Body found on Twitter: The role of alternative sources in social media agenda setting

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While today’s news continues to flow through traditional media channels directly to information consumers, timely events and issues are increasingly reaching the world through social networking sites. From international stories such as protests in the Middle East and natural disasters in Japan, to breaking news in cities across America, Twitter has garnered widespread attention for its role in newsgathering, dissemination, and consumption (Garahan, 2011; Guskin, 2011). Tweets originate in the newsroom, board room, and living room—and are sent by myriad Twitter users, from President Obama to Justin Bieber. In addition to their own text, users include links to Web content from news media, bloggers, entertainers, retailers, politicians, and more. And once in the social media sphere, messages and links posted by one party are easily resent by another. How does this flow of news and information on Twitter relate to what the public deems as the significant issues and events of the day? Nearly four decades of research have provided empirical evidence showing that the news media set the public agenda (McCombs & Shaw, 1972; Coleman, McCombs, Shaw, & Weaver, 2009). But in the social media era, is this still the case? With news and information spreading real-time through a panoply of sources, who sets the agenda on Twitter? This paper addresses the question by examining Twitter postings about a development in a missing-person case. It does so within the framework of agenda-setting theory.
Twitter and today’s communication ecosystem

Twitter describes itself as “...real-time information network powered by people all around the world ...” (Twitter, 2010a). Its 100 million active users (Twitter, 2011a) post more than a billion tweets per week (Twitter, 2011b). Not only has Twitter become a major presence on our laptops and desktop computers, but access to the network more than tripled on mobile browsers in 2010 (Tsirulnik, 2010). Twitter content is becoming part of the historical record, as the Library of Congress now archives the network’s collection of tweets (Lohr, 2010).

The legacy media are increasingly showing interest in Twitter and participating on the social network. Pew Research Center’s Project for Excellence in Journalism now tracks Twitter news content in its New Media Index (journalism.org, 2010). And nearly half of journalists surveyed responded they used Twitter (McClure & Middleberg, 2009). Major news media are attracting large numbers of followers on Twitter; some exceeding their circulation numbers. The New York Times, for example, has a daily circulation of about 916,000 (Vega, 2011) and nearly 4 million Twitter followers (nytimes on Twitter, 2011). And while some news executives fear competition from Facebook and Twitter, (Artwick, 2010a) a growing number of major newsrooms employ social media editors (Luckie, 2010) and encourage journalists to report and promote their work on social networks.

News and information pertaining to the case study in this research first
appeared on Twitter in the autumn of 2009. It began when a Virginia Tech student went to a heavy metal concert, but didn’t come home.

**The Morgan Harrington case in the public agenda**

Twenty-year-old Morgan Harrington disappeared outside a Metallica concert in Charlottesville, Virginia, on October 17, 2009. The case attracted widespread interest, driven by factors including her link to Virginia Tech and the memory of its 2007 shooting tragedy, Harrington’s youth and beauty, the Metallica connection, a $150,000 reward, and her parents’ proactive relationship with police and media (Berrier, 2009; Artwick, 2010b). The family created a website, findmorgan.com, to aid in their search, which hosted a discussion forum with more than 16,000 posts, family blog, and a repository for news updates (Artwick, 2010b). After Harrington had been missing for three months, a farmer found her body in a remote field on his property about ten miles from the concert site (Bowman, 2010). An outpouring of Twitter messages followed from sources worldwide, indicating salience, or perceived importance of the event among Twitter users. Its prominence as a news story was recognized by Virginia television station WDBJ7 News (2010), which named the Morgan Harrington case the top story of 2009.

**Social media research and the agenda-setting tradition**

The rapid growth of social media is attracting researchers’ attention in a variety of disciplines (Tumasjan, Sprenger, Sandner, & Welpe, 2010). And
in the realm of communication scholarship, the agenda-setting function of traditional news outlets is being called into question (Sayre, Bode, Shah, Wilcox, and Shah, 2010). Agenda setting developed as a theoretical perspective throughout a period that spans nearly four decades, following the seminal Chapel Hill study which found a strong relationship between the major issues on the agendas of the press and the public (McCombs & Shaw, 1972, Rogers & Dearing, 2007). Among the most frequently used theories in mass communications research (Bryant & Miron, 2004), agenda setting was born during an era of print and broadcast media—before cable television increased the number of channels coming into our homes, before satellites provided a 24-hour news cycle, and before the Internet gave us global information access. With these changes and the continuing evolution of digital media, scholars have begun to explore the role of digital media in the agenda-setting process. In recent years, one of the theory’s founders identified the Internet as the “new frontier” for agenda-setting research (McCombs, 2005a, p. 544). But McCombs (2004) has also countered speculation that widely available alternate media sources could weaken the influence of mainstream media on the public agenda, fragment interests, and lead to a multitude of media and personal agendas. Instead, he envisions a “relatively homogenous media agenda” led by traditional media and large conglomerates which would continue to influence the public agenda (McCombs, 2004, p. 149). Users, he maintains, would rely on a
small number of sites, constrained by time limitations and the effort needed to access multiple sources of information (McCombs, 2004). More recently, McCombs and colleagues predicted at least another 30 years of “fruitful exploration” for agenda setting in cyberspace (Coleman et al., 2009, p. 157).

Recent studies show mixed support for traditional media agenda setting on social media. An examination of more than 100,000 Twitter postings (tweets) concluded that news outlets “...influence large amounts of followers to republish their content to other users” (Leavitt, Burchard, Fisher, & Gilbert, 2009, p. 3). To determine influence, the researchers tracked the spread of content on Twitter rather than simply comparing the number of individuals following the news outlets, celebrities, and analysts studied. A study of YouTube, agenda setting, and California’s Proposition 8 concluded that “YouTube allows individuals an opportunity to help drive—and at times lead—public discourse on socially relevant and politically important issues” (Sayre et al., 2010, p. 6). Over a 14-month period, the researchers tracked mainstream media content and YouTube videos on Proposition 8, using time-series analysis to determine the relationship of YouTube video postings to mainstream coverage. While traditional news outlets led coverage of the issue before it was voted on, YouTube videos increased after the election, which the researchers interpreted as a platform for opinions not represented in the mainstream (Sayre et al., 2010).
In addition to investigating who sets the public agenda, scholars are exploring the relationship among the traditional and new media, with several studies lending support for inter-media agenda setting in the digital arena. Nearly 90 percent of public relations practitioners report they think blogs and social media influence coverage in traditional news media (Wright & Hinson, 2008). An analysis of issue agendas in Korean online news media found the leading newspaper influenced the agenda of secondary papers and an online wire service (Lim, 2006). Ragas and Kiousis (2010) extended inter-media agenda setting to consumer-generated content and political activist communication. And Sweetser, Golan, & Wanta (2008) found strong correlations between the agendas of news media and campaign blogs during the 2004 election, suggesting a transfer of agendas from the media to the blogs. However, they note that blogs may have played a role in shaping news agendas of several broadcast news organizations, and encourage that the question of “who sets the agenda for whom’ must continue to be asked as new communication technologies emerge” (p. 212).

And as social networks burgeon—with more than half a billion Facebook accounts (Paul, 2010) and 100 million active Twitter users (Twitter, 2011a)—the paths through which we receive news, information, and opinion continue to evolve. Links on our Twitter feeds deliver news directly to us, obviating the need to navigate to website front pages. Citizen bloggers post their latest stories to Facebook, YouTube video links find us on
our phones, and people on the scene of breaking events post photos to yFrog and TwitPic, often before journalists arrive. A comparison of CNN Headline News and trending topics on Twitter found episodes of news breaking first on Twitter, with CNN maintaining its lead in reporting first more than half the time (Kwak, Lee, Park, & Moon, 2010). Three-fourths of news consumers online say they receive news through e-mail or social networking sites, and more than half use those means to share links to news (Purcell, Rainie, Mitchell, Rosenstiel, & Olmstead, 2010).

The active audience may be a central distinction to be considered in agenda setting in the social media environment. Marwick and boyd (2010, p. 16) describe Twitter as “...an example of a technology with a ‘networked audience.’” While the faceless, mass, broadcast audience has limited opportunity for feedback, the networked audience can communicate in a “‘many to many’ model” (Marwick & boyd, 2010, p. 16). Huberman, Romero, & Wu (2009) differentiate between what they call friends on Twitter—those who communicate using direct messages to individuals—and communicating via tweets to an entire network of followers. Others have studied electronic word of mouth on Twitter and its role in marketing (Jansen, Zhang, Sobel, & Chowdury, 2009), analysis of sentiment in tweets (Go, Huang, & Bhayani, 2009; Kim, Gilbert, Edwards, & Graeff, 2009), and even how tweets can be used as a social sensor to detect earthquakes (Sakaki, Okazaki, & Matsuo, 2010).
The unifying element among these studies is interpersonal communication afforded by digital media. While some scholarship has explored how interpersonal communication may fit into the agenda-setting process, it has not done so in a social media context (Vu & Gehrau, 2010; Yang & Stone, 2003). The research has drawn generally from the two-step flow theory, which finds, “...ideas often flow from radio and print to the opinion leaders and from them to the less active sections of the population” (Lazarsfeld, Berelson, & Gaudet, 1948).

Shaw, McCombs, Weaver, & Hamm (1999, p. 21) introduced a model of agenda melding, which argues that “...individuals use a variety of media to relate to others, and that melding with a group agenda of issues is an ongoing social process.” Ragas and Roberts (2009) tested the model, exploring agenda melding in a study of virtual brand communities. They found that subgroups’ agendas reflected the overall group agenda, and that interpersonal connections played a role in the decision to join the community.

Conceptualizing and measuring influence in digital media has drawn from the distinction of the active audience on social networks. In their postings on Facebook and Twitter, people include links to news articles, blogs, photos, and videos, indicating they find them interesting or important enough to share with others. Meraz (2009, p. 683) used the hyperlink as “an external marker of source influence,” in a study of traditional media
influence on blogs, coding more than 3,700 URLs from top U.S. political blogs. The study concluded that “...traditional media's agenda setting power is no longer universal or singular within citizen media outlets: The independent blog platform is redistributing power between traditional media and citizen media” (Meraz, 2009, p. 701).

On Twitter, Leavitt et al. (2009, p. 5) define influence as “...the potential of an action of a user to initiate a further action by another user.” Markers of influence include a reply, which they argue takes place “...because a user is influenced to reply to the content...,” and a retweet, which occurs “...because a user is influenced to reproduce the content” (Leavitt et al., 2009, p. 7). Retweeting allows users to resend another’s message to their own network of followers. The percent of retweets documented in several studies have ranged in average from three percent (Zhang, Fuehres, & Gloor, 2009; boyd, Golder, & Lotan, 2010) to 19 percent (Tumasjan et al., 2010). More than half of American Twitter users retweet material posted by others (Smith & Rainie, 2010). And the retweeted message has great power to reach large audiences, as shown in an examination of 106 million tweets, which found that retweets reached an average of 1,000 users, regardless of the number of followers of the original tweet (Kwak et al., 2010). With its potential to disseminate news and other content to high numbers of Twitter users, the retweeted message could
prove a valuable measure of influence in the study of agenda setting in the social media environment.

**Research question & hypotheses**

This research tests agenda setting theory in a social media context, using a case study that centers on a missing person who was found murdered. It asks what role alternative information sources have in setting the agenda for this case on Twitter.

The study examined all tweets containing the search term ‘Morgan Harrington’ for the 48-hour period following the discovery of her body. (A discussion of the rationale for focusing on this targeted universe versus a random sample over time is discussed in the methods section.) While the agenda-setting setting tradition (McCombs, 2005b) would predict its continued role in a social media environment, more recent literature provides evidence for emerging alternate sources of influence (Sayre et al., 2010; Kwak et al., 2010).

Three hypotheses anticipate an agenda-setting influence of alternative sources over that of mainstream news outlets. This is intended to reflect the environment in which today’s public navigates news and information, with burgeoning social networks, new paths of information evolving, and the use of a variety of media (Kwak et al., 2010; Purcell et al., 2010). When grouping blogs, entertainment sites, and other content as alternative sources to traditional news outlets, this study anticipates finding evidence
for non-traditional source influence. These hypotheses are also in accordance with agenda melding, in which individuals use a variety of media to relate to others in an ongoing social process (Shaw et al., 1999; Ragas & Roberts, 2009).

For H1, influence on setting the public agenda is measured by the inclusion of links to news and information content in tweets about the Harrington discovery. The measure draws from Meraz, (2009), who used the hyperlink as an indication of source influence.

H1: A significantly higher number of tweets will link to alternative content than mainstream news media content about the Morgan Harrington case.

The remaining hypotheses explore interpersonal communication and the active audience in agenda setting on Twitter. They predict that Twitter users will spread content by retweeting messages to the networked audience. Retweeted messages have the potential to reach large audiences, and the majority of American Twitter users retweet (Smith & Rainie, 2010). The measure draws from Leavitt et al. (2010) who used the retweet as a marker of influence.

H2: A significantly higher number of retweeted messages about the Morgan Harrington case will come from alternative sources than from mainstream news sources.

And H3 combines the link with the retweeted message.
H3: A significantly higher number of retweeted messages about the Morgan Harrington case will contain links to alternative content than to mainstream news media content.

**Method**

This content analysis examined all messages (tweets) containing the words ‘Morgan Harrington’ posted on Twitter from 10:43 a.m., January 26, 2010 through 10:43 a.m., January 28, 2010. This 48-hour period begins with the first tweet related to the body’s discovery and spans two days to encompass the positive identification of the remains following forensic tests. The universe of messages for this analysis is concentrated on the 48 hours following the discovery of Harrington’s body; not for convenience, but because of the nature of this real-time, short-messaging medium and the operationalization of issue salience for this study. A traditional agenda-setting study would analyze a sample of media content over time and compare it to issues the public deems salient, which researchers determine from survey data. On Twitter, however, the salient issues and events are those on which the public is posting messages. Heavy messaging activity on Twitter is referred to as ‘trending’ ([Twitter, 2010b](http://twitter.com)). Hence, the Twitter messages on an event such as the discovery of Harrington’s body would be indicative of issue salience for the people who are posting those messages. The media and alternative content related to those issues could be tracked through links included in those Twitter postings. As Coleman et al. (2009, p.
153) point out, “Almost any topic you can think of can be studied from an agenda-setting perspective.” While a broader, longer-standing issue, such as healthcare, might be better studied through a random sampling of Twitter messages over time, a development in a missing person case—such as discovering Morgan Harrington’s body—would provide richer data through an entire universe of posted messages directly following the event.

Because tweets may be removed by Twitter at any time, the researcher saved them into Word documents for later coding. All hyperlinked content within the messages was preserved for analysis. The researcher collected 1,385 tweets and discarded 124 spam and trending tweets, yielding a total of 1,261 Twitter messages for full analysis. Twitter posts that contained strings of words in non-sentence form or noted “trending” in the text were identified as spam or trending and were excluded from analysis.

Two research assistants coded all the tweets after receiving individual training by the researcher. Intercoder reliability tests using ReCal (defreelon.org, 2008) yielded high Cohen’s Kappa values for all variables (see Table 1 for a list of variables and values). Coder training and subsequent data collection followed a pretest conducted by eight coders in an undergraduate research methods class. The pretest led to refinement of variable categories and clarification of coding instructions, which were implemented successfully in the full study.
Understanding the Twitter message format

Twitter messages—tweets—are limited to 140 characters. Members can write their own comments, link to content outside of Twitter by including a URL, send a retweet of someone else’s tweet, respond to another member’s tweet, or send any combination of the above. They can also send messages directly to other members, but those message types are excluded from this study. In addition to posting messages from inside the Twitter network, members can tweet content from other sites on the Web. For example, news websites, blogs, celebrity fan pages, and other online sites provide the means to tweet links to their content directly from their own sites.

Operationalizing variables

The first four variables were used in testing the hypotheses, while the last two provided further depth of analysis.

1) Includes a link – The message either does or does not include a URL that links to content outside Twitter.

2) Link to – This variable categorizes the link as:

   • Mainstream news: Content produced by a professional journalist that appears on an online news site connected with legacy news media--news organizations that existed before the advent of the Internet--e.g. newspapers, television, radio, and news magazines.
   • Alternative source: Content that is not mainstream news.

3) Retweet – The message either is or is not a retweet of another member’s message.
4) **Twitter member type** – This variable categorizes the person who sent each tweet as follows:

- *Citizen*
- *Mainstream news media*: Includes reporter, producer, editor, manager, etc.
- *Entertainment*: Entertainment magazines, TV shows, music radio, entertainment blogs, Metallica Web site, other heavy metal sites, etc.
- *Other website or blog*

5) **Tweet Focus** – This categorizes the text of each tweet, taken as a whole.

- *Body found*: References the discovery, but this is not the final ID.
- *Parents/family*: Father is Dan, mother is Gil.
- *Metallica*
- *Virginia Tech*
- *Killer*
- *Condolences*: RIP, sorry, prayers, etc.
- *Other*

**Results**

In this analysis of 1,261 tweets, three hypotheses predicted that alternative sources would set the agenda on Twitter following the discovery of Morgan Harrington’s body. As predicted, the data supported the alternative source hypotheses in agenda setting on Twitter. A Z-test of proportion for H1 found that 62 percent of links were to alternative content (Z=9.921; p=.000), and for H2 showed that 53 percent of retweeted messages came from alternative sources (Z=6.782; p=.000), versus 47 percent from mainstream news sources. For H3, a significantly greater
percent of retweeted messages linked to alternative content, with just 29 percent linking to mainstream news (Z=5.815; p=.000). Further breakdown of the retweeted messages showed that the greatest number linked to entertainment content (See Table 5).

Who posted the tweets analyzed in the study? Citizens and alternative media sources accounted for 82 percent of tweets (each tweeted about 41 percent of messages studied), while mainstream news media tweeted 18 percent. The text of the tweets was also analyzed, with the majority focusing on the discovery of the body or its official identification. Tweets also focused on condolences, Harrington’s parents/family, Metallica, Virginia Tech, and the killer. See Table 6 for a comparison of the text focus of: all tweets, tweets containing a link, and retweeted messages containing a link. Notable differences among these categories are discussed below.

Discussion

In an era of digital media, with myriad information sources, expanding social networks, and emerging technologies, do the mainstream media maintain their influence in setting the public’s agenda? Findings from this study of the Morgan Harrington missing-person case indicate an emerging role of alternative sources in agenda-setting on Twitter. Nearly four decades of research have built a body of support for the role of the press in setting the public’s agenda (McCombs, 2005a, b; Coleman et al., 2009). This study’s results indicate that role may be shifting. The research focused on
Twitter postings following the discovery of missing Virginia Tech student Morgan Harrington’s body. Hyperlinks to news and alternative sources of content as well as retweeted messages were used as measures of agenda-setting influence, as guided by previous studies (Meraz, 2009; Leavitt et al., 2009).

Support for three hypotheses offer evidence of alternative-source agenda setting on Twitter, adding to recent evidence of the emerging influence of social media sources (Sayre et al., 2010; Kwak et al., 2010).

This suggests that the agenda on Twitter for the Morgan Harrington case was being set by a combination of blogs, entertainment, and other types of non-news websites. When considering retweeted messages containing links, the retweets linked to entertainment significantly more often than to news or any other content.

What might explain this? A closer examination of the retweeted messages showed that they focused primarily on the band Metallica’s reaction to the discovery of Harrington’s remains, and generally linked to a statement on the group’s website. While traditional news media did report Metallica’s condolences, the greatest number of tweets cited entertainment sources instead. This finding shows that the Metallica content spread via Twitter users who received information from the network of sources they follow. The users then chose to disseminate that information to their groups of followers by retweeting. This can have widespread impact, as retweets
often flow outside of an individual’s group of followers to reach, on average, 1,000 Twitter users (Kwak et al., 2010). As Kwak et al. (2010) have demonstrated, news sometimes breaks first on Twitter, as may have been the case regarding the Metallica reaction to the Harrington discovery: “We are profoundly saddened by the news of the discovery of Morgan Dana Harrington's body.” (Metallica Death Magnetic, 2010).

The retweeted content in this study reflects Twitter’s active audience and suggests an interpersonal communication role in the agenda-setting process on Twitter. Users’ behavior appeared to model a hybrid version of the two-step flow of communication. But instead of the information flowing from mainstream media to opinion leaders, and from opinion leaders to followers (Lazarsfeld et al., 1948), the Twitter users who tweeted information received it from a combination of sources.

As for the content of the tweets, nearly three-fourths that linked to content outside Twitter focused on the discovery of Harrington’s body or its official identification, and less than 20 percent centered on condolences or the family. This was much different from the retweets, in which about half focused on the body, and more than one-third centered on sympathy or the family. Perhaps the more personal, sentiment-related retweets about Harrington can be explained by Marwick & boyd’s (2010, p. 16) networked audience model, in which users communicate to an audience that is
“potentially public and personal,” and has a “presumption of personal authenticity.”

Users who retweeted the Metallica condolences may have felt a connection to the band, other fans, and Harrington, sending out to a networked audience the message that perhaps resonated with their own feelings. Future studies could further explore the role of interpersonal communication and Twitter’s networked audience in agenda setting.

Because the traditional news media do not exist in a vacuum, but rather share the instant media sphere with a range of source types, it is important to recognize the agenda-setting potential of those non-news sources. Many factors may have contributed to salience in the Morgan Harrington case, including her identity as a Virginia Tech student, Metallica fan, and attractive blonde 20-year-old woman; the missing-person element; the University of Virginia concert venue; and others (Berrier, 2009). Sources of information related to any or all of these factors may have stimulated Twitter users’ interest in this event. As Shaw et al. point out, “The mass media, while important, are only one of the many significant media, including people, through which we find comfortable social or public agendas with which to meld” (Shaw et al., 1999, p. 3).

The present study focused on links and retweets as indicators of agenda setting on Twitter. Future studies might explore the source of influence for tweets that do not include links or those that are not retweets.
Developing methods to measure Twitter influence among those who don’t tweet, yet may be influenced by other tweets, is another challenge that may be addressed in the future. And finally, subsequent studies might explore agenda setting on Twitter for broader national or international issues or track the process in social media over time.
### TABLE 1
**Intercoder Reliability Results**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Cohen's Kappa</th>
<th>N Cases</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Link</td>
<td>.969</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Link to</td>
<td>.902</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RT</td>
<td>.981</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member Type</td>
<td>.902</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tweet Focus</td>
<td>.864</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### TABLE 2
**H1, Links in Tweets, Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z Test**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mainstream news</th>
<th>Alternative content</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N=607, Z=9.921, Std. Deviation=.48593, Asymp. Sig.=.000</td>
<td>.3806</td>
<td>.6194</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 3
**H2, Retweeted Messages, Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z Test**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mainstream news</th>
<th>Alternative content</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N=363, Z=6.782, Std. Deviation=.49985, Asymp. Sig.=.000</td>
<td>.4711</td>
<td>.5289</td>
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</table>

### TABLE 4
**H3, Retweeted Messages Containing Links, Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z Test**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mainstream news</th>
<th>Alternative content</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N=170, Z=5.815, Std. Deviation=.45699, Asymp. Sig.=.000</td>
<td>.2041</td>
<td>.7959</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 5
**Chi-Square Test, Links in Retweeted Messages**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retweet Links to</th>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Expected N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mainstream news</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>32.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>32.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Find Morgan website</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>32.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blog (not mainstream news or entertainment)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>32.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>32.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi-Square=110.634, df=4, Asymp. Sig.=.000
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text focused on</th>
<th>All tweets</th>
<th>Links only</th>
<th>Retweets</th>
<th>Retweet w/link</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Body found</td>
<td>38.7</td>
<td>46.8</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>24.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official identification</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>29.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents, family</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metallica</td>
<td>.9</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia Tech</td>
<td>.8</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Killer</td>
<td>.3</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condolences</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>33.1</td>
<td>34.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.7</td>
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</table>
References


