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Declining number of full-time professional journalists

According to the American Society of News Editors (ASNE), in 2014, there were about 32,900 full-time journalists at nearly 1,400 daily newspapers in the United States. That's a 3,800-person decrease from 36,700 in 2013 and 40,600 in 2012. The number peaked in 2001 with 56,400 full-time journalists. Beginning with the 2016 survey, the ASNE no longer calculates estimates of the total number of journalists working in newsrooms.

American Society of News Editors, "Newsroom diversity survey; ASNE Newsroom census," 2015 and 2016, http://asne.org/newsroom_census (retrieved December 6, 2016).



Evaluating Internet sources

"Young people's ability to reason about the information on the Internet can be summed up in one word: *bleak*," concluded a recent study by the Stanford History Education Group. The research studied responses from online evaluative tasks of students ranging from middle school to college. For example, more than 80 percent of middle-schoolers believed that a web ad, identified with the words "sponsored content," was a real news story. Similarly, more than 80 percent of high school students had difficulty telling the difference between faked photos and real ones. "Despite their fluency with social media, many students are unaware of basic conventions for indicating verified digital information . . . in every case and at every level, we were taken aback by students' lack of preparation."

Stanford History Education Group, "Evaluating Information: The Cornerstone of Civic Online Reasoning," November 22, 2016, <https://sheg.stanford.edu/upload/V3LessonPlans/Executive%20Summary%2011.21.16.pdf> (retrieved December 3, 2016).



Teen math scores falling

The Program for International Student Assessment is an international assessment that measures 15-year-old students' reading, mathematics, and science literacy every three years in industrialized countries. In the mathematics test, out of a total of 1,000 points, the United States average score was 470, below the overall OECD average of 490. The 2015 score continued the downward trend: 12 points lower than it was in 2012 and 18 points lower than in 2009. Average scores in mathematics literacy ranged from 564 in Singapore to 328 in Dominican Republic. The U.S. average was lower than 36 education systems, higher than 28 education systems, and not measurably different than 5 education systems. The U.S. average was lower than the states of Massachusetts (500), not measurably different than North Carolina (471), and higher than Puerto Rico (378).

National Center for Education Statistics, "Performance of U.S. 15-Year-Old Students in Science, Reading, and Mathematics Literacy in an International Context," NCES 2017-048, December 6, 2016, <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pisa/pisa2015/index.asp> (retrieved December 6, 2016).



Social media usage

"Facebook continues to be America's most popular social networking platform by a substantial margin: Nearly eight-in-ten online Americans (79 percent) now use Facebook, more than double the share that uses Twitter (24 percent), Pinterest (31 percent), Instagram (32 percent) or LinkedIn (29 percent). On a total population basis (accounting for Americans who do not use the Internet at all), that means that 68 percent of all U.S. adults are Facebook users, while 28 percent use Instagram, 26 percent use Pinterest, 25 percent use LinkedIn and 21 percent use Twitter."

Shannon Greenwood, Andrew Perrin, and Maeve Duggan, "Demographics of Social Media Users in 2016," Pew Research Center, November 11, 2016, www.pewinternet.org/2016/11/11/social-media-update-2016 (retrieved December 6, 2016).

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