

Chapter 1: Introduction

The foundation of this Senior Project is to analyze the various mediums of entertainment news and how their content is perceived to the target demographic of men and women between the ages of 18 and 24 on the Central Coast.

In today's fast-paced society, the latest celebrity gossip can be absorbed instantaneously through television programs, online blogs, tabloid magazines and mobile phone apps. This twenty-four hour a day coverage provides a multitude of audiences with a momentary escape from the pressures and problems of daily-life. "No one wants to go to work tomorrow and talk about global warming and how many people were killed in Iraq – it's just too depressing. So they end up turning to the world we cover as hard news. I'm not sure that it's great news for our society, but I do think it's true, especially for our younger viewers."¹

The research for this Senior Project demonstrates that the effective use of multimedia is an important technique to better fulfill the desires of today's young adults. The main demographic of entertainment news mediums has expanded to include "millennials," which are defined as the generation "born between 1980 and 2000, they're a generation nearly as large as the Baby Boomers."² These millennials are "civic-minded

¹ Becker, Anne. "Ted Harbert on Celebrity News." *Broadcasting & Cable* 137.8 (2007): 3-8. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 4 Apr. 2011.i

² Raines, C. "Managing Millennials." *Generations at Work*. (2002): *Google Scholar*. Web. 5 Apr. 2011.

team players with an affinity for technology. They're suspicious of commercial messages and tend to rely more on the recommendations of friends and social networking sites.”³

The ‘need-it-now’ persona of the coveted 18-24-age audience is causing the world of entertainment news to rethink their strategies and marketing techniques. “It is no longer enough to produce a nightly newscast of the day’s celebrity sightings.”⁴

Mary Hart, the host of *Entertainment Tonight* for the past 25 years, explains,

You have to take into consideration the whole picture of television today and how diluted the audience is because of the multitude of choices. It’s not a matter of picking between three networks like when we first went on air. It’s a matter of having access to cable and satellite and everything out there. So everybody has to draw attention to themselves as best they can.⁵

California Polytechnic State University student Leanne Aguilera composed a thirty minute entertainment news show, “SLO it Down,” to be used as a learning tool for how to capture the attention of local Central Coast residents between the ages of 18 and 24. Aguilera created 18 distinct and compelling stories that not only touch upon the lives of today’s elite celebrities, but also included exclusive features on some of San Luis Obispo’s most intriguing musicians, events and locations. Aguilera says, “The goal is to

³ Lavin, K. “Marketing Matters: how to engage millennials”. *All Business*. (2009). *Google Scholar*. Web. 5 Apr. 2011.

⁴ Benson, Jim. “New Approach to Celebrity News.” *Broadcast & Cable* 137.4 (2007): 5-14. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 4 Apr. 2011.

⁵ Hendrickson, Paula. “To the Hart of the matter.” *Broadcasting & Cable* 135.37 (2005): A4. *Communications & Mass Media Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 4 Apr. 2011.

lure audiences in with the latest highlights from Hollywood, and keep their attention by showcasing some of SLO's best kept secrets.”

However, in today's technology driven society, “more millennials say they can live without the television than the computer. Many prefer chatting on line to talking on the phone.”⁶ To keep up with the demands of today's youth, Aguilera also created a correlating entertainment news blog that can easily be accessed through computers, as well as mobile devices. New York Time's Reporter Bob Tedeschi says, “In Marx's view, religion was the opiate of the masses. Now the drug is celebrity news, and cellphones are well on their way to becoming the world's biggest pushers.”⁷

Aguilera analyzed four of the most popular entertainment news mediums: Entertainment Tonight, E! Entertainment Television, TMZ, and PerezHilton.com to draw information about what factors are needed to create a successful show and blog. To compare the two entertainment mediums, Aguilera created a simple survey, via the website surveymonkey.com, and used the social networking site Facebook to promote the comparison to over 300 college students at California Polytechnic State University.

Although the entertainment blog appeals to the technological side of the targeted demographic and provides on-the-go information⁸, Aguilera anticipates the favored medium to be the televised half-hour newscast.

⁶ *Ibid* Raines

⁷ Tedeschi, Bob. “For the Latest on Lindsey or Brad, Magazines Bow to the Phone.” *New York Times*. (2010): 8-7. Web. 6 Apr. 2011.

⁸ Albiniaak, Paige. “TMZ' Stays in the News.” *Broadcasting & Cable* 137.47 (2007): *Communications & Mass Media*. EBSCO. Web. 4 Apr. 2011.

Aguilera explains,

I feel like even though the audience may not have the time to watch the entire newscast, they will appreciate the production value and all of the little details that went into the show. To me the blog will be considered like a helpful little sister: great if you want to get your information quickly and comically, but not enough if you want to understand the whole story.

Regardless of the preferred vehicle, it is clear that the entertainment news industry as a whole will not be disappearing anytime soon. Celebrity Blogger Perez Hilton writes, “I think being fascinated by others is just who we are; we’re curious creatures. Hollywood is a lot like high school. Everyone was interested in what the head cheerleader was doing and what the captain of the football team was doing and if they were dating.”⁹

⁹ Hilton, Perez. “10 Questions.” *Time* 173.22 (2009): 6. *Academic Search Elite*. EBSCO. Web. 6 Apr. 2011

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

The One That Started it All

Today, when flipping through the seemingly never-ending list of channels, chances are very high that one may come across a program, or even an entire network, devoted to the world of A-list celebrities. However, prior to the year 1982, this was not the case. In 1981, Founder and then-President of the firm TeleRep wrote a memo to Mel Harris of Paramount Domestic TV suggesting the idea for a daily entertainment show. After months of development, the half-hour series *Entertainment Tonight* premiered in syndication.¹⁰

Being the first of its kind, *Entertainment Tonight* “had to prove itself in front of the camera” and avoid the temptation to become a show centered on rumors and hearsay.¹¹ “It was the first weekday syndicated show devoted solely to entertainment news when it began, and has remained at the top of the ratings as similar shows came along.”¹² In 2006, the show was inducted into the Broadcasting and Cable Hall of Fame, only the third TV series to do so.¹³

Over a quarter century, *Entertainment Tonight* has earned an estimated 1 billion dollars, due at least in part to the show being consistently among the top ten syndicated programs each year.¹⁴ According to the Nielsen Television Measurement, *Entertainment*

¹⁰ Edelstein, Robert, and Jim Benson. “Entertainment Tonight.” *Broadcasting & Cable* 136. (2006): 30-34. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 5 Apr. 2011.

¹¹ *ibid* Edelstein

¹² Bauder, David. “Mary Hart farewells ET.” *The Gold Coast Bulletin*. (2011): *ProQuest Newsstand, ProQuest*. Web. 6 Apr. 2011.

¹³ *ibid* Edelstein

¹⁴ *ibid* Edelstein

Tonight is currently ranked No. 1 of the ‘top ten television shows covering gossip and entertainment news.’¹⁵ However, according to Alexa, an information company that monitors the preferences of Internet users, the show’s website ‘ETonline’ is ranked as the 3,699th website in the United States.¹⁶

Entertainment Tonight’s core audience is women between the ages of 25- 54 and currently ranks No. 1 in that particular demographic.¹⁷ Paramount Domestic TV Vice President John Goldhammer says, “ET changed the face of how the news business covers entertainment. It altered the entire perception. There is more than enough news to cover, and no one would ever think to ask that question now.”¹⁸

The Celebrity Creator

Following the success of *Entertainment Tonight*, the network *E! Entertainment Television* was created in June, 1990 to provide audiences with all-day coverage of celebrities, rather than a thirty-minute time slot, five days a week.¹⁹ For most of the first fifteen years, “the entertainment channel was heavily invested in news and documentary programming about celebrities, but had very few names it could call it’s own, until ‘American Idol’ host Ryan Seacrest joined ‘E! News’ in 2006.”²⁰

Today, *E! Entertainment Television* operates a cable-TV network reaching approximately 97 million US homes with a mix of celebrity gossip, entertainment news,

¹⁵ Nielsen. “Top 10 Entertainment Programs.” 2011. Web. 14 Apr. 2011.

¹⁶ Alexa: The Web Information Company. “Entertainment Tonight.” 2011. Web. 15 Apr. 2011.

¹⁷ *ibid* Nielsen.

¹⁸ *ibid* Edelstein.

¹⁹ *ibid* Becker.

²⁰ Hampp, Andrew. “E! True Hollywood Story: Superfan to Superstar.” *Advertising Age* 18.21 (2010): 19. *Academic Search Elite*. EBSCO. Web. 22 Apr. 2011.

and reality-based programming.²¹ The integration of reality television stars to their entertainment news coverage has created a successful formula that now has prime-time E! stars sharing the headlines and tabloid covers with the same celebs covered by 'E! News' and 'E! Online.' From August 2009 to January 2010, E!'s reality show talent graced 55 magazines.²²

This strategy was solidified in 2009, E!'s highest-rated year, with the addition of the 'Kardashians' spin-off, 'Kourtney and Khloe Take Miami,' and the 'Girls Next-Door' spin-off 'Kendra.' "As the shows tracked the celebs' respective engagements, weddings and babies, the network saw record-breaking ratings."²³ In fact, an average of more than 4 million viewers tune onto new episodes of 'Keeping Up with the Kardashians' each week, making it one of the top ten highest-rated original television series on cable.²⁴

Ted Harbert, President/CEO of Comcast Entertainment Group describes E! Entertainment as being a "polished" brand.

It was important that we expand the brand to some small degree so that we encompass not just Hollywood, but pop culture. We tell the world we report on pop culture through 'E! News,' we celebrate pop culture through our specials, we make fun of it through Joel McHale and Chelsea Handler, and we also create pop culture, which is a very audacious thing to say. But

²¹ Hoovers. "E! Entertainment Television." 2011. Web. 22 Apr. 2011.

²² *ibid* Hampp.

²³ *ibid* Hampp.

²⁴ *ibid* Hampp.

the Kardashians and Kendra [Wilkinson] is pop culture. These are the things people are talking about at the water cooler.²⁵

Although 'E! News' is currently ranked No. 7 in the Nielson Television Measurement list²⁶, their 'E! Online' iPhone app has 4.5 out of 5 stars with over 33,000 ratings.²⁷ "The app allows you to create a personalized news page for various stars, and a 'Talk Box' where you can submit video comments about the news of the day."²⁸ According to the Alexa, 'E! Online' is ranked as the 363rd most visited website in the United States and visitors spend approximately four minutes per visit to the site.²⁹

E! Entertainment Television boasts that they not only report on the celebrity community, they're apart of it.³⁰ Harbert explains, "Frankly we are the only network that covers this world all the time. I'm just as surprised as anyone at the continued growth in the category and the growing public interest to the world we cover."³¹

The Jack-of-All-Trades

When many Americans do not have the time or patience to spend thirty minutes to get their celebrity fix, they turn to entertainment websites like TMZ.com to get their fill throughout the day. TMZ was launched in November of 2005 as a collaboration between AOL and Telepictures Productions, a division of Warner Bros. The TMZ site features

²⁵ *ibid* Hampp.

²⁶ *ibid* Nielsen.

²⁷ iTunes App Directory. "E! Online." (2011). Web. 16 Apr. 2011.

²⁸ *ibid* Tedeschi.

²⁹ Alexa: The Web Information Company. "E! Online." 2011. Web. 15 Apr. 2011.

³⁰ *ibid* Becker.

³¹ *ibid* Hampp.

constant updates of pictures and videos of breaking entertainment news and celebrities being caught off-guard.³²

In September of 2007, a companion thirty-minute TV series debuted on FOX named *TMZ on TV*. The goal was to attract the same demos that have made TMZ.com a top entertainment-news site by focusing on the lifestyle of celebrities, rather than the red-carpet premieres.³³ Warner Bros. Domestic Television President Ken Werner says, “We tell stories from a different point of view, we don’t cover the Oscars; we cover the parties after the parties after the Oscars.”³⁴

Of the stations that decided to syndicate the program, they have seen significant boosts in their viewership.³⁵ Currently, *TMZ on TV* is ranked No. 4 in the entertainment news category of the Nielsen Television Measurement and is the highest-rated among men ages 18-34.³⁶ Harvey Levin, TMZ’s creator and executive producer says, “I think TMZ is different, fun and irreverent. There’s a variety in this show and elements that appeal to men particularly. We aren’t producing for men or women; we are producing an entertainment show with some breadth to it.”³⁷

Stations also seem particularly happy with TMZ’s online element, which links site visitors to TMZ stories without taking them off the stations website.³⁸ According to Alexa, TMZ.com is currently ranked as the 87th most popular website in the United States. The majority of the website’s viewers are “moderately educated, childless women,

³² *ibid* Benson.

³³ *ibid* Benson.

³⁴ Grossman, Ben. “TMZ’ Good News for Stations.” *Broadcasting & Cable* 137.10 (2007): 9. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 22 Apr. 2011.

³⁵ *ibid* Albiniak.

³⁶ *ibid* Nielsen.

³⁷ *ibid* Albiniak.

³⁸ *ibid* Albiniak.

earning over \$60,000 and browsing from work.”³⁹ Werner says TMZ is “an integrated, multiplatform content and marketing play that combines the strengths of stations with the Internet.”⁴⁰

The Tabloid Tattle-Tale

Entertainment pioneer Perez Hilton, born with the name Mario Armando Lavandeira, Jr., created one of the first wildly popular celebrity blogs, while posting from a Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf back in 2004.⁴¹ Since the launch of PerezHilton.com, the website has continuously been one of the top 500 websites in the United States and garners over 300 million site-hits a month.⁴² Known for posting tabloid pictures in which he adds his own captions and doodles, Perez Hilton has gained negative attention for the site’s “snarky” attitude, its active “outing” of alleged closeted celebrities.⁴³

However, the self-proclaimed “Queen of All Media,” explains,

I’m all about equality. Why should I treat a gay celebrity keeping a secret different from a heterosexual celebrity keeping a secret? I shouldn’t. I’m not impartial. Nor do I pretend to be. I think my readers like the fact that I have opinions and strong ones. I never set out to become friends with celebrities. The ones that I am friends with know what I do for a living.

³⁹ Alexa: The Web Information Company. “TMZ.com.” 2011. Web. 15 Apr. 2011.

⁴⁰ *ibid* Benson.

⁴¹ Martinez, Kiko. “The Guru of Gossip.” *Hispanic* 22.7 (2009). 42-46 *Academic Search Elite*. EBSCO. 22 Apr. 2011.

⁴² PerezHilton.com. “Facts about Perez.” 2011. Web. Apr. 22 2011.

⁴³ *ibid* Martinez.

Also, I'm not friends with the ones that are continuously going to rehab or getting arrested.⁴⁴

Hilton was named Forbes' No. 1 "Web Celeb" for 2007, 2008, and 2009 and he says his "no holding-back" approach, as well as his clever and humorous writing, have helped change the way people consume celebrity news.⁴⁵ A leader in posting news first, Forbes timed PerezHilton.com uploads and reported that a new post appears approximately every 12.5 minutes.⁴⁶ Hilton says, "I won't just put anything up. I take what I do very seriously. I push buttons, and say things that offend people, but I also want to make sure that I'm not perpetuating lies."⁴⁷

A trademark of the site is its insistence on involving the audience; at the end of every post Hilton asks what his fans think of the story. This has been considered a "great way to generate instant feedback on each story, [and] the question also serves as a model for direct intercommunication between a medium and its audience"⁴⁸ This connection exemplifies a trend that many entertainment programs are trying to create: a break down of the wall between media makers and media users.

⁴⁴ *ibid* Hilton.

⁴⁵ Hutson, M. "Gossip Monger." *Psychology Today* (2009): ABI/INFORM Global. Web. 23 Apr. 2011.

⁴⁶ *ibid* Martinez.

⁴⁷ *ibid* Hilton.

⁴⁸ *ibid* Martinez.

According to Alexa, PerezHilton.com, also referred to as “Hollywood’s Most-Hated Website,”⁴⁹ is currently ranked as the 274th website in the United States and 163rd in the city of Los Angeles. The majority of the site’s visitors are considered to be childless, moderately educated, high-income women under the age of 35.⁵⁰ Although Perez Hilton does not have a mobile app, the website can still be accessed through the phone’s Internet browser in a format that some say is better than single-source apps.⁵¹

⁴⁹ *ibid* Martinez.

⁵⁰ Alexa: The Web Information Company. “PerezHilton.com.” 2011. Web. 15 Apr. 2011.

⁵¹ *ibid* Tedeschi.

Chapter 3: Methodology

There were a multitude of methodologies used in this Senior Project to obtain the desired outcome: which entertainment news medium is best suited for the younger residents in the San Luis Obispo Community. Beginning with the research, Aguilera combed through countless databases and websites that were provided through the Cal Poly Robert E. Kennedy Library services. Aguilera also met with CLA Reference Librarian Brett Bodemer, who provided access to the websites that were most beneficial in obtaining television and Internet data, such as Nielson Television Measurement and Alexa.

Once the literature review was complete, Aguilera began to focus on which central coast stories would be the most compelling to include in the entertainment mediums. The Cal Poly ASI Activities Calendar and social-networking site Facebook, provided Aguilera with the most information on upcoming local events and performances.

After deciding on the events that would be the most interesting and visually simulating, Aguilera utilized handheld HD cameras and tripods from the Cal Poly Television studio to record the stories. For the national celebrity stories that were impossible to drive to, Aguilera used Cal Poly access to CNN Newsource, a website that allows pre-selected access to CNN's immense video coverage. Aguilera used the four previously stated entertainment mediums to obtain the information on celebrity news and cross referenced each of the stories to obtain the most details and facts. To create stories

that were more pleasing to the eyes of the audience, Aguilera also used various pictures of the featured celebrities to give her stories more dimension and variation.

Aguilera also used the green screen located in the Cal Poly Television studio to give her the freedom of creating a one of a kind backdrop. Deciding it would be the most convenient option, Aguilera purchased the program 'Final Cut: Express' to piece together the various elements of the entertainment show from on her own computer and the program 'LiveType' to create the graphics. Aguilera spent an estimated 65+ hours on writing, filming, voice tracking and editing the thirty minute show "SLO it Down."

To create a customizable blog, Aguilera used the website Blogger.com as a cost-free alternative which allowed Aguilera to personalize everything on the site as well as the URL 'SLOitDown.blogger.com' Aguilera used the stories and images from the show as the main content of the blog, but rewrote many of the stories to be more comprehensive and verbally amusing.

To obtain feedback as to which medium would be most preferred, Aguilera used 'surveymonkey.com' to create a brief electronic survey that only takes seconds to respond to. Aguilera then created a Facebook "event" inviting her "friends" to take part in a survey that would help determine the results of her Senior Project. When the participation in the survey seemed to be slowing, Aguilera also prompted students through text messages and personal phone calls. The participants in the survey had exactly one week from May 27, 2011 to June 3, 2011 to respond to the survey with the preferred method and any comments he or she wished to share.

Chapter 4: Discussion

The review of literature for this Senior Project creates an almost overwhelming source of information on what works best in today's quest for celebrity coverage. The four entertainment news mediums that were analyzed each encompass a different technique on achieving success. Aguilera attempted to use the best attributes from each of the four vehicles in order to produce pieces that could be deemed exemplary.

Aguilera aimed to capture the level of professionalism that she believes *Entertainment Tonight* conveys in each night's newscast. *Entertainment Tonight* describes their show as "being first, being accurate, having fun, keeping the balance, going that extra mile, and bringing it all back home just in time."⁵² The short on-camera leads at the beginning and end of each story, feature a conservatively dressed Aguilera commenting on the content with subtle humor and poise. Along with being composed, Aguilera hoped to express a sense of warmth and sincerity that allowed the audience to connect with her on a level that is not limited to a mere host/viewer relationship. 'E! News' Host Guiliana Rancick says, "When I meet the people who watch me everyday, I feel like I'm meeting old friends. They feel like they already know me on such a personal level that it's nice to know that the TV screen is not acting like a barrier."⁵³

TMZ on TV is often described as a high-energy and fast-paced show that features the latest breaking celebrity news. "In 2009 TMZ was the first to report that pop star Michael Jackson died, and was also aggressive in its coverage of the Tiger Woods

⁵² *ibid* Edelstein

⁵³ *ibid* Becker

scandal that year.”⁵⁴ Aguilera modeled “SLO it Down” after TMZ’s ‘get it first’ approach by covering a celebrity story that no other entertainment news medium has yet to report on, giving her show a breaking news edge, which when combined with the Central Coast coverage, sets it apart from all others. Along with their dedicated reporting, *TMZ on TV* also compliments their stories with the latest music, creating an upbeat and invigorating theme that lasts through the entire show.⁵⁵ “SLO it Down” also features music that correlates with the content of the story; for example, Kirstie Alley lost 38 inches from her waste on “Dancing with the Stars,” so Aguilera chose the song “Shake it” by Metro Station to provide an cheerful tone that ties nicely with the story.

Although TMZ as a brand continues to thrive in both the television and Internet worlds, Aguilera did not want to “SLO it Down” to have a similarly tarnished reputation. When talking about TMZ, E!’s Ted Harbert said, “Let’s be honest, those guys say things and post things and put things on that we’re not necessarily comfortable doing. But I understand how our young audience is compelled by that kind of video.”⁵⁶ Currently, today TMZ is reporting that Hayden Panettiere is dating Jets Quarterback Mark Sanchez and supporting their claims with one hundred percent certainty. While those who have watched and read “SLO it Down” know that their claims are false, the majority of the country is being exposed to the wrong information. Aguilera was meticulous about triple checking the facts of her stories and staying tasteful about the details she included.

Modeled after the sets of *Entertainment Tonight* and “E! News”, the background for the show “SLO it Down” features a mock-plasma screen television that was

⁵⁴ *ibid* Hoovers

⁵⁵ *ibid* Grossman

⁵⁶ *ibid* Becker

individually edited for each of the 18 stories that were reported. “ET’s set, designed by Emmy-award winner set designer Steve Bass, is backed by four 103-inch and thirteen 60-inch Panasonic plasma screen.”⁵⁷ Dan Henry, the executive in charge of production for both ET and The Insider says, “We’re in the business of displaying creative information. Having multiple displays behind the sets allows us to be creative.”⁵⁸ Although Aguilera did not have the technological advantages of such equipment, many of the viewers who participated in the survey appreciated the subtle details that the fabricated screen provided.

Of the 363 San Luis Obispo residents who were invited to participate in the Survey Monkey poll, only 43 people responded. However, the small group provided a large amount of feedback as to which medium was most successful in capturing and keeping their attention. When asked, ‘Which entertainment news medium did you overall prefer?’ 29 people (67.4%) chose the thirty-minute news show. Cal Poly State University Marketing Senior Sara Clifford said, “I loved the combination of local and national celebrities! Sometimes I just get so sick of what Lindsey and Britney are doing each week and it’s great to see something that shows our local SLO stuff!!” Of the 29 people that preferred the show, 20 or 68.9%, of them were women. This statistic supports the conclusions brought forth in the previously stated Review of Literature that entertainment news audiences are predominately female.

Although the entertainment show was the preferred medium, the other 14 participants, 10 of whom were male, enjoyed the mobility and concise content of the

⁵⁷ Albiniak, Paige. “Hurray for Hollywood in HD.” *Broadcasting & Cable* 138.35 (2008): 10. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 14 Apr. 2011.

⁵⁸ *ibid* Albiniak

entertainment blog. 22-year-old resident of San Luis Obispo, Matthew Manges said, “I enjoyed your show, but my boss caught me watching it at work. So, I looked at the blog on my Droid and loved the piece on Still Time and Russell Brand.” The blog, which features a style similar to PerezHilton.com, received 18 comments where as the half hour show only received two comments on its YouTube page. These results can be attributed to the various questions that Aguilera asked at the end of almost every post to encourage readers to voice his or her opinion on the story. Thus confirming that the blogging style of Perez Hilton does an excellent job of creating an instant link between the author and the audience.

Of the eighteen stories that were featured in both the show and blog, three in particular received the most attention and acclaim. When answering the question, ‘Which story did you enjoy the most?’ sixteen responded with the “SLO it Down” exclusive of actress Hayden Panettiere dating Jets’ player Scotty McKnight. Andrea Brobst, a Cal Poly Biology Junior wrote, “I can’t believe you’re the first to have this story!! Take that LA! Slo’s the new ‘Polywood’!!” The second most popular story, with fourteen votes, was the featured performance of local band ‘Still Time’ in downtown San Luis Obispo. Having a wide range of fans in the Central Coast area, Aguilera was hoping the audience would enjoy an inside look at their concert. Lastly, the coverage of local aerial arts studio ‘Suspended Motion’ received 13 votes. Dan Curcio, the lead singer of ‘Still Time,’ said “Wow we just play instruments and sing some songs. Those little girls were flipping through the air like monkeys! Too cool.” These results confirmed the hopes that Aguilera had when designing this Senior Project: local entertainment coverage provided the audience with stories they could relate to, and the celebrity gossip grabbed their attention.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Celebrity Blogger Perez Hilton says, “I don’t think people are anymore obsessed with celebrities today than they were in the past. The only difference is that mainstream media realize how profitable it can be. But people are fascinated by celebrities because it’s an aspirational thing, it’s an escapist thing.”⁵⁹

The overall results of this Senior Project can be summed up as followed: in order to gain the attention of the 18-24 year-old demographic it does not matter whether they prefer one medium or the other. For the most successful results, it is best to provide an audience with as much multimedia coverage as possible. In today’s technology driven world, it is nearly impossible to please society with only one medium of entertainment news, when there are so many others that are being created as the months go by. However, by creating a simple link from the targeted demographic to the content, such as proximity, the overall appeal and interest of the entertainment medium greatly rises.

Aguilera has spend the majority of her four years at Cal Poly writing and editing stories with a focus on hard news. Working on this Senior Project has allowed her to expand upon her general video editing abilities to include knowledge of video transitions, Chroma key displays, moving graphics and incorporating music, all to enhance the level of interest in a story. By creating the correlating “SLO it Down” news show and blog, Aguilera was able to combine the knowledge she obtained through Cal Poly University with the skills necessary to thrive as a reporter in any entertainment news medium.

⁵⁹ *ibid* Hutson