

① The general consensus among most journalists is that six core elements: timeliness, proximity, prominence, consequence, human interest, and economics characterize an event as newsworthy. This paper analyzes the newsworthiness of articles from the *Chicago Sun Times* dated September 22, 2016 and the October 2016 edition of *Discover* magazine.

② The first criterion of newsworthiness is timeliness. Some articles from the *Chicago Sun Times* and *Discover* magazine that show timeliness are “Tent City’s Tenuous Position,” “Price to Pay,” “Current CTU Vote on Strike not Private,” “A Faster Way to 3-D Printed Organs,” “A Mind in Time,” “What it Takes to Reach 100,” and “Tensions Explode in Charlotte.” These articles present recent information, making them timely.

③ One great example of timeliness is “Tent City’s Tenuous Position.” In the article, the city’s commissioner of Family and Support Services visited Margate Park on Wednesday, September 21, to give the homeless residents a progress report on their future. This was reported the next day in the *Chicago Sun Times* on September 22. The article also mentioned that the city intended to re-evaluate the tents after October 14, which provided a deadline for the residents to plan ahead. Another line in the article that indicates timeliness is, “The city is going to subject them to weekly cleanings for the next six weeks and will then decide whether the tents can stay.” A second article about 3-D printed organs and their evolution in the medical field shows progression in printing 3-D printed organs from 2001 to 2015. That’s as timely as medical research can get. Timeliness is also depicted in the article about the CTU (Chicago Teacher’s Union) vote on setting a strike date at the next delegates’ meeting scheduled for October 5, underscoring the importance of current relevant updates on an issue that affects many people in the city.

④ In comparing the element of timeliness between the articles in the *Chicago Sun Times* and *Discover* magazine, it is clear that newspaper articles relate to day-to-day, current timeframes, and hence reported stories relevant to that particular day reflecting events that actually occurred the previous day. In a newspaper, the news is only new for that day, unlike in a magazine where the information in most cases, is timeless and relevant for months and years to come or until something newer is discovered in that field. In general, magazine articles have a longer shelf life because the articles deal with research that has been conducted over a period of time and not just the day before, as in newspaper articles.

⑤ The second criterion of newsworthiness is proximity. The closer the story to home, the more newsworthy it is. However, the value of news proximity is more than just physical distance. Articles in the *Chicago Sun Times* and *Discover* magazine that depict proximity are, "Patients Detail Doc's Alleged Sex Assaults," "\$50,000 Bail Set for Priest Facing Child Porn Charges," "Broken Arrow," "Asteroids Strike Anywhere, Anytime," "20 Things You Didn't Know About Bats," "Destination- Ignorosphere," and "The Lure of Landfill." Proximity is highlighted in these articles because of the location and the effect it has on people.

⑥ An article "Patients detailing doctor's alleged sex assaults" from The *Chicago Sun Times*, is a great example of both geographical and psychological proximity because it involves a case of a local doctor from Rockford, Illinois who allegedly sexually assaulted patients' during house calls. Another article from the *Chicago Sun Times* that depicts both geographic and psychological proximity "\$50,000 bail set for priest facing child porn charges" involves a Chicago priest accused of possession of child pornography. The idea of local proximity is clear because the case involves a local Catholic priest charged with child pornography, which has a major psychological impact on parents and the community at large. The article, "Asteroids Strike

Anywhere, Anytime,” from *Discover* magazine, is also an example of both local and psychological proximity because asteroid attacks are real and can happen anywhere on Earth and at anytime without warning. Although stories that happen nearby are more significant, proximity does not have to mean geographical distance. Asteroids not only create a sense of curiosity but also a fear of the unknown and that psychologically impacts people around the world.

7 The very name of the newspaper *Chicago Sun Times* epitomizes geographic proximity because it is a local newspaper and mostly covers local news. On the other hand, *Discover* magazine represents more psychological proximity because of the content in the articles that covers research in various fields creating a great psychological impact on its readers. Analyzing the value of proximity in the articles from the newspaper reflected to the textbook definition “News happens close by.” When comparing the proximity aspect of newsworthiness between a daily newspaper and a monthly magazine, it is easy to see the difference and scope of impact. The daily newspaper shows both geographical and psychological proximity whereas the monthly magazine mostly shows psychological proximity. In some cases, news that may not happen close by, can psychologically impact people because of a particular bond or similarity in life experiences. *Discover* magazine addresses research that can affect many people not just in the present but also the future. Proximity makes a story newsworthy because it creates a culture of awareness that affects people geographically or psychologically.

8 The third value of newsworthiness is prominence, which deals with a person at the center of the story. It also has to do with that person as either famous or infamous. All media outlets survive on ratings, thus using prominence to enhance their coverage. Some of the *Chicago Sun Times* articles that exhibit prominence are “Price to Pay,” “Whole New Ball Game,” “Pence Plays Politics with Innocent Man’s Pardon,” and “Clinton Prepares for Debate like Reality Show

Showdown.” Prominence was well depicted in the *Discover* magazine in articles such as “A Mind in Time,” “Fighting Cancer with Data,” and “A Profile of the Plague.”

9 The *Chicago Sun Times* article “Price to Pay” reflects the value of prominence because it is in reference to Mayor Emanuel’s plan to find \$133.8 million to pay for 970 new police officers in the city of Chicago, despite a significant deficit in the budget. The mayor, being a political figure plays a prominent role in Chicago’s politics and is closely scrutinized by the public. A “Whole New Ball Game,” also from the *Chicago Sun Times* deals with the Ricketts family and their donation to the GOP nominee Trump in his campaign to win the presidency. The Ricketts family owns the Chicago Cubs and is among Chicago’s elite, which makes any article about them newsworthy. In the *Discover* magazine article “A Mind in Time,” prominent neuroscientist Russell Poldrack undergoes 104 MRI scans over an 18-month period, at the University of Texas to measure the activity throughout his brain’s neural networks to study brain changes. Similarly, the article “Fighting Cancer with Data,” also from *Discover* magazine, is about former Intel executive and cancer survivor Eric Dishman, who had his cancerous tissue sequenced to devise a treatment strategy for the successful treatment of cancer.

10 Analyzing the element of prominence in the *Chicago Sun Times* and the *Discover* magazine articles clearly shows the difference between locally known famous people, and those who are famous on a much larger scale in the scientific community. In the *Chicago Sun Times* articles, prominent people are well known in the communities in and around Chicago. On the other hand, the articles in the *Discover* magazine dealt with prominent scientists who are well known in their field, and whose contributions go beyond a city in the United States. Prominent people mentioned in the *Chicago Sun Times* are mostly known locally, while the people mentioned in the *Discover* magazine articles are known to the much larger scientific community.

11 Consequence is the fourth value of newsworthiness and covers issues that affect people in their daily lives. It includes anything ranging from the flu epidemic to something bizarre and sensational. Several articles in the *Chicago Sun Times* epitomized the value of consequence particularly in articles such as “King: Protests will Resonate,” “Kerry wants aircraft over Syria grounded,” and “CPS says students safer now than 5 years ago.” Some articles from *Discover* magazine that reflected consequence include “Weapons of Math Destruction,” “Your Attention Please,” “Think Outside the Brain,” and “A Mind in Time.”

12 In the *Chicago Sun Times* article, “King: Protests will Resonate,” tennis icon Billie Jean King applauds athletes’ activism for taking on the race issue that affects millions of people in this country. This article bears consequence because it affects the lives of many people dealing with racial inequality and discrimination. Another article in the *Chicago Sun Times* that shows consequence is “Kerry wants aircraft over Syria grounded.” In this article, Secretary of State John Kerry informs the U.N. Security Council that stopping flights over Syria would give a chance for humanitarian assistance to flow unimpeded, clearly bringing the refugee situation in Syria to the forefront, which impacts neighboring countries in the Middle East. The *Discover* magazine article, “Weapons of math destruction,” emphasizes consequence by educating the public about the importance of credit scores, which determines the kind of life a person can have. The article clearly indicates that the consequences of not having good credit can be devastating.

13 On analysis, the element of consequence is well laid out in both the newspaper articles and the magazine articles, giving readers the freedom to choose their path based on their life situations. Comparing the element of consequence in the articles from the *Chicago Sun Times* and *Discover* magazine clearly shows the difference in the time factor. The *Chicago Sun Times* articles use present information to show consequence while *Discover* magazine articles use

present information to show future or long term consequences. When celebrities become a face for an issue, that issue becomes more consequential.

14 Another criterion of newsworthiness is human interest. This aspect involves stories that arouse different forms of emotion that ordinary people can identify. Human interest in stories appeals to emotion and evokes responses such as happiness or sadness. Of the articles in the *Chicago Sun Times*, the ones that stood out promoting human interest are, ““2 Kill Each Other in Shootout,” “Little Village Popsicle Vendor in Online Photo gets Big Donation,” and “Man in Michigan calls 911, says he just Killed his Family.” The *Discover* magazine articles that sparked human interest included “The Lure of the Landfill,” “Think Outside the Brain,” and “To Catch a Shooting Star.”

15 Human interest peaks whenever gun violence erupts and the article “2 kill each other in shootout,” adds frustration to the epidemic of gun violence in Chicago. Gun violence has affected numerous families in Chicago, so any story on the news about gun violence arouses strong emotions of anger and frustration in people around the city. On a positive note, the article “Little Village popsicle vendor in online photo gets big donation,” is an example of the kindness of some people towards a Popsicle vendor, which pulls at a person’s heartstrings and emotions. “The lure of the landfill,” from *Discover* magazine addresses the issue that inhibits bird migration because of garbage sites in countries like Portugal, thereby shifting their migration patterns because of human behavior. The element of human interest in this article lies in the fact that human beings are interacting with the environment to disrupt migration patterns of birds, which experts believe is detrimental to their existence.

16 Analyzing the level of human interest in the articles from both the newspaper and the magazine are similar in that these stories are special because they often disregard some of the main rules of newsworthiness. For example, issues such as violence and discrimination bring out raw emotions in people who identify with those issues. On the other hand, a feel good article that may or may not affect a large audience still has a significant impact, no matter where in the world it takes place. Stories that spark human interest bring out the best and worst in people depending on a person's core values.

17 In addition to the five traditional values of newsworthiness, economics plays a significant role. Articles that exemplify economics in the *Chicago Sun Times* include "Frazier: We're all Frustrated with the Situation," "Best to be Safe than Sorry," and "Cutler's Gripping Drama." Economics is also depicted in *Discover* magazine in the following articles: "What it Takes to Reach 100," "A Mind in Time," "Think Outside the Brain," and "Drilling to Doomsday."

18 In the article about Todd Frazier in the *Chicago Sun Times*, the newspaper is being economical by using more space for the picture of Todd Frazier from Getty images, and less space on the printed text. Another article relating to economics, "Best to be safe than sorry" uses a picture of Adam Jones from the Associated Press in the middle of the article that occupies less space than the headline itself, thereby cutting costs. An article "What it takes to reach 100," from *Discover* magazine, uses pictures from university archives which are less expensive to obtain and publish.

19 The *Chicago Sun Times* in general does an amazing job catering to its target audience—people who want to be in the know of local news and events and of course, the sports pages for the sports junkies! On evaluation of the articles used in the essay from both the *Chicago Sun*

*Times* and *Discover* magazine, it was surprising that some articles did not exactly fit into the “News” either because of their lack of newsworthiness or misleading titles. For example, in the *Chicago Sun Times*, “Dysfunction- a Contagious Disease in D. C.” gave me the impression that the article was about the dysfunction in the government, not about a sports team that the article was really about. The magazine articles were different in that they were more detailed and evidence-based. Most articles in the *Discover* magazine were informative and research-based regarding medical breakthroughs and environmental concerns. It certainly catered more to people interested or involved in science and technology, and in many ways had a specific target audience; not the regular everyday person, who just needed to check the headlines, weather and traffic!