# Cyber-Storming the Castle

# Brian J. Snee\*

This essay examines the controversy over the removal of a student newspaper adviser. The author traces the ways that the narrative put forth on social media by the previous adviser was taken up uncritically by other journalists. This case provides a cautionary tale concerning online journalistic practice.

Keywords: Autoethnography, College Administration, Journalism, Twitter

Because the only difference between a suicide and a martyrdom really is the amount of press coverage.

-Chuck Palahniuk, Survivor<sup>1</sup>

Manhattanville College is a small liberal arts school in New York's prosperous Westchester County. The college is perhaps still best known for having educated Rose Kennedy, Ethel Kennedy, Joan Kennedy, and Eunice Kennedy Shriver. Located just 30 miles north of New York City, the campus is picturesque. So much so, in fact, that it recently doubled for Princeton University in Tina Fey's comedy, *Admission*.

The crown jewel that occasionally lures Hollywood to Manhattanville is Reid Hall, known on campus as "the castle." It's a marvelous work of art and architecture that was once considered as a potential site for the United Nations. Built in 1892 by a Whitelaw Reid, editor and president of the *New York Herald Tribune*, the four-story, 84-room, granite masterpiece sits on grounds designed by Frederick Law Olmsted. It is breathtaking.

But recently Manhattanville held its collective breath as a group of sports writers from around the country – professional journalists who'd never set foot on the campus – took to Twitter to have some fun cyber-storming the castle. #Mville\_College only trended for about a week, but that was plenty of time to discover just how thin the lines are that separate reporting from repeating and journalism from activism in the era of social media.

#### **Summer 2012**

I moved to Westchester County in the summer of 2012, when Manhattanville offered me the chance to chair its Department of Communication & Media. Shortly before my arrival, the student-run campus newspaper, *Touchstone*, switched faculty advisors. Change was in the air, but change was about to give way to controversy.

<sup>\*</sup> Brian J. Snee (Ph.D., Pennsylvania State University) is Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Communication and Media at Manhattanville College. He can be reached for comment on this essay by email at brian.snee@mville.edu.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Chuck Palahniuk, Survivor (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1999), 134.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Other notable productions filmed at Reid Hall include *The Thomas Crown Affair*, and episodes of "Boardwalk Empire," and "The Following."

The transition of advisors, a common occurrence at college newspapers, should have been simple and smooth. It was not. Because the transfer of (not very much) power had occurred before my arrival, I have no firsthand knowledge of the events that led to it. However, two competing narratives eventually circulated, one of them widely, some would say wildly.

During the previous year, *Touchstone* had been advised by Jeff Pearlman, a professional sports writer, best-selling author, and then-adjunct in the English department.<sup>3</sup> In addition to his work as a journalist, Pearlman maintained a blog and enjoyed a respectable following on Twitter. His social media sites were about to become a battlefield on which gossip would prove to be a powerful weapon and where facts would fall like so many soldiers.

I never met Jeff Pearlman during what was my first and his last year at Manhattanville. I did, however, speak to a number of students, staff, faculty and administrators, all of whom maintained that this is what happened just prior to my arrival: a group of students, which included class officers, former *Touchstone* writers, and even some of Pearlman's own staff, had gone to the administration at the end of the 2011-2012 academic year to request a new advisor for the paper. Under Pearlman's guidance, this group is alleged to have argued, the paper had been a provocative and exciting read, but it was not always accurate or professional. Misquotes and false facts were said to be commonplace. In one issue, the name of the college was misspelled on the front page. In another, an article about food in the cafeteria included a joke about starvation in Ethiopia that was so tasteless and offensive that the college held a workshop on cultural sensitivity. Too much of a muckraking tabloid, *Touchstone* was to become a more professional newspaper, and in order to do so it would need a new advisor. The group that requested the change also selected Pearlman's successor, and the college consented to their demands.

Pearlman contested this narrative, loudly and repeatedly. In his version of events, *Touchstone* was an exciting and dynamic newspaper that published hard news. According to him, "Some of the columns were blistering—the food here sucks, this college doesn't care about us—and I encouraged it. A college newspaper is supposed to be a vent; a place to tee off." Although he conceded that some issues of *Touchstone* included errors – "Bad headlines, run-on sentences, misidentified photographs" – he maintained that the college removed him from his position because the paper was too provocative. As he would tell it, the administration was fearful of his staff's editorial edge, fearful that the hard-hitting journalism in his student-run newspaper might hurt recruitment and retention efforts. According to Pearlman, he was removed so that *Touchstone* could be refashioned as a public relations pamphlet.

I cannot know which version of events is true, or at least which one is closer to the truth. Nor can anyone else who has not thoroughly investigated the matter, and yet that did not stop a group of professional journalists from accepting Pearlman's narrative, apparently without hesitation, and helping it to go viral. For the sake of full disclosure, I will admit that I find that Pearlman's story makes sense only if one believes in a vast conspiracy maintained by dozens of people, including students with nothing apparent to gain, all of whom must have agreed not only to lie, but to repeat the exact same lie. This strikes me as unlikely.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> As I worked on this essay, I thought very seriously about referring to Mr. Pearlman by a pseudonym. However, I ultimately decided to use his real name for two reasons. First, Mr. Pearlman shared his version of this story with as large an online audience as he could possibly attract. Anonymity seems to be the exact opposite of what he was trying to achieve. Second, I wanted to be able to cite his blog and Twitter account, and I would not have been able to do so while concealing his identity. For better or worse, this is the decision that I made.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Jeff Pearlman, "I Was a College Newspaper Advisor," jeffpearlman.com, March 21, 2013, accessed February 25, 2014, http://www.jeffpearlman.com/i-was-a-college-newspaper-advisor/

Fall semester began.

#### Fall 2012

Although no longer advising *Touchstone*, Pearlman continued to teach journalism in the English department, and he quickly made it known that he was not at all happy about what had transpired. In fairness, I would not have been happy either. It is my understanding that Pearlman was never contacted about the change by the college, and is said to have found out about the decision from a student. That's bad form. Still, poor internal communication does not necessarily amount to a conspiracy.

Just weeks into the fall semester, Pearlman started a class blog that billed itself as "The official on-line campus newspaper of Manhattanville College." It seems to have been an intentionally provocative act, as the new *Touchstone* staff had just announced that they were about to start publishing online. After Pearlman was reminded that *Touchstone* is in fact the college's official on-line campus newspaper, the blog was modified, but it was quickly filled with student-produced content that was almost invariably critical of anything and everything at the college.

For example, when the college announced that its 2012 commencement speaker would be the award-winning NPR journalist, Dina Temple-Raston, Pearlman's class blog harshly criticized the choice, explaining that Temple-Raston was a terrible choice – because they had never heard of her. I was genuinely embarrassed for Pearlman's students when the piece was published. It was clear to me that instead of seizing upon a teachable moment and explaining to his class just how successful and accomplished Temple-Raston is, never mind the importance of research, he had allowed them to publish a foolish editorial, perhaps because criticizing the college mattered more than looking out for his writers.

The administration likely was not thrilled that the blog came up with every Google search for the college, but to my knowledge no one ever asked Pearlman to change or remove a story, no matter how one-sided or misguided. For a college said (by Pearlman) to play fast and loose with its powers of censorship, Manhattanville seems to have exercised tremendous restraint with his class blog throughout its blistering, year-long publication. And so it went for most of the 2012-2013 academic year.

In early spring, everything changed.

## **Spring 2013**

On March 21<sup>st</sup>, Pearlman posted the first of two long and ultimately controversial narratives on his personal blog about his experience advising, and not advising, the campus newspaper. Titled "I was a college newspaper advisor," the first post began with a large picture of an old radio

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> What remains of the blog may be found here: https://www.rebelmouse.com/pubwrap/

microphone that, at a glance, appeared to have nothing to do with what was written beneath it.<sup>6</sup> However, on campus it was known that the image was lifted from the cover of a book on the history of radio, a book that had been written by the new *Touchstone* faculty advisor.<sup>7</sup> This was personal.

The nearly 2000-word post advanced the claim that the decision to replace Pearlman was in fact top down: the administration had "dumped" him in order to turn the newspaper into a PR vehicle. No evidence was offered to support this claim, which is not inappropriate for a personal blog, but well below the basic standards of journalism. This was apparently irrelevant to Pearlman's fellow journalists, who would later treat the post like well-vetted hard news and help spread the story across social media. Indeed, a community of professional fact checkers would endlessly tweet and retweet the link to the blog post – without ever checking the facts.

The most regrettable part of Pearlman's post was not the claim made against the college so much as the ferocious assessment of the work of student journalists still learning their craft. Of his reaction to the first edition published under the guidance of the new advisor, Pearlman wrote:

Then the *Touchstone* came out. And it was brutal. A pamphlet. A PR pamphlet. Awful layout, no rhyme or reason; mugshots alongside every story. It looks like a bad high school newspaper, or a mediocre junior high school newspaper.<sup>8</sup>

Pearlman noted on the blog that he did not blame the students for the quality of the newspaper, but given that *Touchstone* is an editorially-independent student-produced paper, it's difficult to separate the paper from those who produce it. One gets the sense that he wanted badly to criticize the new advisor, but had no choice but to criticize the work of the new staff. The very public comments of a college adjunct made many on the staff feel as if they'd been attacked by friendly fire. I found the comments to be petty and the intent obvious. Pearlman concluded:

And that's when it hit me. The college doesn't aspire to a quality student newspaper. It's about safety. Easiness. Why have an established journalist advise students on journalism when you [can] have a PR person advise students on journalism? Why aim for excellence when mediocrity is so comfortable? Hell, I could have helped my students put out a *New York Times*-quality product, and it wouldn't have mattered. It was never about the journalism, per se, or the newspaper.<sup>9</sup>

Despite its impassioned tone and serious accusation about the limiting of free speech, the blog post created little buzz. Three weeks later, on April 12, Pearlman once again blogged about the unpaid advisory position that had gone to another professor more than eight months earlier. In this post, Pearlman explained his motivation for keeping the issue alive online for so long: "How can you tell aspiring journalists that it's their job to uncover wrongdoing—then sit atop wrongdoing? How can you blather on about accountability without being accountable?" <sup>10</sup>

Coordinating his social media efforts, Pearlman began using his Twitter account to drive online traffic to his blog, and this time it worked. The reaction was swift and strikingly one-sided, not just from loyal followers, but from media professionals and outlets. The majority of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Pearlman, "I Was a College Newspaper Advisor."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Anthony Rudel, *Hello Everybody: The Dawn of American Radio* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2008).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Pearlman, "I Was a College Newspaper Advisor."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Pearlman, "I Was a College Newspaper Advisor."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Jeff Pearlman, "Why," jeffpearlman.com, April 12, 2013, accessed February 25, 2014, http://www.jeffpearlman.com/why/

However, one tweet in particular seems in hindsight to have been a prescient sign of hysterical things to come. On April 12, @DomenicoNBC, an account that appears to belong to Domenico Montanaro, a deputy political editor at NBC News, offered this thoughtful and measured reply: "This is why journalism's dying. Manhattanville, go run NKorea." Assuming the Twitter account really does belong to an editor at NBC, it is remarkable that a media professional whose social media account directly associates his tweets with the reputation and integrity of his employer would liken the replacement of a student newspaper advisor to the actions of a violent and oppressive regime. However, Pearlman's reply to the tweet is revealing. A few hours later, @jeffpearlman tweeted back: "blue hens unite, D." Both Pearlman and Montanaro are graduates of the University of Delaware, whose nickname is the Blue Hens. This too was personal.

Many more hyperbolic responses would follow, at least some presumably not from Pearlman's old college buddies. Indeed, a whole group of journalists appears to have immediately and unquestioningly believed that what they read on Pearlman's personal blog was beyond doubt. The basic rules of journalism – like fact checking a single-sourced claim from a biased participant – seem not to apply in the Twittersphere, even or perhaps especially when journalists are doing the tweeting.

@DomenicoNBC tweeted again later that day, completing the transition from sloppy journalism to media activism, with this message: "Hey, @Mville\_College and anyone considering going there, you might as well be Central New Mexico Community College." The tweet was followed by a link to a story on the Student Press Law Center's website about CNMCC, which had shut down its student newspaper after the staff published as issue entirely devoted to subject of sex. Days later, the very same SPLC journalist who had written the article about CNMCC was calling Manhattanville wanting to know why Pearlman had been fired. If the NBC News editor had not contacted her, it is an amazing coincidence.

This would soon become a theme among the journalists retweeting the link to Pearlman's blog. Informing (or possibly misinforming) their followers was not enough to satisfy them. These remarkably uncurious investigators wanted action or revenge. @A\_Jude, the Twitter page for a sports writer from *The Seattle Times*, tweeted: "Administrators at Manhattanville should be ashamed." dectoner, an account said to belong to a staff writer for a newspaper in Chicago, demanded: "Accreditation should be revoked!" deanielpaulling, promoted as the Twitter account of a sports reporter for the *Paducah Sun*, tweeted this: "Manhattanville College (@Mville\_College) doesn't care about students, just \$." @SIPeteThamel, purportedly a senior writer at *Sports Illustrated*, tweeted: "Administrators at Manhattanville should be ashamed. This is North Korea stuff," before retweeting Pearlman's blog post to his 95,000+ Twitter followers.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> https://Twitter.com/DomenicoNBC/status/322784544833024002

https://Twitter.com/DomenicoNBC/status/322788243626151936

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Sara Tirrito, "New Mexico College Administrators Reinstate Staff, Return Confiscated Papers," splc.org, March 27, 2013, accessed February 25, 2014, http://www.splc.org/news/newsflash.asp?id=2553

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> https://Twitter.com/A\_Jude/status/322800423067078656

<sup>15</sup> https://Twitter.com/ctoner/status/323641038650617857

<sup>16</sup> https://Twitter.com/DanielPaulling/status/323111448723210240

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> https://Twitter.com/SIPeteThamel/status/322796159548653569

@MikeMadden, said to be the editor of a Washington DC newspaper, announced: "So, apparently Manhattanville College is not the place to go to learn about journalism." Other journalists would also try to use Pearlman's unvetted narrative and their Twitter accounts to damage the college's admissions efforts. One Twitter user who self-identifies as a contributing editor for Deadspin.com summed up what many of his colleagues felt comfortably informed to tell the world: "So, yeah, don't send your kids to Manhattanville College."

The trolling was not limited to Twitter. LoHud.com, a Westchester County weblog associated with the Gannett-owned *Journal News*, ran a story with no quote from the college in which readers were told that Pearlman was "canned" by the college for making the paper "too provocative for Manhattanville's tastes." When I later contacted the *Journal News* to ask about their investigative research, they acknowledged that they do not fact check information posted on their blogs. Someone then seemed to have handed over my name and contact information to Pearlman, who began emailing me to ask about the writing of this essay. So much for protecting sources. A few days later, an editor at the publication confirmed in a phone call that no fact checking had been done whatsoever. "It's aggregated," she explained, in a tone I'd describe as highly aggravated. She then demanded that I tell her the name of the publication for which I was writing this piece, presumably so that she could contact its editor and convince him or her not to publish it.

At least one college newspaper, *Student Life*, the student newspaper at the University of Washington in St. Louis, published an editorial on April 22, 2013, that stated as fact that Pearlman had been fired because "Manhattanville's administrators grew concerned about the paper's message." No call was ever made to the college by the editorial staff at *Student Life* to verify Pearlman's claim. They apparently read his online blog, believed it to be gospel, and passed it along to their readers. No reporting, just repeating.

FIRE, the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, published an article in which the following is not attributed to Pearlman but is instead offered as a fact: "the paper would from that point forward promote the 'right' image of the school." And the Associated Press Sports Editors also spread Pearlman's narrative across the web, never contacting the college, never asking questions, never examining facts. 23

The college even received a few emails and letters claiming to be from the parents of high school students who had intended to come to Manhattanville, but who now had decided not to apply because of Pearlman's dismissal. When the college searched for the students' names in online education databases, none came back as belonging to an actual student enrolled in any high school, anywhere. It's impossible to know who actually wrote the letters, but, disturbingly, they may have been the fictional work of professional journalists willing not only to engage in media activism, but to manufacture false evidence to suggest that their activism was succeeding.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> https://Twitter.com/MikeMadden/status/322799334993326080

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> https://Twitter.com/BrianPHickey/status/322809116957495296

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Gary Stern, "Journalism Advisor Dumped at Manhattanville; And an Essay Assignment You Won't Believe," LoHud.com, April 15, 2013, accessed February 25, 2014, http://education.lohudblogs.com/2013/04/15/journalism-advisor-dumped-at-manhattanville-and-an-essay-assignment-you-wont-believe/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> "Conversation is a Vital Part of the Collegiate Experience," *Student Life*, April 22, 2013, accessed February 25, 2014, http://www.studlife.com/forum/staff-editorials/2013/04/22/conversation-is-a-vital-part-of-the-collegiate-experience/

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<sup>22</sup> Susan Kruth, "Former College Newspaper Advisor on how Unlearning Liberty Stifled Journalism," thefire.org, April 15, 2013, accessed February 25, 2014, http://www.thefire.org/former-college-newspaper-advisor-on-how-unlearning-liberty-stifled-journalism/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> https://Twitter.com/APSE\_sportmedia/status/323561004292255744

Throughout all of this, Pearlman continued his assault on the college, most regrettably on April 26, when he posted on his blog a picture of the female student who, at the time, served as Editor-in-Chief of *Touchstone*.<sup>24</sup> The student had agreed to appear in a marketing photo for the college. The photo had her name, major and graduation year on it, which Pearlman did not blur out when he posted it to his blog, making her the literal and figurative face of what he claimed was a phony journalism program. The student wept when she saw it, and she confessed to me her fear that it might cost her a news internship that she had just been offered at a local TV affiliate. It struck me as a shockingly cruel thing to do to an innocent college student, but what Pearlman's loyal friends and followers thought is impossible to know. None commented on his use of the student's name and image. Sports reporters unite?

All of this raises fascinating and disturbing questions about the different ways in which journalists and their readers regard content shared by journalists on social media. I strongly suspect that if asked these journalists would say that they were not endorsing Pearlman's claims, but simply sharing his story. However, these same journalists daily use their Twitter accounts to report real news. How are their followers to know the difference between reporting and repeating? This is a larger and more troublesome question that I do not seek to answer here.

In the days that followed, other reporters shouted in outrage over something that, for all they knew, might well be a lie. In the end, one – and only one – journalist decided to report (and not simply reprint) the story. Sara Tirrito of the Student Press Law Center spent days making calls, asking questions, and checking facts - doing journalism, which was a rare commodity in the spring of 2013. When her story finally appeared on the SPLC website, the title said it all: "Manhattanville Newspaper Adviser's Removal Prompted by Reader Complaints." <sup>25</sup>

So much for the conspiracy cooked up in the castle.

# In Theory

All of this leads to two fundamental questions. First, what made Pearlman's story so believable that even seasoned journalists were comfortable accepting it, sharing it, and engaging in activism because of it – all without any apparent attempt to verify it? And second, what does this tell us about the state of social media, in which anyone can report news, spread misinformation, and cross the disappearing line between informing and mobilizing?

The late Kenneth Burke taught us that nothing is more central to persuasion than identification. 26 As a fellow journalist, Pearlman seems to have been a believable (albeit single) source. Some of the Twitter users who saw and shared his blog post appear to have known him personally. Others, I suspect, were willing to assume that a fellow journalist would not play fast and loose with the truth, even on his personal blog and Twitter account. This may be why the story spread so quickly among sports journalists: reporters trusting fellow reporters, each confident that someone somewhere must have looked into the story and done some actual reporting.

Beyond identification with the source, there is the story itself. Walter Fisher established that a story is likely to be persuasive if it is believable and rings true with the reader's personal expe-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Jeff Pearlman, "A Teacher Fades Away," jeffpearlman.com, April 26, 2013, accessed February 25, 2014, http://www.jeffpearlman.com/a-teacher-fades-away/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Sara Tirrito, "Manhattanville Newspaper Adviser's Removal Prompted by Reader Complaints," splc.org, May 1, 2013, accessed February 25, 2014, http://www.splc.org/news/newsflash.asp?id=2570

<sup>26</sup> Kenneth Burke, *A Rhetoric of Motives* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), 19-23.

riences.<sup>27</sup> So many colleges have and still do put pressure on their student newspapers to publish only positive news that it was likely very believable that Manhattanville College had done the same—even if it hadn't. That there is no evidence (that I have seen) to support Pearlman's claim seems to have mattered less than the fact that this was a story that these journalists had heard before, too many times, and this time they were hearing it from one of their own. Critical defenses down, minds made up, trusted voices from institutions like NBC News and *Sports Illustrated* repeated and retweeted a story supported by no facts or evidence, and some did so with great vitriol. The source's ethos generated such strong pathos that his audience forgot to examine logos.

We have known for a long time that people behave differently online. As far back as 1996, Thomas W. Benson alerted us to the fact that Internet discussions are not often marked by a tone of civility or generosity. Even Pearlman himself has written about the phenomenon for CNN.com, noting that the "filter that was a pen and paper has vanished, replaced by the immediate gratification of [on-line] negativity." Curiously, Pearlman was writing about readers who send angry emails to journalists, not journalists who tweet out angry and possibly inaccurate messages to their followers, but the principle applies all the same.

Still, questions remain. Do journalists see themselves as "reporting" when they share information on social media? Are tweets and blog posts to be held to the same journalistic standards as other forms of reporting? And does the public make any distinction between what a journalist writes in a newspaper, says on television, or shares online? It's a conversation that is already started, but nowhere near concluded, as the events of last spring made clear to me.

## **Conclusion**

"Twitter's use by reputable news sites, professional reporters, and opinion writers," one researcher recently observed, "at times remains about as sophisticated as law enforcement during the days of Wyatt Earp and the shootout at the O.K. Corral." In the blogosphere and Twittersphere, journalism and activism overlap and blur in ways both wonderful and worrisome. When the horrible Boston marathon murders happened just a few days after Pearlman's second blog post, everyone with a smart phone became both a journalist and activist at the same time, spreading largely reliable information about what had happened, and doing so, in part, so that those responsible would be caught and punished. And when the media seemed to be too quick to believe suspicious information from social media, as in this case of content gleaned from what may or may not have been Dzhokhar Tsarnaev's actual Twitter account, it was Jeff Pearlman himself who called out his colleagues, tweeting: "Can't believe media is reporting his Internet ramblings as fact." In the blogosphere and one researcher and punished as a law enforcement during the search of the blogosphere and the blogosphere and Twittersphere, journalist and activist at the same time, spreading largely reliable information about what had happened, and doing so, in part, so that those responsible would be caught and punished. And when the media seemed to be too quick to believe suspicious information from social media, as in this case of content gleaned from what may or may not have been Dzhokhar Tsarnaev's actual Twitter account, it was Jeff Pearlman himself who called out his colleagues, tweeting: "Can't believe media is reporting his Internet ramblings as fact."

I know exactly how he felt.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Walter R. Fisher, "Narration as Human Communication Paradigm: The Case of Public Moral Argument," *Communication Monographs* 51 (1984): 1-22.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Thomas W. Benson, "Rhetoric, Civility, and Community: Political Debate on Computer Bulletin Boards," *Communication Quarterly* 44 (1996): 359-378.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Jeff Pearlman, "Tracking Down My Online Haters," cnn.com, January 21, 2011, accessed February 25, 2014, http://www.cnn.com/2011/OPINION/01/21/pearlman.online.civility/index.html

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> Jerry Lanson, "Let's Establish Ethics Codes for Using Twitter in Journalism," *Media Ethics* 25 (2013) http://www.mediaethicsmagazine.com/index.php/browse-back-issues/143-spring-2012/3998417-lets-establish-ethics-codes-for-using-Twitter-in-journalism

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> This tweet appears to have been deleted.