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## A handbook for public journalism

Public journalism is the most important realization of a journalist's potential. Journalists tout their badge of "public service" all the time, but without thinking about the citizens they serve, "public service" means nothing more than a lecture. Interacting with the public at a higher level politically and socially, guarantees citizens will stay more educated about topics and may encourage them to participate in democracy. Many journalists and newsrooms accidentally engage in public journalism but very few deliberately try to enhance their communities on a regular basis. Those who do, find higher reader penetration, enjoy better reader trust and see more or at least better informed political participation – a worthy goal for any public servant, according to Jay Rosen and Steve Smith.

Rosen presents the first cohesive assemblage of public journalism in "What are Journalists for?" But even Rosen suggests problems with the concept stemming from a vague definition of the idea, which prevents him from saying "this is how it's done and this is what it looks like." Rosen's work, though a great foundational piece, missed a few key roles technology plays in public journalism. This is probably because the industry missed them and at the time of the book's completion many of the current Internet tools had not yet been invented. I plan to update many of Rosen's key arguments and stumbling points to 2008. I will use anecdotal information based on my readings, experiments and observations. What Rosen lacks in a handbook he makes up for in the ability to inspire and identify examples of public journalism. I

will build from his examples and use them to recognize new innovative forms of public journalism.

The problem with journalism comes from the infrastructure and thought process of traditional media. Infrastructure problems stem from usability of print and web products, internal structures of news organizations and networking – or lack of networking – in communities and online systems.

### **What's wrong with journalism? The thought process**

Journalists have trouble defining journalism; let alone what it is for, because they've been walled into a way of thinking about their jobs. New ideas often come off as offensive or intimidating. The "Truth" seeking journalist finds conflict and actors who are right and wrong but must ignore this biased concept and write a dialogue in order to dramatize (a poisonous word) situations. So when a public journalist tells him there's no such thing as "Truth" – that there's multiple sides to any story and a dialogue does nothing to serve your readers – it's a bit offensive. The usual responses are "Public journalism is just good journalism" or "Public journalism is biased." Those assumptions are both right; public journalism is good journalism and public journalism is biased. However, it is not biased on the side of the reporter, but biased on the side of the frame chosen to tell a story. To say traditional journalism is unbiased is a fallacy because it's impossible to stay unbiased when one acts as a mouthpiece for politicians. "Let the reader decide" is a nice way of saying "politician X is wrong but let his quotes point that out, not me." It's a type of unfair fairness that allows journalists to be lazy by limiting their perspective to "just the facts" and "he said-she said" plot lines instead of narrating a publicly relevant perspective.

In order to compare these two approaches more specifically, I've laid out a scenario comparing two ways to tell a story. Often times the public comes into a traditional journalists mind but not in the same way it enters a public journalist's mind. An average journalist wonders if the story is relevant and if people will read it. Sometimes, he will approach sources who may be able to answer premeditated questions about a topic but will spend most of his time talking to officials or experts surrounding the topic. A public journalist will approach a story from the public first by finding people who are affected by a topic and finding issues that matter to them. A public journalist may not even write an article for a long time. Instead, he may use live forums or Internet forums to defragment conversations on the chosen topic. By encouraging and fostering communication, the journalist is changing the importance of a topic by changing its priority in the public sphere, similar to how the Truth seeking journalist's published article does the same in political circles. The public journalist is enabling democracy through public discussion and subsequent action, by connecting people to each other by using politicians as a source for action and information not as a source for conflict or quotes. Where an average journalist stops – at novel public opinion – a public journalist starts. By deadline, the differences between both journalists' articles should be apparent: a public frame versus a political frame; an real and publicly relevant dialogue versus a painted political dialogue; an emphasis on processes, options and involvement versus a beginning, middle and end.

### **What's wrong with journalism? Old tools**

In 2006, Adrian Holovaty wrote about “a fundamental way newspaper sites need to change”<sup>1</sup> when he discussed news site content management systems built exclusively for news

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<sup>1</sup> “A fundamental way newspaper sites need to change,” Adrian Holovaty. Posted September 2006. Accessed May 13, 2008. <http://www.holovaty.com/blog/archive/2006/09/06/0307>

articles. This approach to a content management system underscores the thought process of an average journalist who believes there are written stories, photographs and news pages and that anything else is fluff or dangerous. Though public journalism can be done with these basic mediums, it's not the most effective way to involve the public. However, these older tools deserve some discussion because they are part of the larger scheme of public journalism and without them there remains no foundation for anything new.

Words on paper are still an important way to convey life, frame events and inform readers. One of the questions Rosen faced during his crusade on public journalism was "how do you write public journalism?" Others likely asked "how do you photograph or design public journalism?" Rosen had trouble answering these questions because he did not know how to write, photograph or design his concept. Aside from public meetings and inclusive, long-term reporting, which is not conducive to daily deadlines, Rosen's book held no how-to guides, only examples and thought process guidelines. But his examples are sometimes enough for the trained eye to see and often for the public to appreciate. He outlines three basic tenants of public journalism in working:

Journalists would do well to develop an approach that can (1) address people as citizens, potential participants in public affairs, rather than victims or spectators, (2) help the political community act upon, rather than just learn about, its problems, (3) improve the climate of public discussion, rather than simply watch it deteriorate, and (4) help make public life go well, so that it earns its claim on our attention.<sup>2</sup>

Each of Rosen's points can be realized in a visual way on newspaper print. I've discussed point one in the previous section in my comparison between the two thought processes. Point two can be done by creating listings within a basic story that tell people where to go and what to do or by providing contact information for key players in an issue whether they are politicians or

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<sup>2</sup> Rosen, Jay, What are Journalists For?. Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1999. 262

citizens spearheading an initiative. By this simple definition almost all newspapers participate in public journalism in one form or another without knowing it; this is “just good journalism.”

Taking point two to the next level would be outlining processes one of those active citizens took to spearheading the initiative. It’s one thing to tell readers what a person did but outlining what steps he took would help others do the same.

An example comes from a recent issue of the *Reno News & Review* discussing geothermal energy versus coal energy in Nevada. This particular story stood as an example of “good journalism” because it told a story, there were interesting people, the politicians weren’t more or less important than the citizens and workers in the story. But in the end it did not help the reader do anything.<sup>3</sup> As someone who knows the system and has been talking to the same sources about the same topic, I realized stopping coal power plants is not going to work in Nevada because there are too many people involved and too many pieces in place. However, raising the required percentage of renewable energy sources in Nevada is a much easier process because it has already been done twice before. If the reporter thought like a public journalist, he probably would’ve outlined this process more specifically and added extra information on the topic or even helped create a forum for people for and against the idea. But he didn’t.

In order to do this in a visual way, photographers should focus more on people during political events instead of coming back with podium shots or they can stop attending them all together. A mug shot is generally enough to show who attended and who to look for. Other photojournalism techniques and ideas already fit inline with public journalism: find emotion, provide context, frame a photo, etc. A news designer likely has the hardest way of showing public journalism. Often his job will come down to one thing: juxtaposition. A news designer

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<sup>3</sup> Stabile, Erik, “Earth power, Nevada renewables.” *Reno News & Review* Posted April 17, 2008. [UNR Environment](http://unrenvironment.ning.com/resources/topic/show?id=2006910%3ATopic%3A3461) Reposted April 25, 2008. Accessed May 13, 2008. <http://unrenvironment.ning.com/resources/topic/show?id=2006910%3ATopic%3A3461>

must play elements in a way that create a discussion on the page. One example of this can be seen in the way I played quotes on the front page in *The Nevada Sagebrush*. The reporter knocked on doors in a nearby neighborhood and asked residents what they thought would make their area safer, then she went to safety officials at the University of Nevada, Reno and in the Reno City Council with those concerns. Instead of forcing the writer to take up space in her story about crime and safety on campus, I played the thoughts and officials reactions next to each other, creating a discussion on the page, which allowed the different players to talk to each other. We also included pertinent statistics and contact information for the responding officials and encouraged people to give the article to the student-body president on campus. Readers were provided with the ability to take action but were not given the ways to do so other than calling or writing in.

Similarly, Annie Flanzraich, news editor of the *North Lake Tahoe Bonanza*, engaged in public journalism in a similar way on several occasions. Most notably, Flanzraich invited community members to discuss issues that affected them in the upcoming presidential election. Previous to the Nevada caucuses, she held community meetings in her newsroom where people were encouraged to discuss topics that mattered to them in a freeform roundtable meeting. Flanzraich recording their concerns on various topics then approached the candidates with those specific questions. On the pages, Flanzraich played the community members' main concerns on the left page and the candidates' responses on the facing page. She used the print product as a place for conversation and live dialogue.

Despite these examples and many more outlined in Rosen's book, the print product and news articles can only take someone so far into the public journalism jungle. Newspapers have severe limitations when it comes to creating discussions with the public. There's a wealth of

information in the average person untapped by basic reporting and the slow, small forums created on muddy newsprint. Rosen completely missed new technology in his book — the technology of the Internet.

### **What's right with journalism? New tools**

The new tools of the Internet and news web sites quickly throw the idea of public journalism into the mix with citizen journalism, which ultimately becomes civic journalism. At this point there will be a distinction between the three terms. Public journalism will refer to Rosen's four pegs and to a professional journalist creating news with public interaction. Citizen journalism will refer to any content – from comments to an article – created for a journalism product exclusively by a citizen or non-professional journalist. Civic journalism will refer to the intertwined work of both the professional and the citizen who have mixed their work to create something else.

Right now journalism is in a strange, jumbled mess. You could step into one newsroom with people discussing the greater points of social networking, the future of the Internet, multimedia options and the amazing evolution of journalism. And you can step into another newsroom where one person is arguing to start a blog but no one knows what a blog is and those who think they understand the concept decide it's dangerous to journalistic integrity. Then there's news web sites run solely by citizens and others that don't even let citizens comment, let alone contribute information.

Because of this confusion and slow adoption of technology, not to mention reluctance to use technology, journalism has and will continue to suffer setbacks. Users aren't used to news sites having interactive functions, so those sites that feature comments or allow content

contribution grow at a slow pace. This slow growth creates a long and hard learning curve for users, because many news sites lack the tech people to integrate these features in a simple and immersive way. Nonetheless, it's important to continue trying these experiments since citizen and civic journalism are the best ways to realize the goals of public journalism – to engage the public, enrich discussions and sustain democracy. What better way to do that than through an unlimited network to communicate and share information? For the remainder of the paper, I will discuss models I believe show promise and ones that do not.

### **Social networks**

MySpace works like a shotgun. You can load your profile with content and just willy-nilly fire it into the abyss of 125 million people. You'll likely hit a few folks but generally miss everyone. The problem with MySpace is that it's severely fragmented with small clustered networks but no real content connections between people or the outside. It's not terribly approachable or easy to use. Facebook is a tighter more networked group so that when you fire your shotgun(s), you're pretty likely to hit a lot of people you know with a variety of content that's infinitely shareable. The problem with Facebook is that it's too busy, the networks are small and self-contained and oversaturated with applications, messages, shared links, and more. The content is also generally useless or too chunky so that none of it has staying power - it's easy to get bored with Facebook. Ning is the tightest, most specific social network, when you fire your shotgun you're guaranteed to hit everyone on the network – or several networks if you send content to everyone you know – plus non-members. The problem with Ning is that it requires 100-percent citizen journalism content and in its effort to network some groups it severely fragments other groups. In order to stay connected to people, for example, I must regularly visit

4 out of my 11 Ning networks. Also, Ning does not allow content sharing (profiles, blogs, forum posts) between networks except through exhaustive RSS feeds. Unlike Facebook, Ning's platform is limited to only a few forms of content and the administrator has to work almost non-stop to keep it busy.

Because of these models, users have been trained that social networking is a leisure device not an informational tool. "The real question for a Facebook or a MySpace is: Is it best to think of them as a place like Studio 54 -- a place where everyone wants to get in because all their friends are in -- or is it more like some kind of utility?" asked John McCrea, vice president of marketing for Plaxo a content-sharing network.<sup>4</sup> When news sites try to include functions beyond basic comments, users become skeptical or they don't see the benefits of social networking their news. Average users don't see the benefit of easily sharing content and enriching their personal community with information. Instead of realizing the benefits of building an instant community with people who one might never meet in person, in order to coordinate efforts for a better physical community, they see the site as another place to build a mediocre profile. As Google's engineering team pointed out, there's a hassle factor to creating a new profile or social account for every web site one visits.

Current social-networked news sites (Gannett, McClatchy, Swift and other many other similar models) have been created in a novelty way. The creators don't demonstrate an understanding of why social networking is a valuable tool and include social networking and citizen journalism in walled off areas of the site that provide space for citizen to write blogs, produce news and share photos. This is good first step but doesn't really connect people and it is neither public nor civic journalism. For social-networked news to truly work, it must be a

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<sup>4</sup> Whoriskey, Peter, "Google to Connect Friends Across the Web," *The Washington Post*. Posted May 13, 2008, Accessed May 13, 2008. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/05/12/AR2008051200823.html?referrer=digg>

seamless network of information both from the journalist and the citizens. Steve Outing discussed this concept at length in 2005:

Now we enter the world of theory, because I've yet to find anyone taking this bold step yet. Imagine, then, a news Web site comprised of reports by professional journalists directly alongside submissions from everyday citizens. This is slightly different than No. 9, above, because on any one page there will be a mix of professionally written (paid) and citizen-submitted (free) content - - labeled appropriately so that the reader knows what he/she is getting -- rather than the more typical walling-off of citizen content as a way of differentiating it from the work of professionals.<sup>5</sup>

Outing continued:

The key to making this work is the labeling of the respective content. 'By Joe Jones, Chronicle staff reporter' and 'By Sam Smith, Citizen contributor,' makes the difference between the two authors obvious. [...] This is the model that perhaps gets closest to what citizens'-media pioneers like Jeff Jarvis and Dan Gillmor espouse: When news becomes a conversation, and not just a lecture. It's professional journalist and community member sharing the online media publishing space, to the benefit of the audience."<sup>5</sup>

This is the best compromise to any current system I've seen. It represents both interests and ultimately becomes civic journalism as a perfect harmony between public and citizen journalism, allowing people to communicate. The labeling simply helps users understand author credibility. A change from the current system to this theoretical model requires a fundamental change in thought process and infrastructure.

### **If you build it, they will not come**

Because the majority of web users are lurkers who do not contribute but surf endlessly for content that interests them, social-networked, long-form citizen journalism alone does not work. Most people don't like to create their own content other than customizing a profile (this is important later), so providing an infrastructure is not enough to stimulate use. Herein lies the fundamental problem with small-scale citizen journalism efforts. Similarly, public journalism

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<sup>5</sup> Outing, Steve, "The 11 Layers of Citizen Journalism," Poynter Online. Posted June 15, 2005. Accessed May 13, 2008. [http://www.poynter.org/content/content\\_view.asp?id=83126](http://www.poynter.org/content/content_view.asp?id=83126)

online is the same as public journalism in print – it's a publishing model with links that's just as easy to navigate away from as it is to throw away a newspaper. Therefore, you need both and it must be easy to use and immediately obvious to the user that the site can be used for this optional purpose. If a site is set up to network, lurkers can share journalists' content and citizen's content.

A platform like Ning is difficult to use for newcomers and even harder for older people to learn how to operate. Most people aren't brought up to be content-producers. Building a social network on a platform, such as a news web site that most people are familiar with, allows users to simultaneously be lurkers and/or producers but doesn't limit them to one or the other; the networked content here is a variety of news, forums and profiles. People won't produce content if no one is there to read it, they don't perceive enough people are there or the site isn't immediately useable. Ning is a difficult platform because it's still being built so features that were needed last month aren't available until tomorrow. Ning sites need a lot of start up people to succeed and a lot of content to keep people coming back. A news site will have all of the necessary content right away or within a few days of professional journalism activity.

Based on my observations of UNR Environment ([unrenvironment.ning.com](http://unrenvironment.ning.com)), Inside UNR ([insideunr.ning.com](http://insideunr.ning.com)) and Soup du Journalism ([rsjsoup.ning.com](http://rsjsoup.ning.com)), these premises on social-networked news hold true. UNR Environment is a site primarily based on citizen journalism and traditional journalism. Every feature of UNR Environment is open to use by other members, from posting/sharing videos and news, to creating an event or club. However, most of the conversations in the forum and all but three news items and events have been posted by me, the journalist. People will respond but out of 71 members only about five regularly participate even though about 15 people visit the site every day sometimes much more.<sup>6</sup> Even the Environmental Action Team and SEEDS, two clubs who claim the site as their homepage do not use the features

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<sup>6</sup> Based on member numbers and Google Analytics as of May 13, 2008.

in place. Events are still sent out using third-party “e-vite” systems and mass mailings are sent via Gmail.

Inside UNR is the control to the UNR Environment variable. As the administrator, I create no content at all and have provided more features in a different format than on the other site. Fifty-one members joined in half the time it took UNR Environment to accumulate as many yet Inside UNR has little to no content production whatsoever. Its visitor numbers are all over the place though on any given day they average in the one digits and rarely approach 20 visits. Two bloggers, who planned to be regular writers, started when Inside UNR was created but quickly dropped off due to lack of response to their work. North Tahoe Living ([northtahoeliving.com](http://northtahoeliving.com)), a site made by Swift for the Tahoe community, is almost identical in function to Inside UNR; they both failed without news content. Because Ning is not profile-centric but still represents a leisure model, the infrastructure of a social network does not guarantee content from users.

Soup du Journalism serves as the best example of this civic journalism concept. The web Reporting class serves as the traditional journalists with the Journalism 101 students acting as citizen journalists though in my model the class still acted as traditional journalists. The rest of the members are citizen journalists participating seamlessly with the rest of the members, creating and sharing content. The problem with Soup du Journalism is that the traditional news did not integrate well with the citizen journalism, creating the opposite effect of current social-networked news sites. Instead of the citizens being walled off and hidden, the traditional news was walled off and hard to access. Larger networks, like Visual Editors ([visualeditors.ning.com](http://visualeditors.ning.com)) and Reno Baby! ([renonv.ning.com](http://renonv.ning.com)) work on similar principles and are doing well. But again there are the feature and network limitations of Ning.

Though Ning is the closest platform to my ideal public journalism/civic journalism, it doesn't work and its limitations are too big to allow it to work in its current format. The system is hard to learn for new users and the content does not integrate well. It also doesn't have enough types of modules that Holovaty discusses in his blog post. Instead of posting everything in the form of a news article, there should be database and content producing systems for all different types of information. Ning simply doesn't offer that variety. Ning's current content is also severely imbalanced and hard to create new modules of information. The majority of the content is weighted to forums and group creation – smaller networks within the network. In order to create a news module, one must use a complicated HTML-based module or make multiple forums, which still only allow for basic stories, photos and some video. Profiles on the site are also messy and hard to customize. The only answer to social-networked news must be invented; therefore, I will attempt to outline a social-networked news site for the remainder of this paper.

### **What does it look like? Defragment the fragmented**

The Internet, specifically social networking sites, is severely fragmented. As mentioned before, there is no way to connect most of the sites a networked user visits each day. Google engineers are testing a way for people to keep track of every site, even standard web 1.0 sites, they visit using a Google account. This is the first attempt to pull the web together into a cohesive unit but Google will only be able to provide friends list and some content sharing.<sup>7</sup> Also, Google does not consider any citizen journalism news, so people are limited to finding and sharing professional work from mainstream news sources. Other sites attempt to share content with one another using RSS feeds or content-sharing applications between Facebook, Flickr,

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<sup>7</sup> Whoriskey, Peter, "Google to Connect Friends Across the Web," *The Washington Post*. Posted May 13, 2008, Accessed May 13, 2008. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/05/12/AR2008051200823.html?referrer=digg>

YouTube and Ning, for example. But again, these elements are all for fun and games, none of them help disseminate information. In order to make any kind of news application, a user must know basic coding or use another service that will create and install the application.

Current social-networked news or blog sites, such as Instapundit.com or IndyStar.com feel either too empty or too packed with content, making users' experiences slow and confusing. Concepts like Digging (Digg.com), where users control the importance of news, Technorati, a blog aggregator or Google Homepage, a completely customizable and movable home space, are spread out. No one has put these ideas together into one comprehensive, well organized, streamlined news site capable of providing a customized, networked experience. My dream news site would.

The hardest leap for any journalist – and probably the reason no one made this yet – would be to make a news site a social network first and a news source second. At least at first glance. My ideal site would have two options: to customize it or leave it as the journalists decide. The customization system will allow users to move news modules around the homepage. To put sports, news, multimedia, a friend list, a share list, a favorite list, and other modules wherever they want on the page. The homepage essentially would become like a Facebook profile but instead of a smattering of gadgets and games, it's a healthy collection of news, fun, friends and links. All the news on the site would work on a Digg structure except important breaking news (breaking doesn't mean it just happened either). People could also get really specific if they want by restricting certain kinds of news or authors or by turning off some modules all together. Every item has the ability to accept comments in a reply structure, such as on Ning. Articles or pieces of articles can be sent to a forum with a simple click of a button and forum items can be turned into articles in the same way. The site will have breakout groups that have their own self-

contained system, similar to Ning's groups but more inclusive and advanced. Blog sharing is an important part of the site and will interact in the same way as the articles and forums, allowing people to connect to them, share information and discuss them and favorite them. Everything will have RSS feed abilities, like with Ning, and will be capable of sharing or connecting to any other compatible network, such as Facebook, MySpace, Ning or any of the smaller networks. In essence, a Facebook profile could become the homepage to my news site – mine already is a homepage for much of my news.

My site will also allow anyone to contribute any kind of content they want and it will mix seamlessly with everything else. Minimal professional intervention will moderate the site unless absolutely necessary, otherwise the community will moderate itself using the Digg function and old fashion debate. Professional journalists will be required – unless the employee is rude – to interact with the community. I will encourage them to help citizens and collaborate on projects online and in person. Everything the professionals do will be from the public journalism school of thought.

In essence, the site is pure democratic journalism. Giving everyone a choice to participate and everyone a choice to decide what they want, what's important and who they connect with represents the height of public journalism in its three forms: public, citizen and civic. The self-governing news represents a greater foundation leaping back before partisan journalism to the days of Locke, Hobbes and Franklin, who used a printing press to publish their work without any institutional journalism. Though the site still reacts to the political woes of public institutions, it does a fine job of ignoring them and emphasizing the kind of information people want in a publicly framed way. The answer neither comes from professionals nor citizens alone, it must

come from a true collaboration of the two. Only then can Rosen's idea of public journalism be realized.

### **Continuing experiments. Once piece at a time**

At the Pulliam Fellowship this summer, I've been given permission to experiment with social-networked news in addition to my regular print design and multimedia duties. At the *Indianapolis Star*, they've subverted the standard Gannett template and built a web site capable of much of what I've been discussing in this paper. They are the closest mainstream newspaper to realizing the potential of public journalism and the Internet. Therefore, I want to pitch to Mr. Pulliam – who has already agreed to hear my idea – a social-networked system of blogs. One of the problems with blogs today is their inherent diary feeling with little interaction and no connection to one another. I want to work with a web programmer to create a blog system for the Pulliam Fellows in Indiana and Phoenix – about 20 of us all together. The main concept is to create a blog aggregation site that will connect all of the Pulliams (past, present, future) together. Current Pulliams will blog and any past professionals who have blogs will all end up on the site. No one is required to use the site's blog system, they can use Blogger or other RSS feed capable accounts that can be reformatted into my site. The site will have favorites and a customizable blogroll on the customized homepage, a forum to talk to each other about general topics of interest, like where are good places for food or what's the best place to hide food in the break room. The site will allow people to connect with each other's blogs and share information between them easily. I want a recommend function for the best content. The site should allow Pulliams to share stories, experiences, their internship work and lessons with each other and other professionals. The idea is to defragment the Pulliam community, get the interns blogging,

using the internet and multimedia to document their summer to build a portfolio, help plan outings and connect the north and south Pulliams.

The blog site has larger implications as a contained module that can be, if it works, built into current news sites with blogs. This allows users to maintain their profiles and enter the blog section of the web site and use it that minor homepage to keep track of and share all of their favorite blogs. It also allows bloggers to attach their content to the site without having to restart their blog or set up a new account if they already have an existing one somewhere else.

### **Continuing experiments. “What are you going to be in five years?”**

I end with this final note. I have many options but two obvious ones in front of me. The first and simplest is to continue designing newspapers and magazines and occasionally help brainstorm about public journalism and social networking. In this job, I can speak up during meetings at a place that doesn't think all of this newfangled technology and the Internet is some curse on journalism. Or I could look for a position specifically in social networking. Many newspapers are recruiting people who specialize in community building through the web and in person. They are required to communicate with the public daily and basically do public journalism all day long. With my limited experience and studies and if I'm allowed to experiment at the *Indianapolis Star* I doubt I'll have any trouble finding a position since not many other people have even come this far. Undoubtedly in a year or two more of those positions will open up and I can live the public journalism dream and continue my design and photography on the side. What it really comes down to is which one will I miss more?