

# WSU talk names pros and cons of social media

## Journalist speakers have mixed feelings about new methods

By Yesenia Amaro Daily News staff writer

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An audience member asked an interesting question during Washington State University's 36th annual Edward R. Murrow Symposium roundtable discussion Tuesday night: Do you think Murrow would be tweeting?

"If I'm tweeting, I think Murrow would be tweeting," Judy Woodruff, of the Public Broadcasting Service, responded.

The two-day symposium, which this year focused on transformational media, concluded with the roundtable discussion, where Woodruff, Deborah Amos and Robin Fields exchanged their views about media ethics and responsibility. The discussion took place at the Beasley Coliseum and was moderated by WSU Edward R. Murrow College of Communication Dean Lawrence Pintak.

Woodruff and Amos, of National Public Radio, received this year's Murrow Award for Lifetime Achievement in television and radio respectively.

Fields, senior editor of ProPublica, was presented with the Murrow Award for Media Entrepreneurship. ProPublica is an independent, nonprofit newsroom that produces investigative journalism.

Pintak asked the journalists if they have a Twitter account and how they avoid giving their personal bias in their tweets.

Woodruff said she has a Twitter account, but admitted she is still learning how to tweet.

"(The) News Hour feels (Twitter) is something important, frankly, to bring attention to what we are doing," she said.

Woodruff said other media networks also are using social media.

Pintak cited the New York Times reporter who tweeted "Toyota sucks" and asked the journalists if they thought that was right to do.

Fields said sometimes people forget that Twitter, Facebook, and e-mails are publications. She said she personally doesn't have a Twitter account.

"Maybe I'm behind the times, but I don't like that," she said.

Still, she said, ProPublica does blog often.

"We do a considerable amount of blogging, but it's investigative blogging," she said.

Amos said because she covers the Middle East, she is very active on Facebook, but she is very careful about how she uses it.

"I have to be a little careful because of where I go," she said. "I need to be very aware of my public persona."

As media is experiencing a technological transformation and anybody is able to blog. Pintak said, it's hard to tell what's real and what's not.

"We have to wonder, sometimes, about the integrity within them," he said.

Fields said ProPublica sometimes uses blogs as a source, but not as a sole source of information.

"You have to go out and do your own work," she said. "... Our credibility is built brick by brick, story by story."

Woodruff said the level of pressure is another change in media.

"Absolutely, there's more pressure to appeal to the audience," she said.

Fields said that is not the case for ProPublica since it doesn't have to sell anything because it is independent. But she said an audience always makes a difference.

"We do want our stories to have an impact," she said. "And to have an impact you need to have an audience."

**Yesenia Amaro** can be reached at (208) 882-5561, ext. 237, or by e-mail at [yamaro@dnews.com](mailto:yamaro@dnews.com).