

## ПРЕЗИДЕНТСТВО И СМИ: ТРАДИЦИОННЫЕ И НОВЫЕ МЕДИА КАК АКТОРЫ В АМЕРИКАНСКОЙ БОЛЬШОЙ ПОЛИТИКЕ

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Цель данной работы заключается в предложении концепции ролей, которые исполняют традиционные и новые (цифровые) СМИ в американской большой политике через анализ предвзятости, политической инклюзивности и толерантности выбранных медиа по отношению к своей идеологической оппозиции. Это исследование вникает в сущность ролей, которые играют разные средства массовой информации во время президентства Дональда Трампа, а также выстраивает базу для теоретизации дальнейшего развития американского медиа пространства. Исследователи рассмотрели большое количество схожих тем, включая общую роль СМИ в американской политике. Однако ничего конкретного не было сказано о ролях, которые традиционные и новые СМИ играют по отдельности. Данное исследование предлагает восполнить данный пробел в знании через указание на то, почему «старые» медиа все еще удерживают свои позиции в американской политике, несмотря на высокий уровень политической поляризации в стране, которая отчасти является результатом самого «противоречивого президентства», которое Америка когда-либо видела.

### Ключевые слова:

*Медиа, США, Дональд Трамп, СМИ, новые медиа, традиционные СМИ, интернет, телевидение, адресное вещание, широкое вещание, республиканская партия, демократическая партия, QCSA, QCA, масс-медиа, предвзятые медиа.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Contemporary media play the key role in American politics. Different types of media have been objects of examination for numerous research papers written over the last twenty years. Media space has become very polarized over the last two decades, and many political actors started to take advantage of it [60]. Along with that, nation-wide digitalization brought up a new player – new media that includes Internet newspapers, radio, blogs and vlogs. These new players now possess a great “threat” to traditional media that include newspapers, radio and television broadcasting [92]. This paper suggests an understanding of the roles played by traditional and new media outlets in the contemporary American top-tier (federal level) politics through analyzing biasness, political inclusiveness and tolerance of selected media outlets to opposing points of view through examination of selected media reactions to certain events. This research provides an insight into the role of each type of media in political process during Donald Trump’s presidency and builds up a basis for theorization of how American media space will develop in the nearest future. Research question touches upon the roles of traditional and digital media outlets. Hypothesis suggests that traditional media play the role of mediators for political clashes while new media can be regarded strictly as sides of these clashes.

## CRITERIA FOR MEDIA AND CASE TO ANALYZE

Criteria for media to analyze include: a) size and extension of media outlet. Allows to cut off smaller regional or local media outlets; b) power of media outlet. It shows if the selected case possesses agenda-setting capabilities; c) ideological criterion that provides each selection with representatives from opposite sides of political spectrum. The specific case in relation

to which selected media outlets will be analyzed needs to meet several criteria too: a) The case must be recent. It should be not older than three years old, starting from 2016 presidential election campaign that resulted in Donald Trump’s election that ultimately brought to even a more powerful political breakup inside the United States. b) Thematic criterion. The case needs to be widely discussed in the media. There might be some examples that either side of the debate try to ignore, but the chosen one must make them unable to disregard it. c) It needs to be controversial. There must be at least two sides in the debate regarding this topic. d) There must be a clear dividing line between conflicting sides. The topic not only needs to be controversial, but it also needs to attract attention from different political powers that will use it for own benefit or as an argument in debates.

## SELECTING MEDIA AND CASE TO ANALYZE

Rating provided by Statista suggests that four most popular (criterion 1) broadcasting outlets in the United States are NBC, CBS, Fox News Channel, and ABC with an average audience of 7,87, 7,38, 6,88 and 5,42 million viewers per day respectively [54]. One would notice that newspapers and radio stations are not included in the list. As a matter of fact, these are ignored here because these sources information are much less popular in the United States than television and online news [88]. Most popular digital media outlets on the other hand are The Huffington Post, Politico, Breitbart News Network [93]. Media outlets that do not have a certain lean to the left or to the right, do not possess agenda setting capabilities (criterion 2) as they provide equal coverage of every point of view and provide only factual reporting without provision of any specific opinion. Agenda setting is a biased thing, and, as Media Bias/Fact Check and AllSides show, the chosen

media outlets all lean left or right to a certain extent. Consequently, each selected case possesses agenda setting capabilities. Third, Ideological, criterion is met by all of the sides as well. ABC, NBC, CBS and Politico, according to one of the sources, lean left [1], Fox with its Fox News leans right [28]. Finally, Huffington Post and Breitbart are extremely left [41] and right [11] respectively. This data already shows a pattern that the most popular old media outlets all moderately lean left or right with two thirds of most widespread digital media outlets being extremely biased.

The case to analyze needs to meet several criteria as well. Starting with the recency criterion, there are several main claimants for the position. Firstly, it is the gun problem that has always been one of the main points of divergence. Another recent topic are elections of the US President in 2016. These elections resulted in Trump taking the president seat. Third case of interest is light drug legalization [42]. Finally, the last case that meets this criterion is federal government shutdown that had lasted for 35 days (from December 22nd till January 25th). This shutdown became the “longest ever” with that “easily exceeding the previous record under President Bill Clinton in 1995, of 21 days” [104]. The second criterion is thematic. The case to choose must be widely discussed in the society. Consequently, it should then be highlighted in the specified media outlets numerous times. All of the abovementioned discussion topics generally meet this criterion, but topics like mass shootings that are interrelated with firearms in general and drugs have not attracted so much attention from media lately. Same applies to 2016 presidential elections. The government shutdown topic seems to best fit this criterion. Switching then to the third criterion of topic being controversial, it should be first of all mentioned that every potential case meets it. The final criterion is the presence of a clear di-

viding line between opposing parties. In all of the cases brought up in this paper there is a clear dividing line between democrats/republicans, supporters/opponents of gun carry and drug legalization.

All the things considered, the best case to choose is government shutdown as it completely meets all the required criteria, while other suggested topics should be discarded.

## **CQCA: SENTIMENTAL VOCABULARY IN MEDIA**

Research conducted by Young and Soroka suggests that “a number of studies in political communication focus on the “sentiment” or “tone” of news content” [86, 205]. This article is meant to be one of them as qualitative content analysis, based on word count, is an effective way to confirm or discard a hypothesis. Combined with other methods, it will provide a robust and trustworthy paper. A dictionary-based [86] approach will be used in the CQCA analysis. The dictionary consists of over 28 thousand negative and positive sentiments that will be automatically applied to two hundred articles in selected media outlets using Wordstat. This allows to find out whether the set of articles retrieved from specific media outlets use biased and emotive vocabulary that points to the role (side/stage for debate) of each medium types on the American political stage. WordStat in this case is used to count the number of words from a dictionary in uploaded texts, so uploading both dictionaries was the first thing to do. After that, one hundred digital media articles were uploaded and checked. Results show that the most frequent negative word is “shutdown”. However, “shutdown” is in this specific case used as a topic for observation, not as a negative connotation. Subsequently, this negative sentiment must be excluded from the list of words.

First findings show that the frequency of negative sentiments across the board of digital media articles exceeded positive by ~47,5% (Figure 1,2). However, the real point of interest appears to be in “negative sentiments’ rate per ten thousand words” which indicates that negative sentiments in Breitbart articles about government shutdown can be encountered at a rate that is lower than in HuffPost articles by a ~110% margin (Fig.3) and almost twice as low as in Politico articles (Ibid). In addition to that,

WordStat has a co-occurrence tool and allows to search for coincidences of word use within one sentence or paragraph across all texts and is aimed at showing patterns of word use. The tool detected a high level of co-occurrences of a negative word pattern (Fig. 4), that is used to describe Mexican immigrants to the U.S., plus the highest rate of interconnection between words in it. A significant share (around 70%) of such occurrences belongs to Breitbart articles (Fig. 5).

Figure 1. Positive and negative sentiments frequency in new media.

» Included		Leftover words						
		FREQUENCY	% SHOWN	% PROCESSED	% TOTAL	NO. CASES	% CASES	TF • IDF
Dictionaries	NEGATIVE WORDS	4587	59,59%	7,82%	7,82%	3	100,00%	0,0
	POSITIVE WORDS	3110	40,41%	5,30%	5,30%	3	100,00%	0,0

Figure 2. Distribution of positive/negative keywords in new media (frequency).

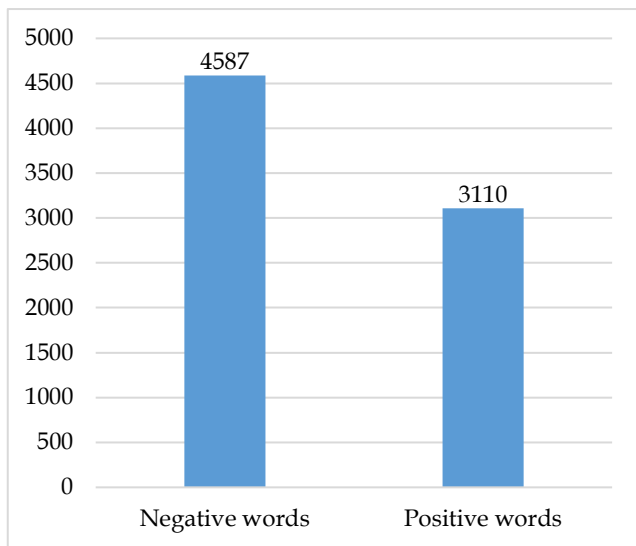


Figure 3. Negative sentiments in new media. Rate per 10'000 words.

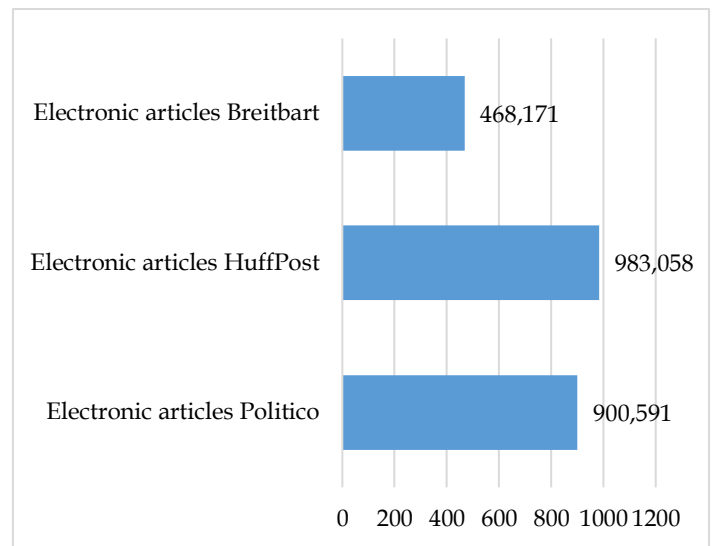
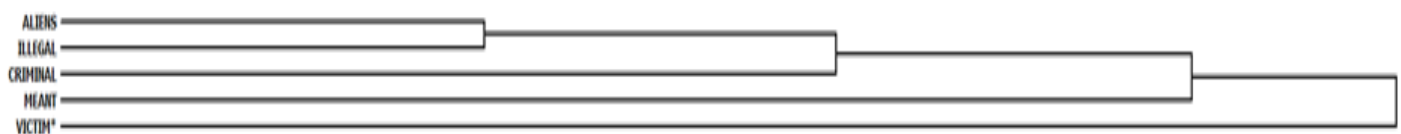


Figure 4. Co-occurrences in negative word patterns.



Opposite results can be observed in “positive sentiments’ rate per ten thousand words” which shows that Huffington Post and

Politico have a much lower rate of emotionally positive wording than Breitbart that seems to pay more attention to minimization of negative

effects caused by government shutdown among its readers. This coincides with Breitbart’s position on the ideological spectrum. The same can be said about Huffington Post and Politico. Returning back to positive sentiments, Breitbart uses them 45% and ~88% more frequently than Politico and HuffPost respectively (Fig. 6).

This seems to be the result of digital outlets’ extreme level of polarization that was previously confirmed by research carried out on the Internet. When it comes to Breitbart, it was claimed to be far right on both resources, but HuffPost and Politico were in some cases rated as far left and left respectively, and exercised a

left/slightly left bias in the other. Research conducted in this chapter shows that reality is closer to the first scenario. In the case of government shutdown, the higher usage of negative sentiments plus lower usage of positive indicates that the outlet in question exercises left bias. As a result, Huffington Post, according to this research, exercises extremely left bias, Politico, while surely being much closer in both terms to Politico, can be thus rated as a “left”, and finally Breitbart is leaning far to the right, according to patterns found in this part of the paper.

Figure 5. Number of “Alien, Illegal, Criminal, Meant, Victim” pattern encounters by outlet.

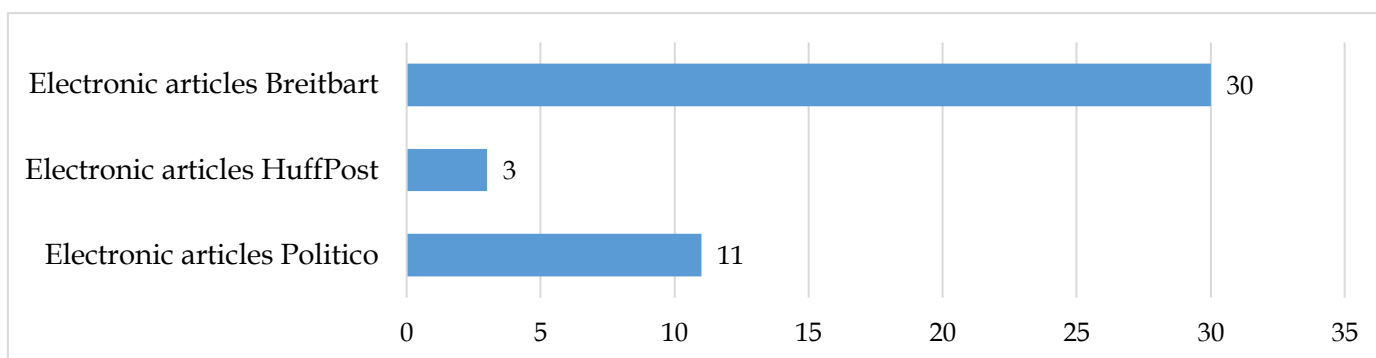
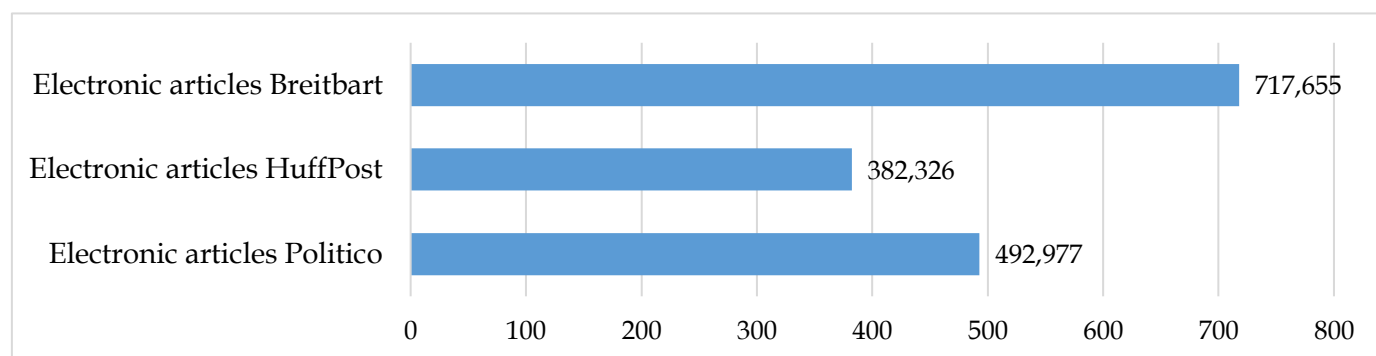


Figure 6. Positive sentiments in new media. Rate per 10'000 words.



Traditional media on the other hand have shown quite different results. Firstly, when it comes to distribution of sentiments old outlets demonstrate the approximately the same pattern as digital mediums: the difference between negative/positive sentiments usage is around 35% (Fig. 7) which is noticeably but not extremely different from what was seen in case

of new media. What is extremely different from data seen before is the fact that in combination with lower difference between negative and positive sentiments’ usage, distribution of connotations between media outlets does not replicate the pattern seen above (Fig. 8). Fox news, that is claimed to be partisan, shows a rate of negative sentiments that are quite similar to

those seen on other media outlets, with only ABC (that is considered to exercise a left bias) falling behind the bulk by a small maximum margin of approximately 16% (with average being 13,5%). Positive sentiments usage by old media (Fig. 9) haven't shown any interrelatedness between supposed ideological positions of any of the outlets and factual use of those sentiments. Fox is being almost on par with ABC (which has a left bias) while CBS and NBC (both exercise a slightly left bias) have the highest and the lowest usage of positive sentiments respectively. Co-occurrence tool has not found any significant ties between any positive or negative sentiments.

Figure 7. Distribution of sentiments in traditional media (Frequency).

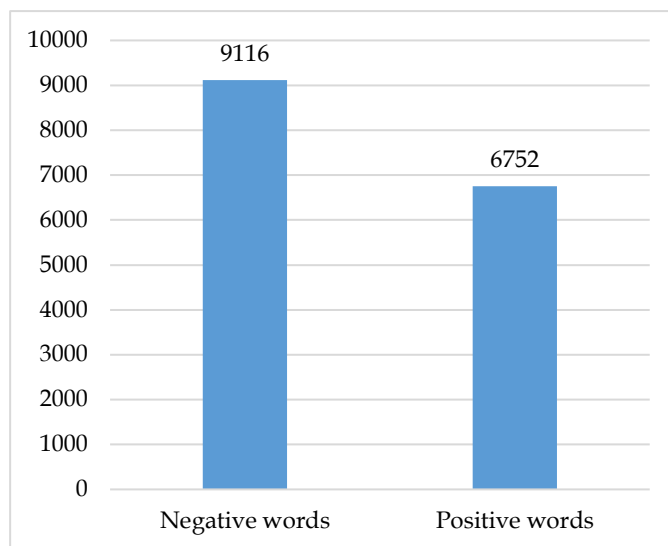


Figure 8. Negative sentiments in old media. Rate per 10'000 words.

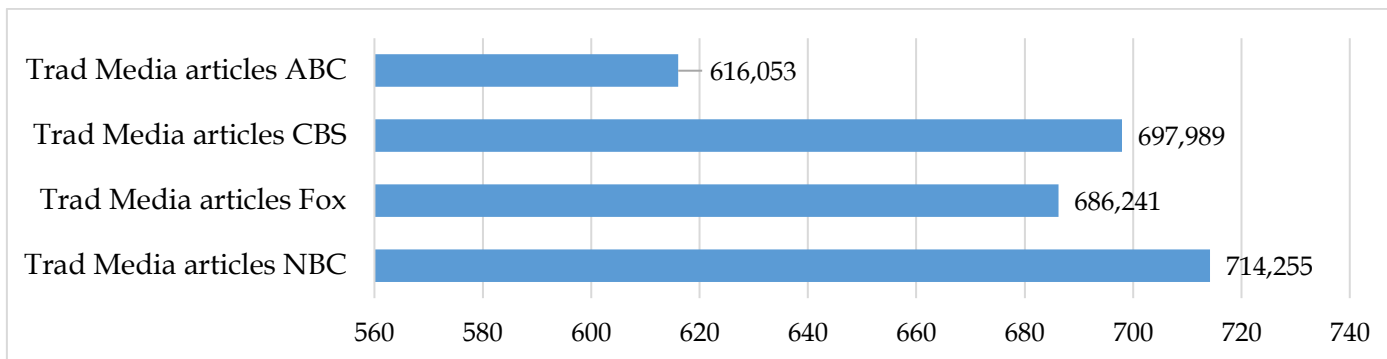
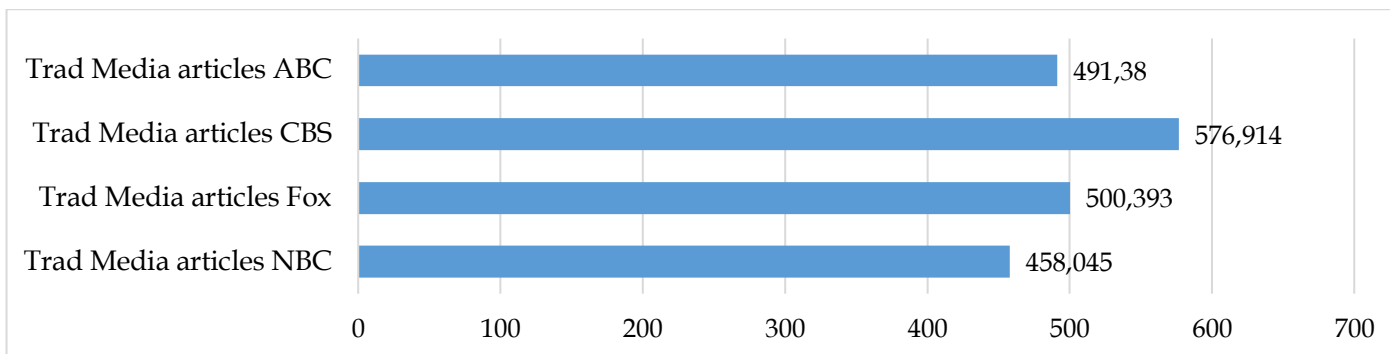


Figure 9. Positive sentiments in old media. Rate per 10'000 words.



Findings listed above indicate that distribution of negative and positive sentiments among old and new media are very different. On the one hand, new media section has shown that Internet mediums' political ideology/bias clearly correlates with the rate of posi-

tive/negative sentiments: while Breitbart, which is "far right", abstains from using negatives and tends to place an emphasis on positive vocabulary in relation to the selected topic, Politico and Huffington Post, being "left" and "far left" show a completely opposite approach

that favors negative connotations over positive. On the other hand, old media have not shown a clear link between their political ideology and the use of sentiments. Moreover, presumably one of the “extreme” media outlets, Fox News, shows a higher number of negative sentiments usage than its most liberal counterpart – ABC News.

In addition to that, the random sets of articles from both new and old media have shown that new mediums pay lots of attention to people who have little to do with politics. At the same time, those personalities can be quoted by opposing journalists, but in a negative context. For example, current random set of articles retrieved from each outlet using keywords “government shutdown”, has shown that Huffington Post uses rappers [80] and comedy shows [5] as news hooks for their published materials. At the same time, they completely ignore the other side of the debate. The opposing side actually refers to the same people, but use negative subcurrents to deface their rivals’ statements [15; 40].

Abovementioned factors lead to the conclusion that new media outlets are, according to

the hypothesis of this research paper, less inclusive than traditional media that do listen to their opponents [97] and do not make news hooks out of statements belonging to people, who have next to nothing to do with politics. Data above confirms that despite being committed to a certain political ideology, old media do exercise a higher level of political pluralism by “neutrally” incorporating opposite side’s opinion, while new media are obsessed with their opponents and/or certain figures among them.

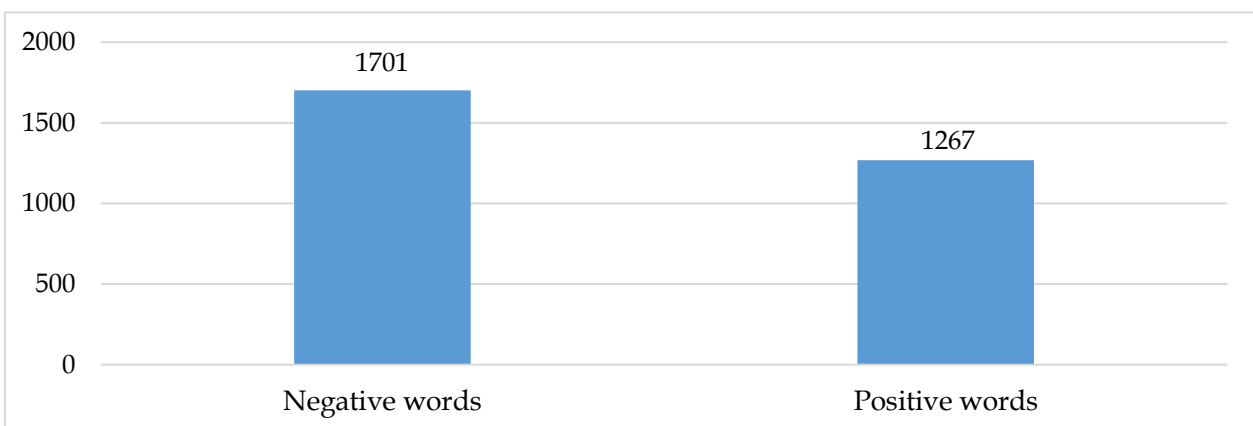
### VALIDATING CQCA RESULTS (DATA TRIANGULATION)

The dictionary that was used in the previous chapter needs verification, so a different dictionary provided by Hu and Liu will be used to re-examine data and confirm or reject findings that have been revealed above.

After that had been done, same operations were executed. Following results have been retrieved: firstly, proportion of positive and negative words in new media has changed, but not dramatically: the difference between these sentiments is now ~35% (Fig. 10,11).

Figures 10,11. Distribution of Positive and Negative sentiments (Dictionary 2, New Media).

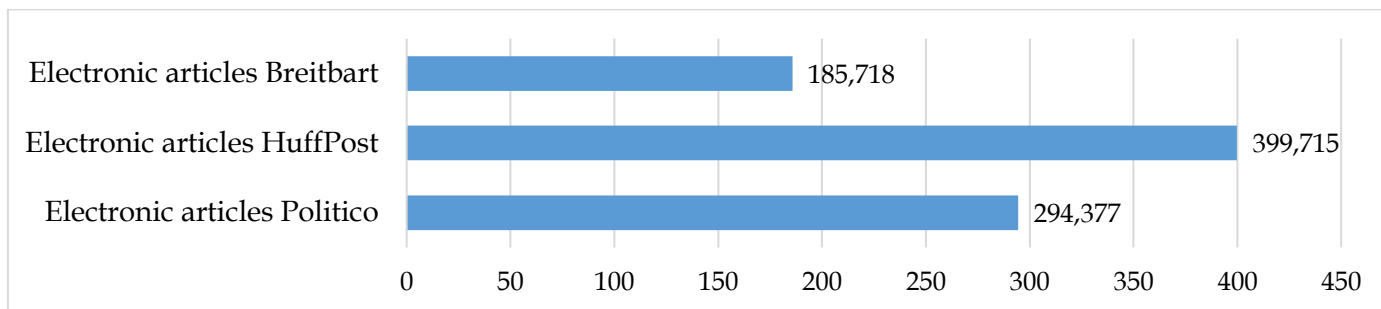
Included		Leftover words						
Dictionaries		FREQUENCY	% SHOWN	% PROCESSED	% TOTAL	NO. CASES	% CASES	TF • IDF
	NEGATIVEWORDS	1701	57,31%	2,90%	2,90%	3	100,00%	0,0
	POSITIVEWORDS	1267	42,69%	2,16%	2,16%	3	100,00%	0,0



Quite similar results can be observed in relation to negative and positive sentiments' rate per ten thousand words in new media with HuffPost and Breitbart accounting for the highest share of negative and positive sentiments

respectively. Difference between them in the first case is ~116%, and ~109% in the second, which is slightly different from what was seen in the case when the main broad dictionary (Fig. 12,13).

Figures 12. Negative sentiments in new media. Rate per 10'000 words (Dictionary 2).



Figures 13. Positive sentiments in new media. Rate per 10'000 words (Dictionary 2).

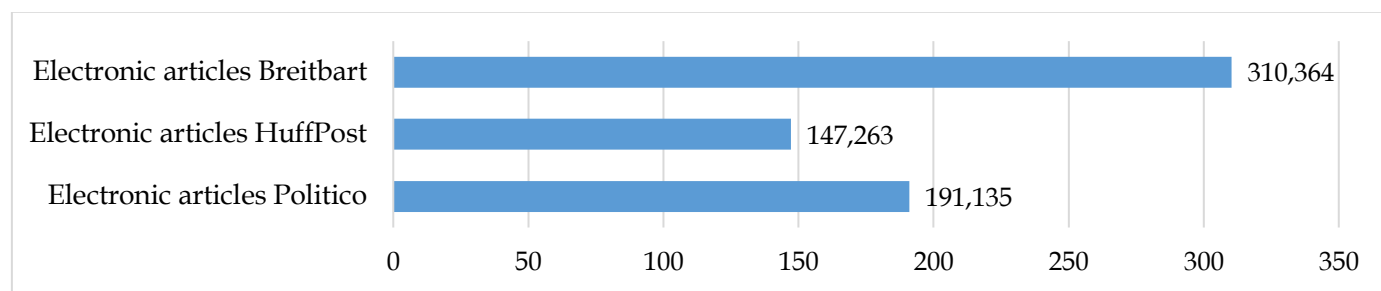
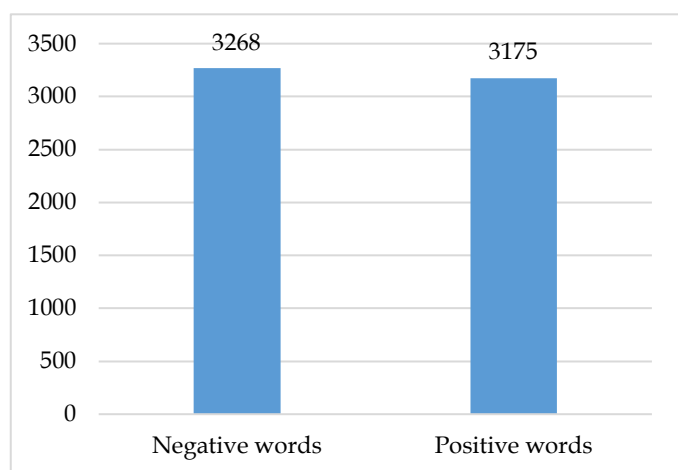


Figure 14. Distribution of negative and positive sentiments in old media (Frequency).



Moving on to traditional media outlets, results retrieved turned out to be different, but not to the extent that would undermine arguments mentioned above. Firstly, proportion of negative and positive keywords is ~1:1,03

which indicates a difference of only 3% (Fig. 14).

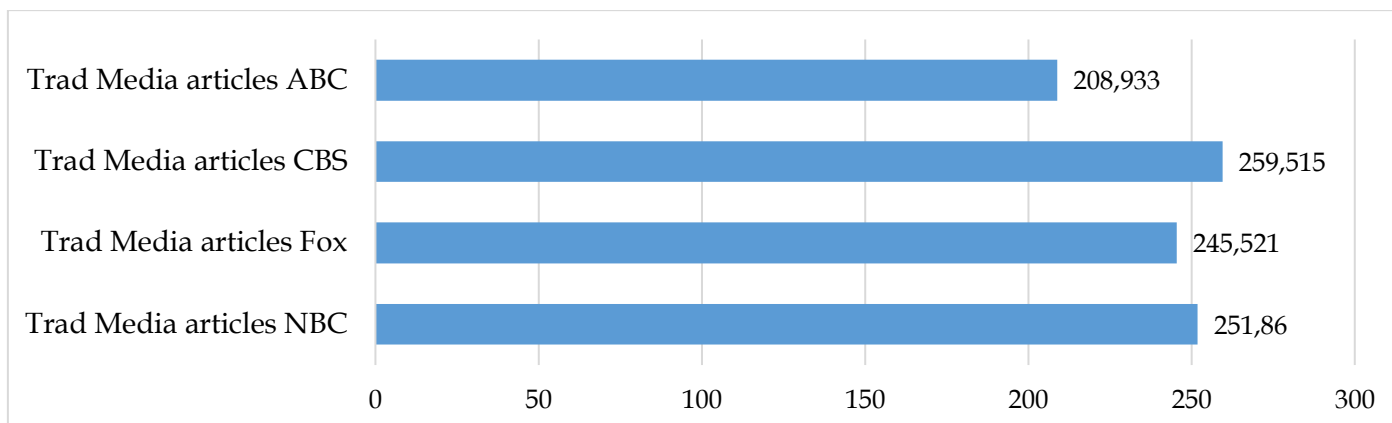
Despite that, proportion of negative sentiments stay generally the same with ABC falling behind the general mass and Fox News being between CBS and NBC. The only exception is that NBC and CBS have switched places with, again, an insignificant difference (Fig. 15). The situation changes again when it comes to positive sentiments, where Fox News showed a 62% higher share of positive keywords than its "left" counterpart of ABC (Fig. 16). This, while surely a big difference in absolute numbers, it is still almost twice as small as in the case with positive sentiments share in new media outlets. Moreover, the share of negative and positive sentiments per ten thousand words in Fox News as a separate entity indicates that their proportion is 1,095:1 respectively. This, along with other factors that have noticeably changed,



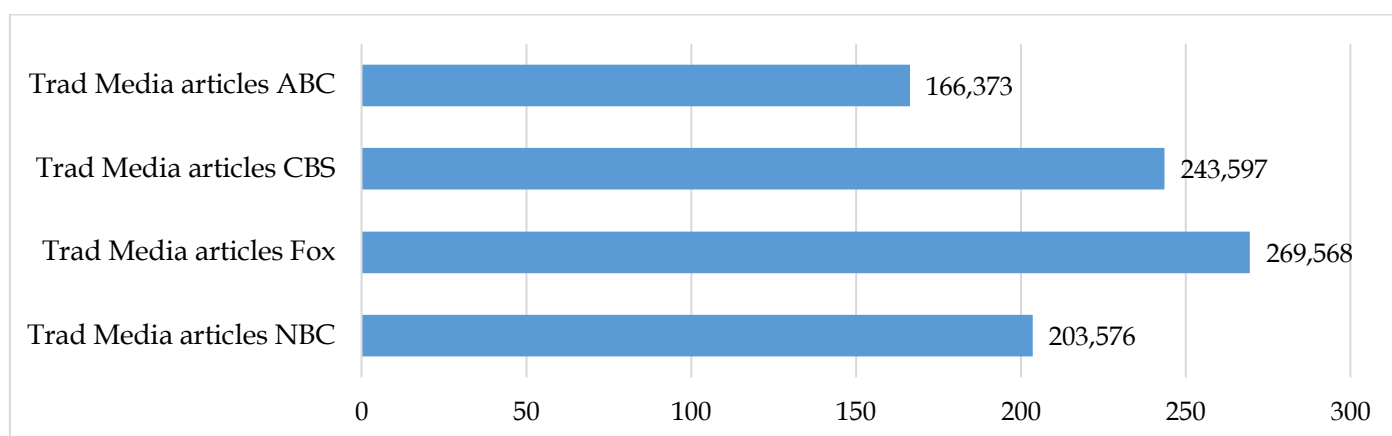
still does not render hypothesis insignificant, and confirms that the previous result is close

enough to the current observations in terms of possible conclusions.

Figures 15. Negative sentiments in traditional media. Rate per 10'000 words (Dictionary 2).



Figures 16. Positive sentiments in traditional media. Rate per 10'000 words (Dictionary 2).



## QUALITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS

Previous part of the research has shown a clear pattern which indicates that old media are, while still being biased to a certain extent, exercise a higher level of tolerance towards their political opponents that are more widely included into the discussion, whereas new mediums either mock their opponents or ignore their presence at all while also tossing lots of negative/positive sentiments (depending on the side) into their articles. Hence, traditional outlets can be regarded as “battlegrounds” for political debate, while digital ones can be regarded as sides of the struggle

However, quantitative content analysis is not enough to say that this paper’s hypothesis

can be confirmed right away. That is why it is needed to apply to other methods of research, which will now be inductive qualitative content analysis that goes significantly beyond just counting negative sentiments and works with underlying meanings of messages delivered in articles and transcripts.

This chapter suggests to examine in what way traditional and digital media outlets deal with their supposed political opponents in their articles. In order to determine their opponents, two rankings will be used throughout this part of the research – AllSides and MB/FC. The same random selection of two hundred articles will be used throughout this part of the research as well.

It should be primarily determined what are the “enemies” of each media outlet. According to AllSides and MB/FC, ABC, NBC, CBS and Politico lean left [1], Fox News leans right [28] and Huffington Post with Breitbart are extremely left [41] and right [11] respectively. As a result, it can be concluded that republicans are the main opponents of ABC, NBC, CBS, Politico and HuffPost, while Breitbart and Fox News’ opponents are democrats and their supporters. Consequently, articles of each specific outlet must be analyzed concerning the medium’s attitude towards their rival. Some of the findings were made possible with help from QDA Miner: encoding obscene/offensive vocabulary and arguments from authority into respective categories helped to detect some of the factors that pinpoint high levels of biasness in digital media.

The first media outlets to be examined are Huffington Post and Breitbart. The former is considered to be one of the largest opponents of the current American republican establishment and Trump himself. Such attitude is illustrated by articles that claim Trump as a “violence encouraging [56], lying [8] racist [57]”. Considering the government shutdown, HuffPost has mentioned republicans or Trump in almost every article devoted to this case, but at the same time has never applied to their speeches or statements in a neutral, unbiased, way. It goes without saying that Huffington cited their opponents multiple times, but these citations were aimed at defacing them later in the text. For instance, the case when Trump's adviser Kevin Hassett said that government shutdown had some pros for employees that had an opportunity to go on a vacation that did not affect their days off count. His quote goes as follows: “A huge share of government workers were going to take vacation days, say, between Christmas and New Year’s, and then we have a shutdown, and so they can’t go to work, and so then

they have the vacation, but they don’t have to use their vacation days. And then they come back, and then they get their back pay... Then they’re, in some sense, they’re better off” [100]. Huffington rushed to name their article “Trump Adviser Suggests Unpaid Government Workers Are ‘Better Off’ During Shutdown” [100] ignoring his original quote and subsequently creating a straight-off negative attitude towards that person among the readers. It is also worth noting that Breitbart completely ignored this case [44], whereas Fox News, that would presumably do the same, did not [99].

It is also worth noting that Huffington Post writers pay a lot of attention to celebrities and comedy shows that publically condemn republicans’ actions and blame the current American president for all the issues they are having. For example, one of the entries contained by the sample for quantitative content analysis was solely devoted to a comedian Jimmy Kimmel who said Trump’s “one crazy zigzag stroke...” could let him “... be back on the greens at Mar-a-Lago faster than you [Trump] can say ‘Pocahontas’” [67] relating to president’s absence from golf club that had lasted for 52 days. It goes without saying that both Breitbart, along with Fox News and pretty much every other media outlet in scope ignored this message. The other similar case was with a famous rapper Cardi B who was mentioned in four out of 34 Huffington selected articles. Cardi B “blasted Pres. Trump over government shutdown in viral video” [64], “returned to social media... to share her frustration with President Donald Trump” [80] Moreover, one of HP’s article is titled “Cardi B’s Trashing of Donald Trump For The Shutdown is Now a Banging Song” [62]. Behavior demonstrated above was ignored by major traditional media outlets and Politico as well, but was squeezed out by Breitbart. This medium utilized a different approach which tried to persuade readers

that the artist is not the person to be listened to. They cited her tweets with plenty of obscene language and offenses towards Trump supporters [18] with also reminding the audience that Cardi B “recently admitted to drugging and robbing men while she was younger” [18]. The artist was mentioned by Breitbart two more times (across the gathered articles). One of the articles that was, again, devoted to her, Breitbart editors reported that “Cardi B has been invited to a Democratic event in Iowa after calling supporters of President Trump “f\*\*\*\*\* racist rednecks” [15] and repeated the same quote in an article that covered criticism of Donald Trump by Cardi’s husband, rapper Offset who also expressed his discontent by saying “that’s some slave s\*\*\*” [16]. Plus, BB cited and “debunked” a “far-left” pop star Cher who stated that FBI must “Stick Trump in Straight Jacket and Put His A\*\* in Prison” [22] (this is how the article is titled). It thus can be concluded that HuffPost, along with Breitbart, often cite artists, not real politicians and do it one-sidedly: in the first case it is done to show discontent with Trump’s policies among celebrities, and the second one’s journalists try to defame democrats and liberals by choosing stars who can’t choose words when criticizing someone.

It should also be mentioned that HuffPost does a similar thing, but towards political journalists who stick to a different ideology, by using exaggeration. For example, a Fox News Sean Hannity was reported to “issue a warning to people saying Donald Trump Caved” [65]. At least that’s what the title said, and could make readers falsely think that it was some kind of a threat towards people who use “#TrumpCaved” [87] hashtag. However, the only thing he said was “anyone out there thinking President Trump caved today, you don’t know the Donald Trump I know. He will secure the border, one way or another” [65] which does not resemble with idea given to the reader

in the headline while in reality Hannity’s statement was an answer to her colleagues at Fox News who were criticizing him for “temporarily ending government shutdown” [87]. Breitbart does exercise such practice too as its editors cite CNN’s Luis Gutierrez who said Trump was acting like a “Reckless child” [55]. Indeed, the journalist did say that, but the context is only unfolded in the text of the entry: “Trump just accepted a temporary deal... with NO FUNDING for his wall, the SAME DEAL he rejected... This is not behavior of leader, but of a reckless child...” [55]. It can be thus concluded that combining clickbait material and politics is a tool that is utilized by both sides of the debate: this not only attracts reader’s attention, but also determines their attitude towards person or people in scope of the article.

However, there is still a difference between HP and BB. While they both cite and exaggerate opposing journalists’ (mainly from traditional media outlets) claims, the former does not pay much attention to senators and other professional politicians and prefer to focus on ‘friendlies’ like Ocasio-Cortez who “channels Spice Girls in Government Shutdown Tweet” [61] and is “Glad The Shutdown Gives Her ‘Free Time to Make Trouble’” [81], whereas the latter not only broadly interviewed Republican representatives [50] and cited them [35], but also citing and criticizing Democratic representatives [36].

HuffPost and Breitbart can thus be described as one-sided mediums that pay most attention to criticizing either Trump or his opposing powers respectively and promoting views of certain “friendly” political figures. But what about Politico that seems to be the least biased among them? The easiest way is to check whether Politico uses the same tools and shares the same traits with HP and BB.

Firstly, it does look like Politico uses quite biased articles that include words

“Trump” and “bad” in the same title [101], as well as asking a rhetorical question “if his tweets are descending into unintelligible self-absorption, what does that say about his frame of mind?” [101]. This question is rather provocative and suggests, regarding the whole negative style of the article, that his mind is also descending in the same direction. This illustrates that Politico may sometimes be quite biased towards certain politicians or their supporters. At the same time, Politico has had interviews with Trump himself which indicates that this outlet keeps close to reality and does not abstain from interviewing and listening to their apparent opponents.

The other difference is the fact that, unlike BB or HP, does not resort to certain figures, like celebrities or comedians, when talking politics. Both, the scope of articles or a dedicated search [78] have not shown such occurrences, except for one that took place during a 2013 government shutdown [39] that has nothing to do with the topic of this research.

Some sort of exaggeration, like in the case of BB and HP, has taken place with Politico naming an article “Conservatives to Trump: You caved!” [23] This is surely a sort of exaggeration, because the title might lead people into thinking that all conservatives, including republicans, are criticizing Trump after he announced the end of shutdown without him receiving sufficient amount of money for his wall project. However, it later turned out that the list includes commentators and a film producer, as well as several conservative media outlets [23].

As it was mentioned above, Politico, unlike HP and BB, not only listens to their pre-supposed “allies”, but also takes their rivals into consideration and even interview the leader of their political opposition. Of course, criticism of Trump and republican establishment occupies a large part of Politico’s materials, but ideas of opponents are not missed out.

To sum up, Breitbart and Huffington Post are both one-sided media outlets that act as sides of political debate, whereas Politico lies among traditional and new media in terms of inclusiveness and tolerance towards opposing political powers.

When comparing traditional broadcasting outlets (ABC, CBS, NBC, Fox News) to digital mediums, it should be primarily noted that the articles in scope are more moderate in terms of lexicon. For instance, old media can’t afford using or even citing abusive vocabulary, because such actions a) seriously undermine level of credibility [4] and b) breaks the rules created by FCC (Federal Communications Commission) [103].

Observing ABC News showed that some of their articles in scope are applied to regular people who work at the government or those who may be impacted by the government shutdown. For example, they produce news on how general population might be affected by it [26]. On the other hand, however, they pay plenty of attention to criticizing Trump and republicans (with the former being main target) through citing “Top Democrats” [83] and, again, general population [38], but do not exclude President’s own thoughts from the agenda [98]. This is also accompanied by the lack of clickbait and exaggerated headlines. Next, ABC News channel does not apply to comics and celebrities when criticizing people, who, according to them, are responsible for the shutdown in the first place by focusing on regular people and professional politicians. What is more, ABC, unlike Huff-Post, does not criticize people who share opposite points of view, whereas HP does by citing people who suggest “Trump supporters should work for free while the government is shut down to show your support” [80] while also calling them “f\*\*\*\*\* racist rednecks” [18].

Fox News then which sticks to opposite points of view, cannot be placed in one line

with Breitbart with the main difference being, again, abstaining from using clickbait and exaggerated titles, pay plenty of attention to regular people [6] and factual reporting [97]. The outlet, despite criticizing Democrats, still shows a high level of involvement by providing each side of the debate with an opportunity to be heard [94; 95; 97]. Moreover, some of the Fox News' on-air talents have criticized "Trump and Democrats" [68] for the shutdown while some criticize their President for ending it for three weeks [65]. Approximately the same can be said about the leftovers – CBS and NBC that, provided they are less biased than ABC and Fox News, exercise quite the same level of tolerance towards opposing parties with both outlets, despite leaning left, do not confront themselves with Trump's or republican supporters by citing the abovementioned Cardi B, but still do criticize Trump and his establishment [3; 43; 76]. At the same time, CBS' and NBC's reporting that tries to explain to the general population how badly the shutdown has influenced American people [30; 49] while also not missing out the fact that "economy added 304,000 jobs in January despite the longest shutdown in history" [7]. Despite criticizing Trump and his fellow Republican party members of Senate/Congress, they still allow their opponents to voice their opinions [96].

It can thus be concluded that despite still criticizing either democrats, or Trump and his fellow party members (depending on the case), old media manage to keep the level of tolerance towards opposing powers high by giving them a chance to voice their opinion on outlets that do not support their views. At the same time, the most popular U.S. new media outlets go to extremes and mute or undermine opinions expressed on opposing information channels with only outlet of Politico falling among HP+BB and old media while leaning to the latter in terms of standards.

## QCA VERIFICATION (DATA TRIANGULATION)

In order to verify results gathered above, a different set of articles must be used in order to execute data triangulation that makes this part of the research more robust and trustworthy. The set of articles includes random entries that were obtained using search engines built-in into each website in scope. "Government shutdown" was used as the query, then the drop-out was sorted "by most relevant" with any duplicates removed using CASES | DUPLICATES command in QDA Miner. Further investigation showed the following results. The list includes 105 random articles, scripts and videos from the specified sources.

Both Huffington Post and Breitbart examinations show that nothing has significantly changed in relation to the previous scope of entries: the former could not abstain from citing comedians [53], actors [66], using abusive vocabulary [63], exaggerating headlines [9; 82] and mocking their political opponents in story entries [59]; while the latter criticized their opponents (Democrats) via trying to undermine their statements and statements of journalists supporting left-wing agenda [45; 48]. The only thing, except a high level of bias, citing famous rappers is a widespread practice: it was used in the previous set of articles by both media outlets, and same happens in this case: Huff cites Cardi B (again) who "Torches Tomi Lahren [conservative political commentator] with savage Clapback: 'I Will Dog Walk You'" [29], whereas Breitbart does the same to presumably show how savagely such celebrities behave when it comes to politics and, amongst others, Donald Trump by citing Snoop Dogg calling American President "a piece of sh\*t" [17]. The outlet has also vastly criticized their opponents on Politico, specifically Nancy Cook, who "came out with a curios article" that blamed Breitbart news for "leading the way in framing

the argument for" Trump who was "going the route of a national emergency declaration" [10]. It can be then concluded that BB and HP are indeed, being the most popular digital mediums, are still quite biased towards their opponents and exercise next to zero tolerance towards opposing points of view.

Politico, as well as traditional media outlets, has not provided any significantly new information for this research too. All the mentioned media outlets exercise a noticeable level of criticism towards their opponents, but the tools and the extent to which rivals are criticized tremendously differ from those utilized by the abovementioned digital outlets. For example, Politico vastly criticizes Trump and republicans [25] while producing quite "loud" news entries that sometimes contain information that does not provide any important information on the issue-on-agenda [27]. At the same time, however, Politico does allow for opposition presence in their articles which is confirmed by a number of entries that cite their rivals without producing any judgements from the editorial board [31; 71]. What is more, Politico's article undermined Huffington Post's claims that "Trump made no mention of... shutdown in State of The Union" [89]. In fact, he did not say that directly, but his "zigzagging" speech was also "a sign that Trump recognizes the potential damage he incurred by offering to "own" the federal government shutdown and that being seen as the leader of an unpopular establishment party" [37].

Finally, the traditional media outlets, namely, ABC, CBS, NBC and Fox News have not demonstrated any significant changes in their behavior in the set of articles. The former three do, to some extent, criticize Donald Trump and his republican establishment (generally concentrating criticism on the President himself). For example, ABC asked a question of "Who's to blame for the government shut-

down?" [102] and then answered this question in a different article that goes "Shutdown blame stays on Trump, with his approval at historic low" [52]. The other example is NBC news that said "Trump held government workers hostage... and walked away with nothing" which can even be described as a psychological affect that suggested Trump was some kind of a bandit and then processed to comparing conference committee "a legislative firing squad for his wall" [2]. Despite that, both ABC and NBC still leave some space for debate that allowed their opponents in the person of republicans and Trump himself to voice their own concerns [13]. CBS, according to its articles in scope of this set, is focused on factual reporting and sharing thoughts on what could happen and what had already happened during the shutdown. Finally, Fox News, while, again, directly or indirectly, criticizing democrats (for example, by citing Trump's suggestion that China would be pleased to see democrats in 2020 [19] and by stating that "Dems are cool to Trump's offer to end shutdown" [84] and emphasizing that "2006 Dems would have already stopped the shutdown" [77] blaming current Democrats for stalling the process of making their country safer), like CBS, focused on factual reporting, while also leaving some space for the opposition [72; 85].

Thus, it can be again concluded that old media manage to keep the level of tolerance towards opposing powers high by giving them a chance to voice their opinion on outlets that do not support their views. At the same time, the most popular U.S. new media outlets go to extremes and mute or undermine opinions expressed on opposing information channels with only outlet of Politico falling among Huff Post / Breitbart and old media while leaning to the latter in terms of standards.

## CONCLUSION

To sum up, analysis has indicated that despite being committed to certain political figures or parties, traditional outlets still exercise a higher level of political inclusiveness and tolerance towards their opposition, while new ones are being one-sided in their reports while also preventing their respective opposition from voicing counter-opinions. With that being said, traditional media provide better coverage per capita and, despite disagreements between Democrat and Republican supporters, are still watched by people with opposing political affiliations. This fact was proven by CQCA and QCA and leads to a conclusion that old mass media attract rivaling politicians by making them able to voice their opinions and promote their agenda on politically “unfriendly” outlets. Consequently, traditional media can be regarded as stages for debate/political confrontation which plays a big role in American big-time politics. The same, however, cannot be said about new media outlets that, as, again, analysis has shown, do not tolerate opposition and produce one-sided news, apply to celebrities that generally have nothing to do with politics, which clearly is a tool of manipulation, as it makes consumers think that these people cannot lie. Or vice versa, such manipulation persuades people that opposing celebrities are liars and consequently makes them extrapolate such views on other political rivals, including celebrities (see 3.2.1 – 3.2.3). Consequently, digital outlets are sides, not stages for political debates.

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## PRESIDENCY AND THE MEDIA: TRADITIONAL AND NEW MEDIA AS ACTORS IN THE AMERICAN BIG-TIME POLITICS

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Purpose of the study lies in suggesting an understanding of the roles played by traditional and new media outlets in the contemporary American top-tier (federal level) politics through analyzing biasness, political inclusiveness and tolerance of selected media outlets to opposing points of view. This research provides an insight into the role of each type of media in political process during Donald Trump's presidency and builds up a basis for theorization of how American media space will develop in the nearest future. Researchers have tackled various issues that pose a certain interest for academic community, including the role of media in general. However, nothing exact was said about the role of digital and traditional media as separate entities. This gap in knowledge is meant to be fulfilled by this research, which pinpoints the reasons for old media holding their positions in politics during the most controversial presidency America has ever seen.

### Key words:

*Media, United States, USA, Donald Trump, media, new media, traditional media, internet, television, narrowcasting, broadcasting, Republican Party, GOP, Democratic Party, CQCA, QCA, Mass media, government shutdown, media bias.*