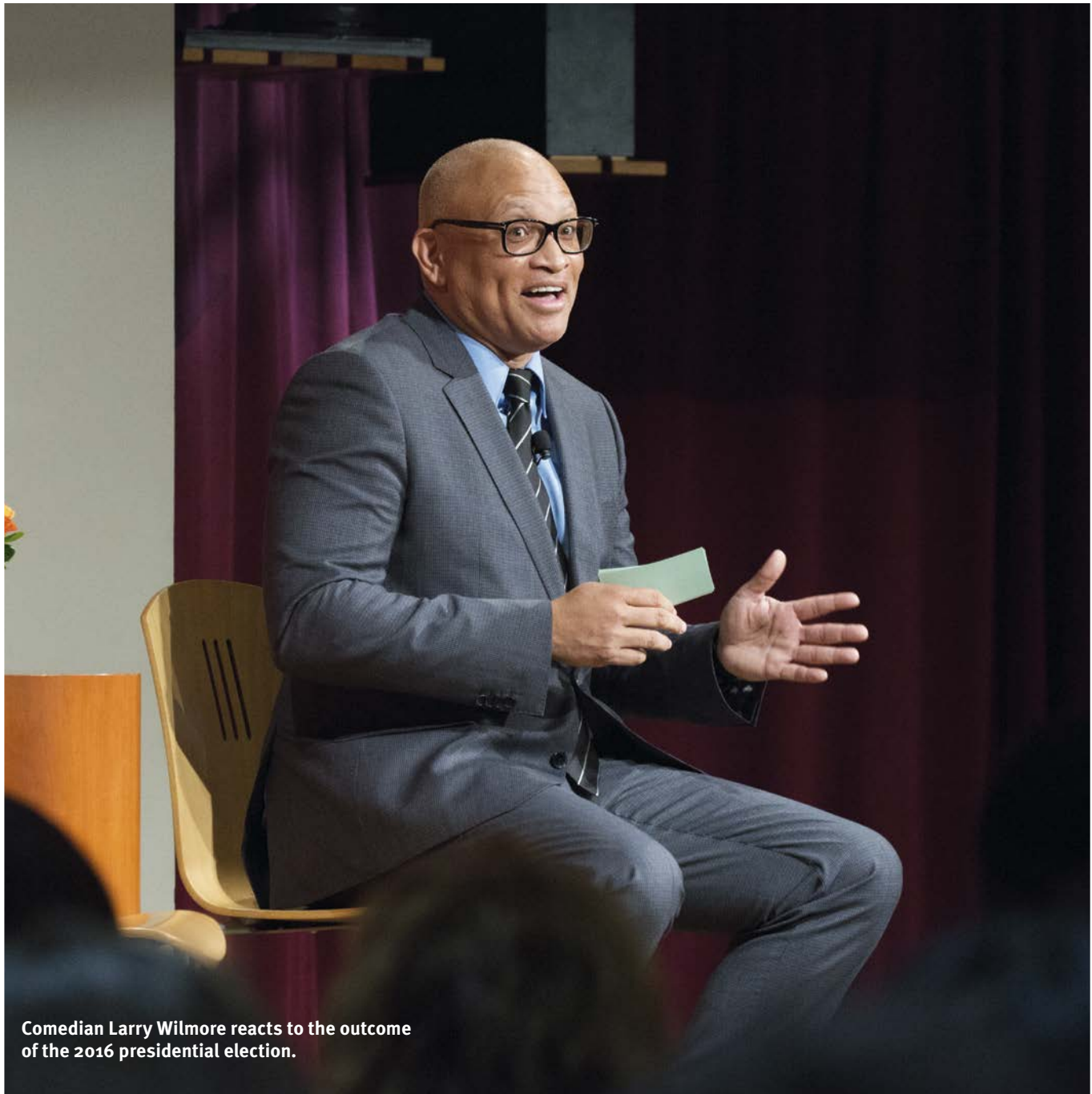


Molly Ball, *The Atlantic*



Tim Wu, Columbia Law School, author of *The Master Switch*

EVENTS



Comedian Larry Wilmore reacts to the outcome of the 2016 presidential election.



Annual Lectures

THEODORE H. WHITE LECTURE ON PRESS AND POLITICS

Comedian, producer, and writer **Larry Wilmore** delivered the 27th annual Theodore H. White Lecture on November 15, 2016. The lecture commemorates the life of the reporter and historian who set the standard for contemporary political journalism and campaign coverage. Wilmore brought his irreverent perspective on the election and laughs to the Forum at HKS. The **David Nyhan Prize for Political Journalism** was awarded to **Nancy Kaffer** (top) of the *Detroit Free Press*. The Nyhan Prize is awarded to a journalist who embodies Nyhan's commitment to political coverage and challenging powerful individuals and institutions. Video: shorensteincenter.org/larry-wilmore



SALANT LECTURE ON FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

Jeffrey Rosen (bottom), President & CEO of the National Constitution Center, Professor of Law at The George Washington University Law School, and a contributing editor for *The Atlantic*, delivered the ninth annual Richard S. Salant Lecture on Freedom of the Press on October 13, 2016. Rosen argued that Twitter, Facebook, and Google are facing increased pressure to moderate content in a way that is inconsistent with First Amendment protections—in the name of promoting civility rather than democracy. Video: shorensteincenter.org/jeffrey-rosen



Goldsmith Career Award winner
Jorge Ramos delivers the keynote speech.

The Goldsmith Awards

Mother Jones, Jorge Ramos, and others honored at 2017 ceremony

THE GOLDSMITH AWARDS CEREMONY, held on March 2, 2017, recognized six outstanding journalism teams as finalists for the Goldsmith Prize for Investigative Reporting. **The \$25,000 prize was awarded to Shane Bauer of *Mother Jones* for his investigative report “My Four Months as a Private Prison Guard.”**

Bauer spent four months working as a guard to get a deep look inside the secretive world of private prisons, exposing mismanagement. Within a few weeks, the Department of Justice announced it would end its use of private prisons, and the Department of Homeland Security said it would consider doing the same.

“The judges agonized over this year’s decision,” said Shorenstein Center Director Nicco Mele. “Ultimately, the *Mother Jones* piece was an exceptional piece of reporting that deserved special attention and recognition. It was a brave and unusual story, full of challenges that were deftly navigated in the finest tradition of deep reporting.”

Launched in 1991, the Goldsmith Prize for Investigative Reporting honors journalism that promotes more effective and ethical conduct of government, the making

of public policy, or the practice of politics by disclosing excessive secrecy, impropriety, and mismanagement.

FIVE FINALISTS FOR THE 2017 GOLDSMITH PRIZE FOR INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING RECEIVED \$10,000 EACH:

Carrie Teegardin, Danny Robbins, Ariel Hart, Jeff Ernsthausen, Alan Judd, and Johnny Edwards of *The*

Atlanta Journal-Constitution for “**Doctors & Sex Abuse.**” This *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* investigation revealed a culture of secrecy and deference that protected doctors who sexually violated vulnerable patients. In light of the findings, the Georgia medical board is re-examining its handling of sexual misconduct, and lawmakers in several states are considering strengthening patient protections.



Sam Roe, Karisa King (left), and Ray Long (right) of the *Chicago Tribune* for “Dangerous Doses.**” *Chicago Tribune*’s two-year investigation into prescription drug interactions sparked widespread reforms at the nation’s pharmacies, led to the creation of a scientific method for discovering fatal drug combinations, and prompted state and federal authorities to call for policy and legislative action.**

EVENTS

“An occasion with this kind of cachet, at Harvard, recognizing your work—that’s an honor, and that inspires you to keep going.”

— *Sam Roe, Chicago Tribune*

David S. Cloud of the *Los Angeles Times* for “**California National Guard Enlistment Bonus Scandal.**” After the *Los Angeles Times* revealed that the California National Guard was using tax liens, wage garnishments, and other penalties to recover tens of millions of dollars in enlistment bonuses from about 9,700 soldiers and veterans, the Secretary of Defense suspended the repayment program, and Congress passed a law that will waive most of the debts.

Josh Salman, Emily Le Coz, and Elizabeth Johnson of the *Sarasota Herald-Tribune* for “**Bias on the Bench.**” The *Sarasota Herald-Tribune* revealed that trial judges throughout Florida treated black and white defendants differently, sentencing blacks to more time behind bars and giving them fewer second chances. Florida lawmakers have called for more oversight, and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee suggested a mandatory annual review of sentencing patterns.

John Carreyrou, Christopher Weaver, and Michael Siconolfi of *The Wall Street Journal* for “**The Downfall of Theranos.**” *The Wall Street Journal* revealed trouble at a laboratory startup that promised a revolutionary blood testing technique. The investigation exposed problems in the technology that jeopardized the health of patients. As a result, Theranos was sanctioned by federal health regulators, Walgreens terminated a contract with the company, and numerous lawsuits have been filed.

THE GOLDSMITH CAREER AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN JOURNALISM was awarded to **Jorge Ramos**, Noticiero Univision anchorman. Ramos also writes a weekly column for more than 40 newspapers in the U.S. and Latin America, provides radio commentary for the Radio Univision network, and hosts Fusion’s *AMERICA with Jorge Ramos*, a news program geared towards young adults.

The award is given for outstanding contributions to the field of journalism, and for work that has enriched political discourse. Past recipients include Gwen Ifill, Seymour Hersh, Walter Isaacson, and Christiane Amanpour. In his keynote speech, Ramos shared his experiences reporting abroad and on the Trump administration, and his views on the immigration debate.

“I think our position as journalists is to be on the opposite side of power... regardless of who is in the White House, a Democrat or a Republican.”

— *Jorge Ramos*

THE GOLDSMITH BOOK PRIZE is awarded to the academic and trade books that best fulfill the objective of improving democratic governance through an examination of the intersection of media, politics, and public policy.

The Goldsmith Book Prize for best academic book was awarded to **James T. Hamilton** for *Democracy’s Detectives: The Economics of Investigative Journalism* (Harvard University Press). *Democracy’s Detectives* details how investigative reporting benefits society, generating a return of thousands of dollars for every dollar spent.

Benefits such as improved schools, safer streets, better medical outcomes, and less fraud are worth preserving, argues Hamilton, and he suggests ways for cash-strapped news organizations to keep investigative reporting alive.

The Goldsmith Book Prize for best trade book was awarded to **David Greenberg** for *Republic of Spin: An Inside History of the American Presidency* (W.W. Norton). *Republic of Spin* analyzes a century of presidencies and how they have adapted to and exploited changes in communication. Speechwriters, spin doctors, polls, press conferences, and more are all covered, as are changes in journalism, from the muckrakers of the early 1900s to today's digital revolution.

“What gave me great hope was all of the journalists out there doing this work, digging, toiling away in obscurity, looking into issues of great local, national, and global significance, holding power accountable.”

— *Nicco Mele*

Find links to the stories and watch video of the awards ceremony, including Jorge Ramos' keynote speech: shorensteincenter.org/goldsmith-2017

Top: Shane Bauer of Mother Jones (right) accepts the Goldsmith Prize from Nicco Mele.

Middle: Josh Salman and Emily Le Coz of the Sarasota Herald-Tribune

Bottom: Goldsmith Book Prize winner David Greenberg



FELLOWSHIPS

Joan Shorenstein Fellows

Since 1986, the fellowship program has welcomed more than 250 accomplished journalists, scholars, and politicians from around the globe.

FELLOWS SPEND AN ACADEMIC SEMESTER researching, writing a paper, participating in events, and interacting with students, faculty, and the Harvard community.

During the 2016–2017 academic year, fellows focused on topics ranging from the local to the global, from media portrayals of marginalized groups to technology and business challenges—as well as the 2016 election. Some fellows brought a data-driven approach to their work, while others reflected on their personal experience in the field. This mix of issues and perspectives creates an enriching environment for fellows, faculty, and students alike. **Read more about the fellows:** shorensteincenter.org/fellowships



DERRICK Z. JACKSON

Coverage of the Flint water crisis and environmental justice

(Fall 2016) Essayist for *The Boston Globe*, climate and energy writer for the Union of Concerned Scientists



YEGANEH REZAIAN

Dangers faced by women journalists in the Middle East

(Fall 2016) Former Iran correspondent for Bloomberg News and *The National*



FARAI CHIDEYA

Race and gender in political press coverage in 2016

(Spring 2017) Author and senior writer at FiveThirtyEight, campaign coverage for CNN and NPR



ERIE MEYER

The use of open data in journalism and society

(Fall 2016) Founding member of the United States Digital Service, a team charged with improving public-facing digital services for federal government agencies



MARKUS PRIOR

Public interest in Election 2016

(Fall 2016) Associate Professor of Politics and Public Affairs in the Woodrow Wilson School and the Department of Politics at Princeton University



ADAM J. BERINSKY

The relationship between media choice and political polarization

(Spring 2017) Professor of political science at MIT



HELEN BOADEN

Political and strategic pressures faced by public service broadcasters

(Spring 2017) Former director of BBC Radio



ZACK EXLEY

Alt-right voices on YouTube

(Spring 2017) Political and technology consultant, advisor to Bernie Sanders' campaign

FELLOWSHIPS

Walter Shorenstein Media and Democracy Fellows

Walter Shorenstein Fellows share their expertise with the HKS community to help confront today's challenges.

THIS FELLOWSHIP BRINGS HIGH-PROFILE FIGURES in media, politics, and policy to the Kennedy School to engage with students, faculty, scholars, and the public on timely issues.

Walter Shorenstein Media and Democracy Fellows are chosen for their unique and respected views on current issues impacting the media and the political process, and their distinguished track record of leadership. While in residence, they participate in classes, seminars, study groups, symposia, and lectures, and interact with the HKS and wider Harvard communities. **Read more about the fellows:** shorensteincenter.org/fellowships



BOB SCHIEFFER

Election 2016: Media coverage and money in politics

(Fall 2015–Fall 2016) Former reporter and anchor for CBS News, former moderator of *Face the Nation*



RICK STENGEL

The global information war: Terrorism, disinformation, free speech, and fake news

(Spring 2017) Former undersecretary of state for public diplomacy and public affairs, former managing editor, *TIME*

Entrepreneurship Fellows

Disruption and innovation from the technology sector are having a profound impact on the public sphere. A new fellowship brings the startup perspective to HKS.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP FELLOWS ARE EXPERIENCED TECHNOLOGY ENTREPRENEURS who provide guidance and mentorship to students and work with faculty on research and course development.

Technology creates both challenges and new opportunities for media and government. By fostering relationships between private sector entrepreneurs and Kennedy School students, the Shorenstein Center aims to encourage more thoughtful approaches to public policy on the part of disruptive startups, while better supporting Kennedy School students looking to start new organizations and programs.

A.M. Rosenthal Writer-in-Residence Program

This program brings professional nonfiction writers to the Shorenstein Center every other year.



**MICHAEL PHILLIPS
MOSKOWITZ**

Improving online engagement through design and branding

(Fall 2016) Executive-in-residence at Foundation Capital, a venture capital firm, startup advisor, and former global chief curator for eBay



MEIGHAN STONE

Social entrepreneurship, refugee policy, and media

(Spring 2017) Former president of the Malala Fund. Led advocacy and media projects for the United Nations, Bono's ONE Campaign, Clinton Global Initiative, World Economic Forum, and G7 summits



Recent Publications

How did major news outlets influence the 2016 presidential election? A four-part research series analyzed the quantity and quality of coverage of the candidates and issues.

SPANNING FROM THE “INVISIBLE PRIMARY” beginning in January 2015 to the general election, Thomas E. Patterson, Bradlee Professor of Government and the Press, reviewed campaign coverage from ABC, CBS, CNN, Fox, the *Los Angeles Times*, NBC, *The New York Times*, *USA Today*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *The Washington Post*.

His findings for each period, summarized on the next page, painted a stark picture of the media’s failures during the campaign, and have encouraged widespread discussion and reflection about election coverage. The series received nearly 100 mentions in media outlets including *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, Associated Press, *Politico*, Vox, Salon, *Newsweek*, *Fortune*, PBS, and Fox News, and received more than 150,000 views online, making it the Center’s most widely-publicized research.

Read the Center’s recent publications:

shorensteincenter.org/research

Media Coverage of the 2016 Election

Pre-Primary News Coverage of the 2016 Presidential Race: Trump's Rise, Sanders' Emergence, Clinton's Struggle

Thomas E. Patterson | June 2016

In 2015, major news outlets gave Donald Trump more “good press” than “bad press,” helping propel him to the top of Republican polls. Hillary Clinton had the most negative coverage of any candidate, while Bernie Sanders was largely ignored in the early months.

News Coverage of the 2016 Presidential Primaries: Horse Race Reporting Has Consequences

Thomas E. Patterson | July 2016

Coverage of the primaries focused on the horse race over the issues—to the detriment of candidates and voters alike. Trump's coverage continued to outpace that of his rivals, including Ted Cruz, Marco Rubio, and John Kasich—although it turned negative in tone once he secured the Republican nomination.

News Coverage of the 2016 National Conventions: Negative News, Lacking Context

Thomas E. Patterson | September 2016

Before, during, and after the DNC and RNC, negative reports about the candidates greatly outnumbered positive reports, but context appeared to be missing. Although Clinton's emails were covered extensively, for example, few stories provided background to help news consumers make sense of the issue.

News Coverage of the 2016 General Election: How the Press Failed the Voters

Thomas E. Patterson | December 2016

Until Election Day, Clinton and Trump continued to receive negative coverage light on policy. Coverage of their fitness for office was nearly identical in terms of negative tone. “Were the allegations surrounding Clinton of the same order of magnitude as those surrounding Trump?” asked Patterson. “It's a question political reporters made no serious effort to answer.”

Fellows' Papers

“They Don't Give a Damn about Governing” Conservative Media's Influence on the Republican Party

Jackie Calmes | July 2015

An examination of the increasing influence of conservative media on the GOP's agenda, which some Republican leaders say harms the party's ability to govern and pick presidential nominees.

The Dream is Dead: Can Taxpayer Money Save Presidential Campaigns?

Marilyn W. Thompson | May 2016

Could the Presidential Election Campaign Fund address citizen frustration with campaign finance?

The Bezos Effect: How Amazon's Founder Is Reinventing *The Washington Post*

Dan Kennedy | June 2016

A look inside the *Post's* digital strategy and business model following its acquisition by Jeff Bezos.

The Pen and the Sword: Reporting ISIS

Paul Wood | July 2016

The harrowing story of a kidnapping by ISIS—and the ethical dilemmas of reporting on terrorist groups.

Rape Culture in India:

The Role of the English-Language Press

Joanna Jolly | July 2016

Although some of India's newspapers have increased coverage of rape, their approach is often problematic and has not led to policy change.

Mobile vs. Computer:

Implications for News Audiences and Outlets

Johanna Dunaway | August 2016

Although they expand internet access, mobile devices can also contribute to a digital divide in news consumption between the more and less informed.

The Growing Impact of Journalist's Resource

The Center's initiative to make research more accessible to journalists and journalism educators

JOURNALIST'S RESOURCE IS A WEBSITE that synthesizes and curates contemporary peer-reviewed research on public policy issues. The site had 2.4 million users between January 2016 and January 2017, a 32 percent increase over the previous year. More than 45,000 journalists, faculty, students, and others subscribe to the project's weekly e-mail.

One indicator of the impact the project has had is the number of times media professionals mention or link back to the site's content in their reports. Journalist's Resource has been cited by news agencies large and small, including major legacy publications such as *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, and *USA Today* as well as newer platforms such as FiveThirtyEight, Huffington Post, and TechCrunch. Over the past year, news and journalism groups and other organizations linked back to Journalist's Resource about 2,400 times.

In a user survey completed in January 2017, 76 percent of journalists who responded and 79 percent of educators reported accessing Journalist's Resource's research articles on a weekly or monthly basis. More than 70 percent of journalists who participated said Journalist's Resource "often" or "sometimes" helps them gather background on a topic, understand a policy idea, and find expert sources.

An earlier user survey conducted in 2015 became the basis for a paper written by Northeastern University assistant professor John Wihbey. Wihbey, Journalist's Resource's former assistant director, presented his research on "Journalist's Use of Knowledge in an Online World: Examining Reporting Habits, Sourcing, and Institutional Norms" at the 2016 annual meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication.

Journalist's Resource was created in 2010 to help journalism faculty teach future reporters and editors how to incorporate scholarly research into their news coverage. The project grew out of a partnership between the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, the goal of which was to revamp journalism education and, as a result, improve the quality of news reporting and analysis. The Carnegie-Knight Initiative on the Future of Journalism, announced in 2005, now includes 11 journalism schools and the Shorenstein Center.

Over the years, Journalist's Resource has become a vital bridge between the worlds of academic research and journalism. Today, tens of thousands of working journalists and journalism educators turn to the project for help finding and interpreting research and other evidence-based sources of information.

Journalist's Resource's philosophy is that peer-reviewed studies can, at the very least, help anchor journalists as they navigate complex topics and competing claims. The website features a database of some 1,700 articles that synthesize research in policy areas such as immigration, mass shootings, and public school reform. For example, a recent research "roundup" on voter fraud provides a general overview of the subject for context and lists the abstracts of relevant studies that have been published in peer-reviewed journals within the past few years. The website also offers model syllabi for 11 courses, including Health Reporting and Political Reporting, as well as 155 journalism tip sheets on subjects ranging from finding public records and scraping data to interviewing sources and understanding the federal budget.

"I just wanted to express my admiration and appreciation for the great work you do to help us in the media understand what it is that we are caught up with every day...I use the Center's website and email blast regularly in my current job to generate ideas."

— *Moshe Arenstein, MSNBC producer*

The veteran journalists on staff are constantly adding to and updating these resources. They aim to broaden the project's reach by visiting more newsrooms and classrooms and introducing a series of short instructional videos. Journalist's Resource helped lead a training workshop at the Education Writers Association's annual conference last year and will lead similar sessions this year. Meanwhile, the website was redesigned in March 2017 to make it faster and more user-friendly.

Journalist's Resource

Research on today's news topics

Government • Economics • Environment • Politics • Society • International •

Search the site

What is the national debt? A reporter's guide



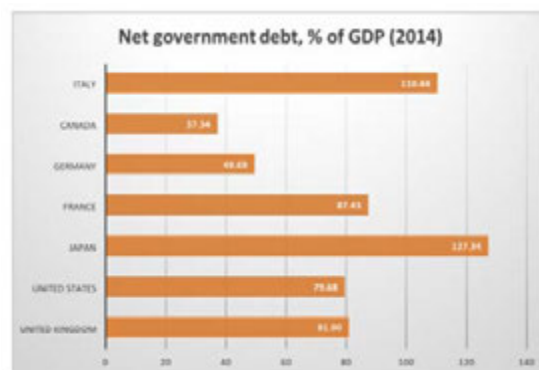
Woman holding \$50 bonds (Library of Congress)

Share / Save

America's national debt swells more in an hour than most of us will earn in a lifetime. The numbers are frightening. And fear is easy to manipulate. Yet not everyone sees the debt as a national crisis. Some argue that the United States, because it prints the world's favorite currency – the dollar – and enjoys a solid reputation among investors, is simply taking advantage of its unique position.

Corporations, governments, money managers and private individuals lend to the U.S. government in exchange for small payments (the interest they receive) because the U.S. Department of the Treasury – the body with the near magical power to print dollars – is widely seen as the safest place in the world to store money. A long history of fiscal probity and rule of law has shaped the consensus that no one offers a safer haven.

When someone lends to the U.S. government, they receive Treasury securities – "bills" of one year or less; "notes" of one to 10 years; and "bonds" of 20 to 30 years. These are essentially I.O.U.s that return a small, regular payment until they mature, when the holder can cash them in for face value. Because the U.S. is such a safe haven, these I.O.U.s offer exceptionally low interest payments.



Recent research guides have covered topics such as the federal budget, race and police violence, and gender and journalism. **Find these guides and many more at journalistsresource.org.**

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STAFF

Nicco Mele
Director

Tim Bailey
Events Manager

Jessica Colarossi
Faculty Assistant

Kaitlyn Dowling
Executive Assistant to Nicco Mele

Nilagia McCoy
Communications Manager

Jane McIntyre
Financial Manager

Susan Ocitti
Fellows Program Manager

Denise-Marie Ordway
Managing Editor, Journalist's Resource

Nancy Palmer
Executive Director

Emily Roseman
Faculty Assistant

Donna Tremonte
Consultant, Web Developer

David Trilling
Research Reporter, Journalist's Resource

John Wihbey
Consultant, Journalist's Resource

FACULTY AFFILIATES

Matthew Baum
Kalb Professor of Global Communication

Susan Crawford
John A. Reilly Clinical Professor of Law

David Eaves
Lecturer in Public Policy

Steve Jarding
Lecturer in Public Policy

Juliette Kayyem
Belfer Lecturer in International Security

Khalil G. Muhammad
Professor of History, Race, and Public Policy

Pippa Norris
Paul F. McGuire Lecturer in Comparative Politics

Richard Parker
Lecturer in Public Policy

Thomas E. Patterson
Bradlee Professor of Government and the Press

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Design

Embryo Creative

Layout

Nilagia McCoy

Written by

*Nilagia McCoy, Nancy Palmer,
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Photography

*Martha Stewart, Mike DeStefano,
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