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**Re-learning to listen: one way news  
organizations can regain trust**



# OUTLINE



What is role of audience in journalism?

What is engaged journalism?

What are the ways to engage audiences?

What are advantages of engaged journalism?



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## AUDIENCES IN THE NEWS CYCLES

From passive consumers to active participants.

An exchange between press critic Walter Lippmann (1889-1974) (photo on the left), and philosopher John Dewey (1859-1952), (photo on the right), is central to understanding of the role of experts and the responsibilities of the public in a democracy.



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# LIPPMANN'S PERSPECTIVE

Public – uninformed mass.



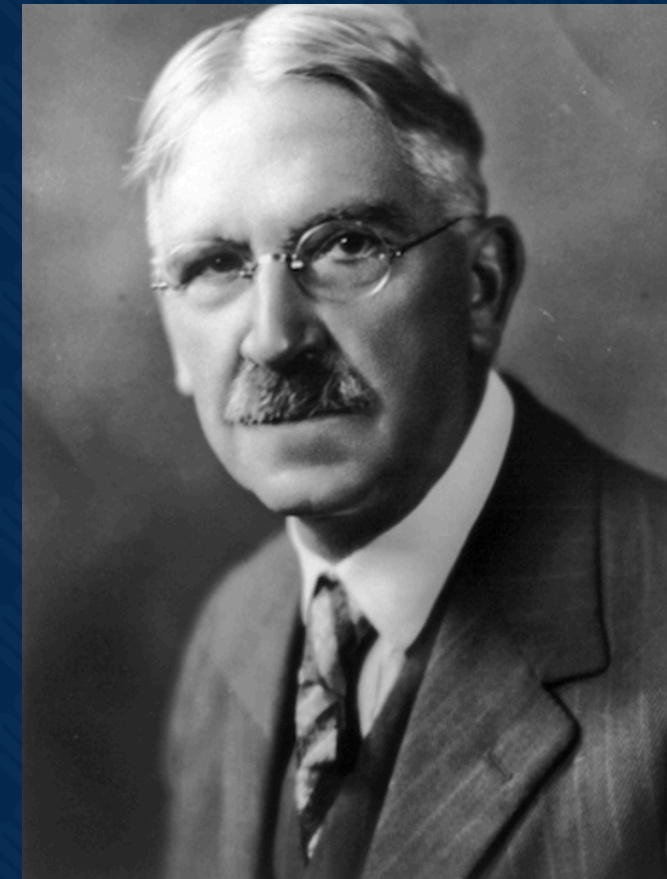
- Lippmann thought that modern society had become too intricate for the public to comprehend and make informed decisions.
- He envisioned the press as a bridge between uninformed masses and powerful insiders who help formulate policies for elected decision-makers.
- The journalists' function, in his view, is to evaluate government policies and present well-informed conclusions to the public.



## DEWEY'S PERSPECTIVE

Audiences – engaged in democratic discourse.

- Dewey saw journalists as the teachers of the public, while Lippmann viewed them as leaders of the citizenry.
- Dewey believed that the public was capable of rational thought and decision-making, and active citizen participation was vital for a healthy democracy.
- In this context, the job of the journalist is to engage and educate the public in the critical policy issues of the day, enabling them to participate in the democratic discourse.



# WHAT IS ENGAGED JOURNALISM?

From one-way communication to engagement.

- Journalism has traditionally been seen as a **one-way communication**, where news organizations would broadcast information to their audience without necessarily engaging with them.
- However, in recent years, after the online media revolution, there has been a growing movement towards **engaged journalism**, which seeks to involve audiences in the news process and give them a voice in shaping the stories that are reported.
- The engaged journalism is defined as an inclusive practice that prioritizes the information needs and wants of the community members it serves, creates collaborative space for the audience in all aspects of the journalistic process, and is dedicated to building and preserving trusting relationships between journalists and the public”.



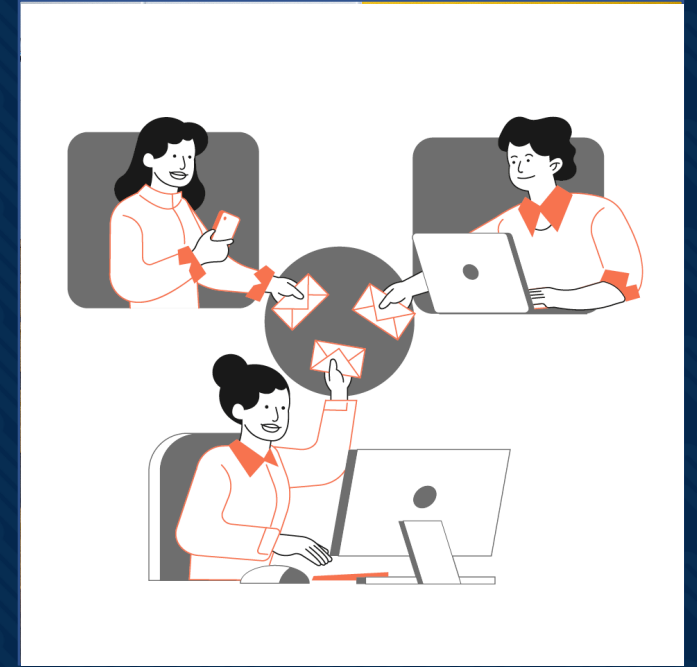
# GOALS OF ENGAGED JOURNALISM NEWSROOMS



Prioritize listening to the community.



Seek to build stronger relationships between journalists and community members.



Create dialog and build trust.

# ENGAGED JOURNALISM

Seeking out input from the audience.

- One way in which newsrooms are practicing engaged journalism is by actively seeking out input from their audience.
- This can be done through surveys, polls, and social media channels.
- Newsrooms are also hosting public forums and town hall meetings where they can hear directly from their audience and discuss issues that are important to them.





# THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

Example of seeking out input from the audience.

- The Texas Tribune has a “Community Voices” program that invites readers to contribute their perspectives on local issues.
- The news outlet also organizes a “The Texas Tribune Festival”, event each year that brings together politicians, journalists, and community members for discussions on important issues.
- You can explore the news outlet here: <https://www.texastribune.org/>



The screenshot shows the homepage of The Texas Tribune. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for INVESTIGATIONS, NEWSLETTERS, EVENTS, AUDIO, DATA, and a DONATE button with a search icon. The main header features the organization's logo, a yellow star, and the text "THE TEXAS TRIBUNE" in large, bold, black letters. Below the logo is the tagline "Support nonprofit, public-service journalism that Texans trust. Give now." A horizontal menu below the header lists several topics: Abbott and DeSantis, Drag Queen Performances, Electricity Market, Education Savings Accounts, and 2023 Legislative Session. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column features a photograph of a "VOTE CENTER" sign with a blue arrow pointing right, with people standing nearby. Below the photo is the caption "Eli Hartman for The Texas Tribune". The right column features a headline "Texas Senate gives first OK to make illegal voting a felony again" by Pooja Salhotra, Natalia Contreras, and VoteBeat. Below the headline is a sub-headline "The priority bill, backed by Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick, reverses a change the Legislature made two years ago during an omnibus voting bill that made illegal voting a misdemeanor." To the right of this article is another article titled "Shuttered Fairfield Lake State Park will reopen temporarily starting Tuesday" by Emily Foxhall, 7 hours ago. The article includes a small image of a person pointing at a map.

# ENGAGED JOURNALISM

Partnering with community organizations and groups.

- Another way in which engaged journalism is being practiced is by partnering with community organizations and groups.
- By working with these groups, newsrooms can gain a better understanding of the issues that are important to the community and develop stories that are more relevant and impactful.
- Engaged journalism is not just about reporting on the community; it is about working with the community to create better journalism.



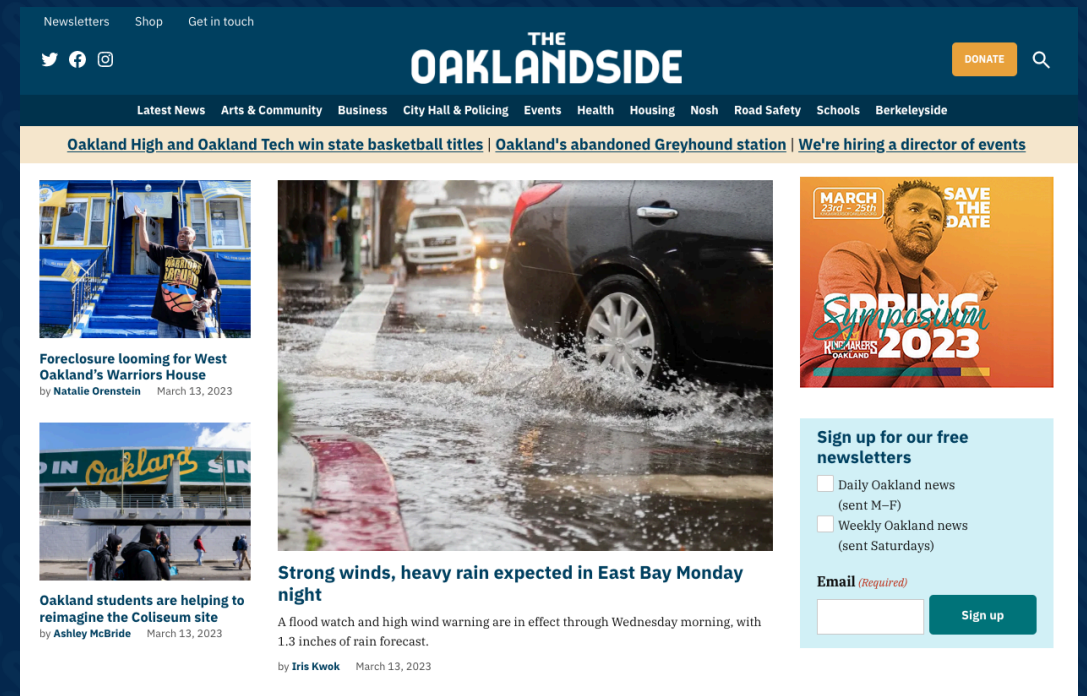
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# THE OAKLANDSIDE

Example of partnering with community organizations and groups.

- The Oaklandside, is a nonprofit news outlet dedicated to serving local information needs, amplifying community voices and investigating systems in and for Oakland.
- A team of journalists is deeply embedded in the community and regularly attend community events and meetings.
- The news outlet also have a community engagement team that works to build relationships with local organizations and community leaders.
- You can explore The Oaklanside here: <https://oaklandside.org/>



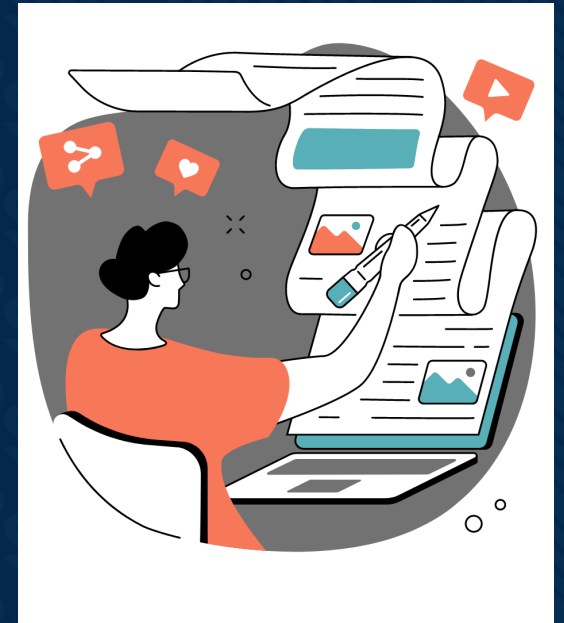
The screenshot shows the homepage of The Oaklandside website. The header is dark blue with the site's name 'THE OAKLANDSIDE' in white. Navigation links include 'Newsletters', 'Shop', and 'Get in touch'. A 'DONATE' button and a search icon are on the right. Below the header is a horizontal menu with categories: 'Latest News', 'Arts & Community', 'Business', 'City Hall & Policing', 'Events', 'Health', 'Housing', 'Nosh', 'Road Safety', 'Schools', and 'Berkeleyside'. A secondary navigation bar features headlines: 'Oakland High and Oakland Tech win state basketball titles', 'Oakland's abandoned Greyhound station', and 'We're hiring a director of events'. The main content area has three columns. The left column shows a photo of a person at a blue bus stop with the headline 'Foreclosure looming for West Oakland's Warriors House' by Natalie Orenstein, dated March 13, 2023. Below it is a photo of a stadium with the headline 'Oakland students are helping to reimagine the Coliseum site' by Ashley McBride, dated March 13, 2023. The middle column features a photo of a car driving through a flooded street with the headline 'Strong winds, heavy rain expected in East Bay Monday night' by Iris Kwok, dated March 13, 2023. The right column has a 'SAVE THE DATE' graphic for 'MARCH 2023' and a 'Spring Symposium 2023' event. Below the graphic is a sign-up form for free newsletters, with options for 'Daily Oakland news (sent M-F)' and 'Weekly Oakland news (sent Saturdays)'. An email field and a 'Sign up' button are also present.



# ADVANTAGES OF ENGAGED JOURNALISM

Partnering with community organizations and groups.

- Engaged journalism can lead to more relevant and impactful reporting by ensuring that news coverage reflects the needs and interests of the community.
- By involving the community in the reporting process, newsrooms can build trust and relationships with the local residents and organizations, which can lead to a stronger sense of community ownership and investment in local news.
- Engaged journalism can also lead to a more diverse range of voices and perspectives being represented in news coverage. By partnering with community organizations and groups, newsrooms can ensure that the voices of marginalized and underrepresented groups are heard and their stories are told.



# ADVANTAGES OF ENGAGED JOURNALISM

Partnering with community organizations and groups.

- Engaged journalism can also lead to a more sustainable business model for newsrooms, as community members who feel invested in the reporting process are more likely to become paying subscribers and donors.
- Overall, engaged journalism can lead to a stronger, more vibrant, and more impactful news ecosystem that better serves the needs of local communities.



## References:

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Batsell, J. (2015). *Engaged journalism: Connecting with digitally empowered news audiences*. Columbia University Press.

Green-Barber, L., & McKinley, E.G. (2019). *Engaged journalism: practices for building trust, generating revenue, and fostering civic engagement*. <https://s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/lindsaygreenbarber.com/assets/IA+Engaged+Journalism+Report+1.31.19.pdf>

Joy Mayer (2015). *Engaged Journalism: It's About Listening and Responding*. Reynolds Journalism Institute.

**Thanks for learning about  
engaged journalism!**



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