

A large, diverse crowd of people is arranged in a large 'U' shape, framing the central text. The people are of various ages, ethnicities, and are wearing colorful clothing. Some are standing, some are walking, and a few are on bicycles. The background is a plain white surface.

THE CONVERSATION US

2016 Stakeholder Report

FROM THE EDITOR

2016 was a tumultuous and unpredictable year, not least in the world of journalism where facts and expertise found themselves under siege from “fake news” and elected officials.

Here at The Conversation, however, we continued to attract readers by holding true to our mission to provide context and insight about stories that matter by working with academics to translate their ideas and research to the general public.

Where else could you find pieces on the rise of white identity politics and why American elections are ranked worst among Western democracies alongside a first-hand account of an OB-GYN treating Zika, an insider's description of how scientists detected gravitational waves and the story of how public bathrooms got separated by gender in the first place?

The past year we brought you coverage of the most extraordinary US election campaign in recent memory. But, as you will see from the individual desk editors' reports on the following pages, The Conversation was also able to highlight scholarship that provides critical and sometimes surprising context to the headline issues of undocumented immigration and Flint Michigan's water crisis; that proposes solutions to the everyday problems worrying Americans such as bullying in schools and antibiotic resistance; and that challenges accepted thinking about labor unions and crocodiles.

The end of 2016 and beginning of 2017 saw an exciting expansion of our coverage with the establishment of three new editor positions covering data & applied mathematics; ethics & religion and philanthropy & nonprofits.

Since our launch in October 2014, The Conversation US has published over 4000 articles from over 3400 scholars from over 525 academic institutions. We are immensely grateful to our contributors. It is a privilege for our editorial team to work with them as, indeed, it is for me to work with such a dedicated and professional group of editors.

Thanks, too, to our readers who, I am proud to say, come from every corner of the United States. We are proud of our impact in the US media and we're proud to be part of a growing international network with Conversation editions in Australia, the UK, Africa and France.

As we enter a time of political and social turbulence at home and abroad, independent evidence-based journalism could not be more important. The path ahead for The Conversation is clear. We look forward to you keeping us company as we continue to promote truthful information and strengthen journalism by unlocking the rich diversity of academic ideas and research to audiences across America.



Maria Balinska

Editor and Co-CEO The Conversation US

OUR CHARTER

- *Inform public debate with knowledge-based journalism that is responsible, ethical and supported by evidence.*
- *Unlock the knowledge of researchers and academics to provide the public with clarity and insight into society's biggest problems.*
- *Create an open site for people around the world to share best practices and collaborate on developing smart, sustainable solutions.*
- *Provide a fact-based and editorially independent forum, free of commercial or political bias.*
- *Support and foster academic freedom to conduct research, teach, write and publish.*
- *Ensure the site's integrity by only obtaining non-partisan sponsorship from education, government and private partners. Any advertising will be relevant and non-obtrusive.*
- *Protect editorial freedom in all commercial agreements.*
- *Ensure quality, diverse and intelligible content reaches the widest possible audience by employing experienced editors to curate the site.*
- *Set the standard in journalism best practice. Be open, transparent and accountable. Where errors occur correct them expeditiously.*

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Conversation US has come a long way since its launch in October 2014. We were fortunate at the beginning to have six major foundations willing to fund an idea that was already thriving in Australia and the UK. Now, just two and a half years on, we have increased our funding significantly -- thanks to delivering to the wider public trusted, evidence-based journalism that is authored by academics working with our experienced editors. It is the editorial product that drives The Conversation's success.

We are said to live in a post-truth time where a viable business model for quality news looks lost forever, social media dominates how people get information and misinformation and spin are getting hard to identify.

The Conversation is proving what is possible.

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Howard Hughes Medical Institute, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation and The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation were our partners for launch. In a significant vote of confidence in our mission and our success to date, both HHMI and Robert Wood Johnson decided at the end of 2016 to renew funding for TCUS.

Since 2015 we have also attracted support from a number of other leading foundations including the Carnegie Corporation of NY, the Knight Foundation, the Rita Allen Foundation, the Henry Luce Foundation, the Simons Foundation and the Lilly Endowment. We are proud to have added the Ford Foundation to that list in early 2017.

In January of 2016 we launched the university membership model, which is the backbone of our sister editions in Australia and the UK. We were fortunate to have 19 highly regarded research universities sign up as founding members. Since then, we have been added 17 more universities and colleges to bring the total to 36.

Also in 2016 after a 90-day audit of our content, the Associated Press entered into a formal partnership with The Conversation US. This is a significant development. TC-US content now lives on AP Mobile and AP News. Our stories are being tweeted out monthly to the 9.3 million twitter followers of the AP. They are being published regularly by AP clients across the country -- in regional and local markets from Indiana to Texas.

In April 2017 the AP hosted an AP Conversation Summit for universities and foundations. Ten of our university supporters along with six of our foundation supporters and many media representatives attended alongside the executive team of The Conversation and senior leadership at the AP. The main item on the agenda: how to make sure academics and researchers are sharing their knowledge about issues that are important to everyday people.

Thanks to our fundraising success, we have been able to hire a Director of University Relations to grow our university membership. We have also added a Director of Foundation Relations.

We have many opportunities that lie ahead as we move beyond our start up phase. Access to trusted, evidence-based analysis and news has never been harder to get and never been more crucial to inform a functioning democracy.

We have added a donation button to the site and are grateful for the individual contributions that are coming in regularly. I look forward to authoring this report one year from now with the expectations of significantly more growth and success.

In the meantime, I want to thank all of our supporting university and foundation funders. Without your backing, we would not be here!



Bruce Wilson

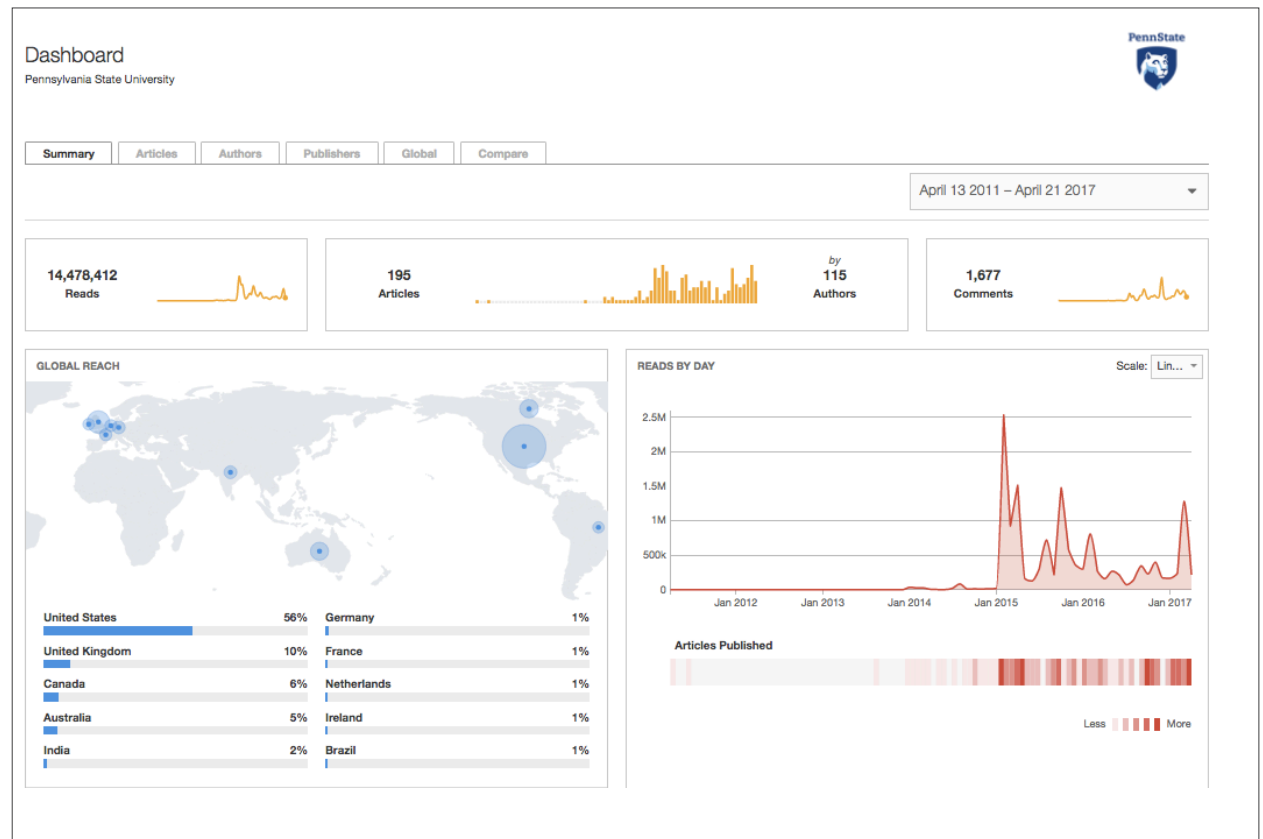
Executive Director & Co-CEO

MEMBERSHIP

The Conversation US is funded through a combination of foundation grants and annual university membership dues. While a researcher at any university can write for The Conversation, academics at member universities receive special benefits that include:

- A graphical dashboard with metrics that report on all articles' through republication statistics, social media engagement and comments.
- Campus visits from The Conversation staff to provide training for faculty on how to pitch ideas based upon their research and how to write for the general public.
- Forward planning advice and alerts of future story themes.
- "Expert requests" for articles on specific topics that are sent out daily by our editors.
- Input to our advisory board on policy and procedural matters.

Today 36 academic member institutions formally support our mission of providing research-based analysis written by academics to the general public. Our team has traveled across the country visiting member schools to learn about their cutting edge scholarship, to work with faculty to hone pitches, and to collaborate with university media relations teams on expanding the impact of academic research.



AUDIENCE

During 2016, the monthly audience of The Conversation US website grew to over 560,000 readers. — Monthly reads of our content through Creative Commons on other media and republishers currently exceeds 6 million.

According to our 2016 reader survey, The Conversation US reaches a diverse audience — less than 33% of our readers are academics, and 50% work full time. Our readers are equally split by gender. 64% of our readers completed college and 47% hold an advanced degree. We have readers in over 92 countries, but our largest audience (69%) is from the U.S.A.



Sometimes popular academic writings don't seem to jive with the times. The Conversation does."



I like the idea of news items being written by a person who has some background knowledge of the topic."

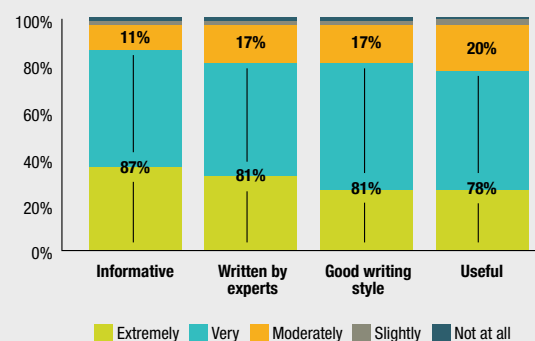


It's refreshing to read articles that do not fall back on sarcasm, idioms, irreverence, or other current digital writing tropes to engage the reader."

TOP 5 COUNTRIES BY READERSHIP

-  1. United States
-  2. Australia
-  3. Canada
-  4. France
-  5. United Kingdom

READERS EVALUATION*



**Results compiled from over 3,200 responses to our survey conducted January, 2016.*

OUR READERS



51% male
49% female



73% under 64



67% have an
undergrad degreee



47% have an
advanced degreee



50% work full-time



8% are students

MONTHLY AUDIENCE

560k users on site
6m reach through republication

MEDIA + REPUBLICATION

Republication is at the core of The Conversation's model: we distribute content to an enormously wide range of publishers under our Creative Commons license. In 2016, nearly 85% of the reading of our content was done on others' websites, greatly expanding diversity.

In 2016, our republication network grew substantially. Publishers who began using our content included Smithsonian Magazine, PBS Newshour, PRI's The World, Marketwatch, Tegna (the group of 46 local websites formerly known as Gannett Broadcasting), and Lee Enterprise (a chain of 44 local newspapers). Online-only outlets such as The Inertia (an extreme sports site), Inverse (a pop culture/science site), The Daily Beast (news and commentary site) and DeSmogBlog (a climate change site) also came on board.

Internationally, our stories were translated and published by outlets including Nexa (Brazil), El Pais (Spain), Digi24 (Romania), Novoye Vremya (Ukraine), and Newsphere (Japan).

Newspapers including the Bangor Daily News, Arizona Republic, Houston Chronicle, and Louisville Courier-Journal put our content in print as well as online.

Successes for Republishers:

American Medical Association warns of health and safety problems from 'white' LED streetlights - **CNN.com**

Normalizing fascists - **SmithsonianMag.com**

Pleasure is good: How French children acquire a taste for life - **Houston Chronicle**

Five things that explain Donald Trump's stunning presidential election victory - **PBS Newshour**

As Republicans ready to dismantle ACA, insurers likely to bolt - **Business Insider & Marketwatch**

Roots of opioid epidemic can be traced back to two key changes in pain management - **Mineral Wells (TX) Index**



Republishing articles from The Conversation is simple and fast. Their stories fill in gaps in our coverage and present fresh and smart angles to our readers."

Dave Beard

(Former) Executive Editor, PRI.org



Stories from the Conversation have been a great complement to our original reporting at CNN Health, providing unusual angles on popular stories and sometimes answering questions readers didn't know they had."

Katherine Dillinger

Producer, CNN Health

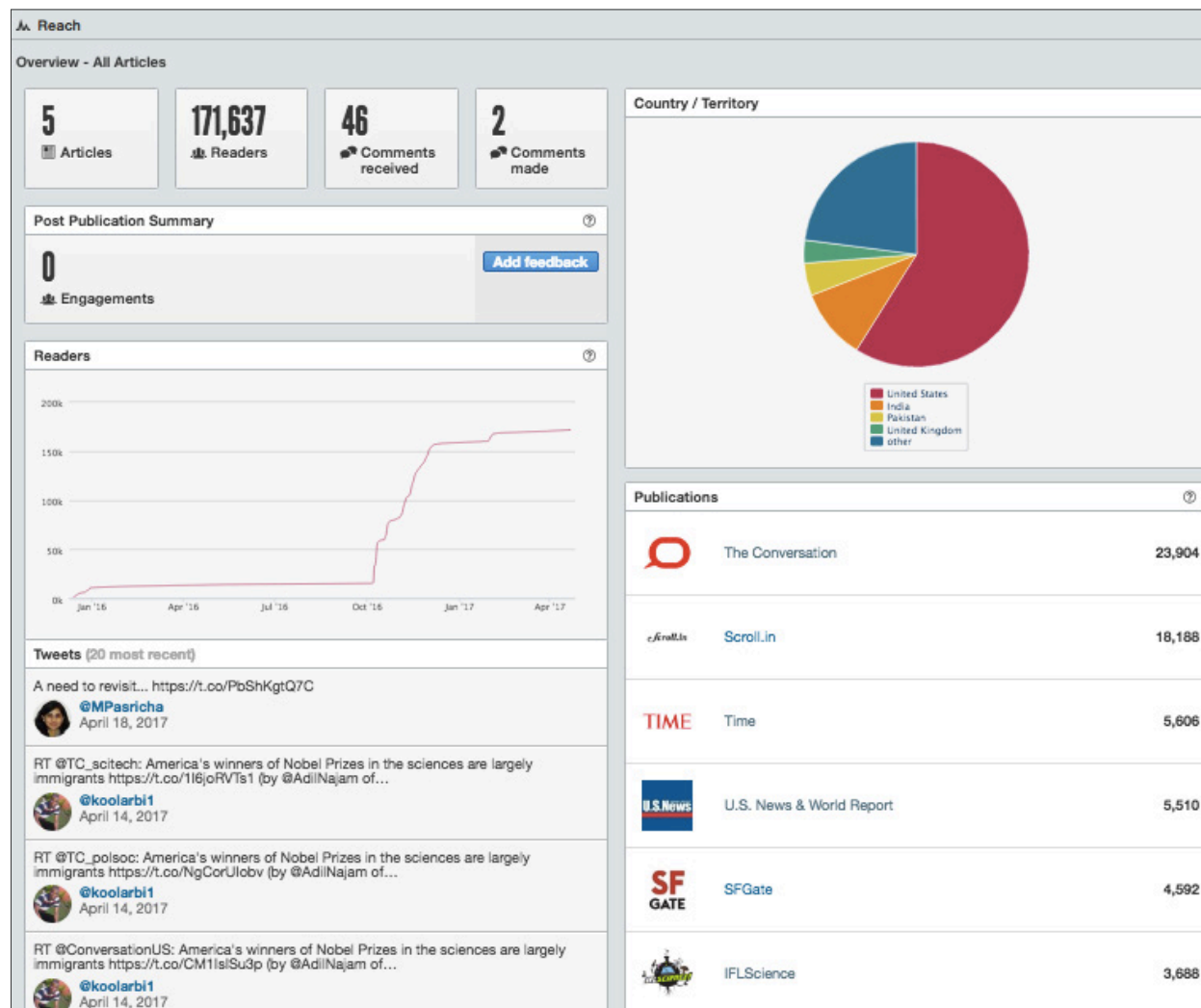


RESEARCH ENGAGEMENT METRICS

We provide our authors and member institutions with a dashboard and metrics to track the engagement and impact after publication of each of the articles they have contributed to The Conversation.

These dashboards report on reach and readership, tracking the number of reads, location of readers, the names and numbers of republication sites, social media reach and more.

Individual authors are provided their own dashboard where they can track each of their articles and the effect of all of their articles. Member institutions can track the impact of each of their faculty authors and see the aggregate impact of the articles published through The Conversation.



ENGAGEMENT + IMPACT



I direct the Public Engagement Project at University of Massachusetts at Amherst where we teach our faculty the skills of engaging a broader public. That the Conversation provides educational services each year -- teaching faculty how to pitch stories and write compelling opening paragraphs -- is tremendous and lowers the threshold for faculty who want to write for the general public.

That's huge for a university to suddenly have so many more of their researchers read all over the world. For individual faculty it is also very gratifying to be able, in one article, to share their research with more people than they may have in their entire career."



Amy Schalet

*Associate Professor of Sociology,
Director of the Public Engagement Project,
University of Massachusetts Amherst*



The best thing about the Conversation, in my own experience, is that they actually don't just publish what you write, they really work with you.

We academics might think that we write for a living, but we write in a particular way. To get your point across to the general public, you need to write in a different way, and also understand how the reader is going to be reading it.

And that is what The Conversation does. They hold your hand and, without being intrusive to the argument, they work with you to make your point clear and get it across to readers so they really understand what you are trying to say."



Adil Najam

*Dean, redecker S. Pardee School of
Global Studies Boston University*



Famous journalists have referred to my Conversation pieces on TV, I've been interviewed widely because of my publications on the site, and I have an advance book contract with a university press for a book based on one of my articles for The Conversation.

My articles have been translated into several languages and have been read around the world, which means that my work has a much larger impact than it would have with just publishing in academic venues."



Jennifer Mercieca

*Aggie Agora Director
Liberal Arts Administrative Fellow
Associate Professor, Department of
Communication, Texas A&M University*



The Conversation is a unique outlet that brings together the best academic minds with outstanding editors with a simple goal: to quickly share critical content on a variety of relevant topics. Being able to pitch, edit, and interact with staff through their online submission process facilitated a smooth process of getting published. I had the opportunity to contribute to the inaugural issue and share my research with a wide audience. As a result, I made valuable connections with people all over the world.



Daina Ramey Berry

*associate professor of History and African
and African Diaspora Studies at UT Austin,
and the Oliver H. Radkey Fellow
in American History*

ENGAGEMENT + IMPACT

“

It's really important to have outlets like the Conversation, and articles like this which we know are reliable and fact-based. As scientists and social scientists we need to tell the public what is going on. We are talking about a post-truth era, but truth is so robust and it needs to be defended.”



Stephanie Malin

*Assistant Professor of Sociology,
Colorado State University*

“

I was pleased to co-author an article for The Conversation about key factors in a transformative college education. I joined with Peter Felten, executive director of Elon University's Center for Engaged Learning, to reach nearly 26,000 readers, many of them students and parents who were preparing for the start of the academic year. In a time when some question the value of higher education, we appreciated the opportunity to provide a substantive, research-based piece that helps families understand what matters most in the college experience. Thanks to The Conversation for helping us reach beyond the walls of academia on a topic that is vital to the future of our society.”



Leo M. Lambert

President, Elon University

“

Writing for The Conversation is one of the highlights of my academic career. The Conversation provides great visibility.

When I publish in The Conversation my arguments reach a wide audience in just days. This time-scale is amazing compared to academic journals which take years.

The Conversation is also great since they are willing to publish both serious and lighter posts. Publishing these articles has boosted my engagement with students and colleagues. Even some of the fluffiest articles I have written, like Are Blondes Actually Dumb, are quite worthwhile since they have provided a starting point for serious discussions about discrimination.”



Jay L. Zagorsky

*Economist and Research Scientist
The Ohio State University*

“

The Conversation has provided an excellent outlet for social scientists to translate their research for a wider audience. It is wonderful to have a platform that values academic scholarship, with editors that work closely with researchers to effectively highlight interesting and timely research findings for the general public.”



Cecilia H. Mo

*Assistant Professor of Political Science
Vanderbilt University*

OUR CMS PLATFORM

The Conversation's Content Management System (CMS) provides authors and editors with a seamless platform for collaboration. Easy to use, the editing software ensures that the most up-to-date version of an article is accessible by anyone involved in the process from anywhere in the world.

Through the CMS we provide guidelines for authors not used to writing for the public. Our readability index makes it immediately obvious when clarity is needed, and our history bar ensures accountability of our edits.

Through it all, authors have control of the process. Authors approve final copy before it can be published. Many academics say that using our unique CMS is one of the best things about writing for The Conversation.

HistoryEditPreviewMobile

ApprovalsFinish

Headline

Water, weather, new worlds: Cassini mission revealed Saturn's secrets

H B I [Icons] + [Icons]

Saved1,085 wordsReadability

[Cassini](https://saturn.jpl.nasa.gov) is the most sophisticated space probe ever built. Launched in 1997 as a joint NASA/European Space Agency mission, it took seven years to journey to Saturn. It's been orbiting the sixth planet from the Sun ever since, sending back data of immense scientific value and images of magnificent beauty.

Cassini now begins one last campaign. Dubbed [the Grand Finale](https://saturn.jpl.nasa.gov/mission/grand-finale/overview/), it will end on Sept. 15, 2017 with the probe plunging into Saturn's atmosphere where it will burn up. Although Saturn [was visited](https://solarsystem.nasa.gov/missions/pioneer11/indepth) by [three spacecraft](http://voyager.jpl.nasa.gov) in the 70s and 80s, [my fellow scientists and I](https://saturn.jpl.nasa.gov/mission/team/) couldn't have imagined what the Cassini space probe would discover during its sojourn at the ringed planet when it launched 20 years ago.

A planet of dynamic change

<image id="166306" align="right" source="SOURCE?" caption="Storm Saturn" />

Massive storms periodically appear in Saturn's cloud tops, known as Great White Spots, observed by Earth-bound telescopes. Cassini has a front-row seat to these events. We have discovered that just like Earth's thunderstorms, these storms contain [lightning](https://saturn.jpl.nasa.gov/resources/4943/) and hail.

Cassini has been orbiting Saturn long enough to observe seasonal changes that cause variations in its weather patterns, not unlike the seasons on Earth. Periodic storms often appear in late summer in Saturn's northern hemisphere.

In 2010, during northern springtime, an unusually early and intense storm appeared in Saturn's cloud tops. It was a storm of such immensity that it [encircled the entire planet](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0019103512005192), and lasted for almost a year. It was literally not until the storm ate its own tail that it eventually sputtered and faded. Studying storms such as this and comparing them to similar events on other planets (think Jupiter's

Requirements

1. Dan Reisenfeld must approve the piece

Collaborators

Maggie VilligerEditor

Dan ReisenfeldLead AuthorLead Author

Interviewees


Disclosures

✓ Dan ReisenfeldEditDan Reisenfeld receives funding from NASA.

Brief (sent)

Word count: 800
Deadline: April 19, 2017 11:00pm (2 days ago)
A basic "explainer" article about Saturn. You're writing for interested non experts, so please include lots of background...
ViewEdit

Lead image



Standfirst

As the probe starts its 'Grand Finale,' a Cassini team member describes the amazing discoveries it made
147 characters.
The standfirst will appear below the headline in page placements and the newsletter.

Topics

AstronomySpace

PlanetsSolar system

SaturnCassini

Space exploration

HIGHLIGHTS: ARTS + CULTURE

The Rio Olympics and the presidential campaign were two major news events that the Arts and Culture desk covered over the past year.

For the Olympics, instead of relaying medal counts, our writers contributed pieces on a range of topics, from how Olympic athletes earn a living to doping in Ancient Greece and how the Games can impact the architecture and infrastructure of host cities.

During the election campaign, we published a series of articles on the language and rhetoric of the candidates, bringing in scholars who have spent their careers studying the techniques politicians use to inspire, deceive, and connect with voters.

We also commissioned historians to help contextualize today's issues and events, with articles about the police beating that opened America's eyes to Jim Crow's brutality, what studying 19th-century writings and drawings of kids can teach us, and the years Woody Guthrie spent living in one of Fred Trump's Brooklyn apartment complexes as a resentful tenant.

The deaths of Prince and David Bowie received substantial coverage, and we ran stories about the end of American Idol and the decline of two other distinctly American institutions: the neighborhood barbershop and the roadside motel.

But we also noted the emergence of new cultural phenomena, whether it was the nationwide clown scare, the Mannequin Challenge, the ways social media apps have changed the way we travel, or one man's quest to solve the mystery of the "Worldwide Hum."

Our experts didn't limit their coverage to the United States. We ran articles about an Indonesian ethnicity that recognizes five genders; how residents of a small Norwegian city battle the wintertime blues; the ways that TV dating shows changed romantic relationships in China; ISIS' looted antiquities trade; the war on Mexican journalists; and the Czech Republic's booming fertility industry.

HIGH IMPACT ARTICLES

"Could the language barrier actually fall within the next 10 years?" David Arbesu, University of South Florida

"Woody Guthrie, 'Old Man Trump' and a real estate empire's racist foundations" Will Kaufman, University of Central Lancashire

"The rhetorical brilliance of Trump the demagogue" Jennifer Mercieca, Texas A&M University

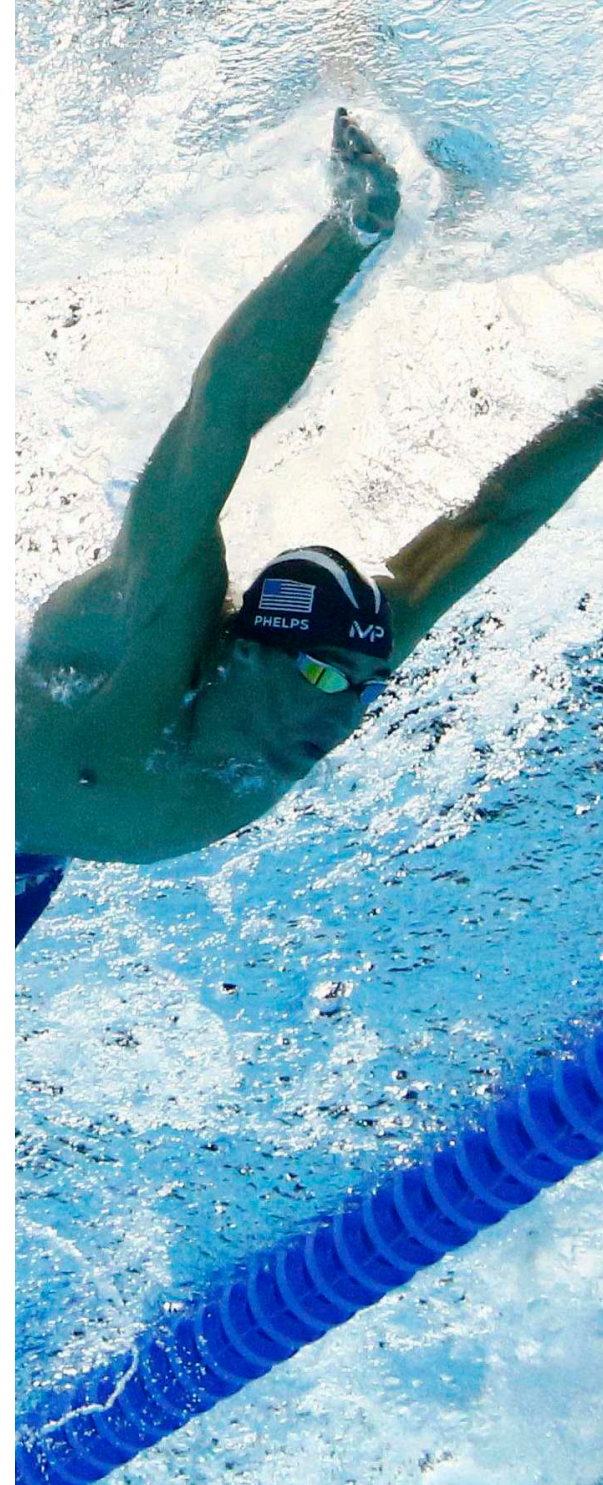
"In a digital archive of fugitive slave ads, a new portrait of slavery emerges" Joshua Rothman, University of Alabama

"How did public bathrooms get to be separated by sex in the first place?" Terry S. Kogan, University of Utah

"What's lost when we photograph life instead of experiencing it?" Rebecca Macmillan, University of Texas at Austin

Nick Lehr

Arts & Culture Editor



HIGHLIGHTS: BUSINESS + ECONOMY

Our 2016 coverage explored the economic and business repercussions of a host of historic events, from Brexit and warming ties with Cuba to the U.S. presidential election. In each case, our aim was to provide readers with insightful and original analysis and scholarship to help them understand what's really at stake.

Income inequality, immigration and trade were recurring themes, including on the campaign trail, and we provided extensive coverage of each from a variety of angles. In particular, we put together a series on inequality that examined its severity, underlying causes and potential solutions.

The presidential election shattered decades of bipartisan consensus favoring free trade. We followed the ups and downs of the Trans-Pacific Partnership as President Obama's signature accord floundered, and commissioned a variety of analyses exploring the successes and failures of globalization.

We chronicled the U.S. economy's continued recovery from the financial crisis, as well as the impact of the Federal Reserve as it gradually resumed a path of raising interest rates.

Beyond the banner headlines, 2016 featured a diverse range of topics, including the impact of robots on the labor market, why people go hungry, corruption, regulation and the economics of marriage. And behavioral economists shared their insights into the intersection of human behavior and economic activity.

We also looked beyond U.S. shores and provided readers with expert updates on emerging markets like Brazil and Turkey and whether the nuclear deal with Iran would spur investment there.

China was the subject of many articles as well, such as whether it manipulates its currency and how to compete there.

HIGH IMPACT ARTICLES

"Why do oil prices keep going down?" Marcelle Arak, University of Colorado Denver and Sheila Tschinkel, Emory University

"How to get ready for the economic recession coming in 2017." Jay L. Zagorsky, The Ohio State University

"Is Trump right that the TPP will destroy millions of jobs and cede US sovereignty?" Greg Wright, University of California, Merced, Emily J. Blanchard, Dartmouth College

"We've been measuring inequality wrong – here's the real story." Alan Auerbach, University of California, Berkeley and Laurence J. Kotlikoff, Boston University

"Why America's labor unions are about to die." Raymond Hogler, Colorado State University

"Is the American Dream dead?" Mechele Dickerson, University of Texas at Austin

"As Obama makes historic visit, is Cuba ready for change?" William A. Messina, University of Florida and Brian Gendreau, University of Florida

Bryan Keogh

Senior Economy & Business Editor



HIGHLIGHTS: EDUCATION

While our education desk tracked the many issues that surfaced during the 2016 Presidential campaign, we also covered other critical stories, such as the globalization of American universities, sanctuary campuses and sexual assault and hunger on campus.

Debt free college was another major focus and our scholar contributors challenged common assumptions. One article, for example, explained how students with the most debt are typically the least likely to struggle to repay their loans. Other pieces discussed the difficulties being faced by universities that can't be addressed by providing free tuition and took a hard look at the impact of drastic funding cuts on public universities.

The education desk also tackled controversial debates in higher education such as the impact of guns on campus and whether the tenure system has become outdated.

Researchers on K-12 education provided evidence-based pieces on issues that many parents struggle with, such as children's screen time, homework, and creative ways to read and play with children. They looked at bullying, and school choice as well as the particular challenges facing English language learners and arguments behind the movement to opt out of testing altogether.

An important ongoing series for us has been the impact of race in education, which, as researchers have shown, starts from pre-school. Among the subjects covered: why black children get suspended in pre-school for minor offences; why black families homeschool their children; and why fewer black children get identified as gifted.

Finally, we have been highlighting the changing fate of libraries – how some are disappearing but others are innovating. Librarians are, for example, playing an increasingly important role in the push back against “fake news.”

HIGH IMPACT ARTICLES

“Has the library outlived its usefulness in the age of Internet? You’d be surprised” Donald A. Barclay, *University of California, Merced*

“Is it OK to spank a misbehaving child once in a while?” Ronald W. Pies, *Tufts, University*

“Is today’s university the new multinational corporation?” Jason Lane, *State University of New York at Albany* and Kevin Kinser, *State University of New York at Albany*

“What summertime means for black children” Keffrelyn Brown, *University of Texas at Austin* and Anthony L. Brown, *University of Texas at Austin*

“When do children develop their gender identity?” Vanessa LoBue, *Rutgers University Newark*

“Here’s how homeschooling is changing America” Kyle Greenwalt, *Michigan State University*

Kalpana Jain

Senior Education Editor



HIGHLIGHTS: ENVIRONMENT + ENERGY

Environment and energy coverage in 2016 spanned the gamut from science to policy — and often lived at the intersection of both. In the run-up to the US election and after, we asked academics to provide evidence-based analysis on many of the vital questions facing policymakers in Washington D.C. and state capitals. This included looks at public lands, environmental regulation, sources of energy and climate change policies.

Publishing the latest scientific research was a mainstay as well; how global warming is affecting wine harvests, the impact of microplastics on the oceans, reducing water pollution from agriculture, or the (bloated) energy use of marijuana farms. Our authors also wrote about public health and the environment, global climate negotiations, the health of oceans and our waterways, and — everyone's favorite — wildlife with coyotes and Galapagos tortoises.

Our desk keeps close tabs on the news, looking to provide context and insight on current events. During the Flint water crisis, the PhD students from Virginia Tech who helped blow the whistle wrote about their experience putting science into action. A professor of public land politics from the University of Oregon wrote a dispatch from the Malheur Wildlife Refuge standoff. Our coverage of the high-profile Dakota Access Pipeline protests in North Dakota included perspectives from Native American scholars. .

Many newsrooms do not have the resources to employ environmental reporters, and energy is often the purview of the business section of newspapers, a fairly narrow view of a topic that affects so many aspects of society. And indeed, a wide variety of media have republished our articles on environment and energy —

everything from local radio stations and the Bangor Daily News to CNN and Scientific American. As such, we see The Conversation's environment and energy coverage fulfilling a crucial role in today's media landscape.

HIGH IMPACT ARTICLES

“Who politicized the environment and climate change?”

Brian C. Black, Pennsylvania State University

“Why the Native American pipeline resistance in North Dakota is about climate justice” Kyle Powys Whyte, Michigan State University

“Malheur occupation is over, but the war for America's public lands rages on” Peter Walker, University of Oregon

“American Medical Association warns of health and safety problems from ‘white’ LED streetlights” Richard G. “Bugs” Stevens, University of Connecticut

“Trump Questionnaire recalls dark history of ideology-driven science” Paul N. Edwards, University of Michigan

Martin LaMonica

*Deputy Editor and Environment
& Energy Editor*

Jennifer Weeks

Environment & Energy Editor



HIGHLIGHTS: HEALTH + MEDICINE

The Conversation US expanded its health care coverage capabilities in 2016, allowing us to offer scholarly expertise not only on medical research and consumer health but also on health care policy.

And, wow, was there ever health care policy to cover in 2016.

The Affordable Care Act became one of the most debated topics during the presidential campaign, with Donald Trump vowing to repeal and replace the signature act and Hillary Clinton promising to fix it. We offered analysis aiming to explain the complicated details of the ACA in simple terms. We engaged scholars who are experts in health policy, health insurance, and public health to explain the ups and downs and ins and outs of the law.

Policy was also important in our coverage of the Zika outbreak and the growing opioid epidemic. But not only. We ran articles about the history of the Zika virus as well as first hand accounts of treating pregnant women with Zika. We explained how over-prescribing of opioids - after pain was listed as "the sixth vital sign" - contributed to the epidemic and tracked the rise of illicitly made counterfeit opioids.

We highlighted research that is changing people's lives or has the potential to do so - from how some women with early-stage breast cancer can safely forgo chemotherapy to why it really may matter if you feed a virus but starve bacteria when you are sick.

Finally, we continued to make sure that our readers were getting the latest expertise on diet and consumer health trends. An article bearing the disappointing tidings that having sex does not burn a lot of calories was one of the most popular of the year.

HIGH IMPACT ARTICLES

"Feed a virus but starve bacteria? When you're sick, it may really matter" Ruslan Medzhitov, Yale University

"Early stage breast cancer: How to know whether to forgo chemo" Valerie Malyvanh Jansen, Vanderbilt University and Ingrid Mayer, Vanderbilt University

"What's ailing the ACA: insurers or Congress?" J.B. Silvers, Case Western Reserve University

"Want to lose weight? Train the brain, not the body" Laurel Mellin, University of California, San Francisco

"Why so many people regain weight after dieting" Kenneth McLeod, Binghamton University, State University of New York

"Why a Zika vaccine is a long way off" Robert Bednarczyk, Emory University

Lynne Anderson

Senior Health + Medicine Editor



HIGHLIGHTS: POLITICS + SOCIETY

Coverage from the politics and society desk challenged readers' assumptions during 2016. Distinguished scholars explained why American elections are the worst among Western democracies, showed us evidence that young Americans don't hold democracy in high regard and laid out the reasons why Mexican immigration isn't such a big deal.

Under the direction of the politics and society editors, the entire U.S. editorial staff contributed to our election coverage. We highlighted this coverage on a special Election 2016 page starting during primary season. We produced explainers on the election process, scene setters, instant analysis of important events and explored the evolving role of the U.S. on a global stage. One standout was an election night piece that helped examine Donald Trump's unexpected win while many pundits were still catching their breath. We experimented with new story types and found success with global panels and essential reads of archival material. History and rhetoric were two subject areas which highlighted the strengths of our model.

Our desk was also able to take a deep look at immigration, producing over 30 pieces examining the issue from a variety of viewpoints.

Criminal justice was another strong focus with articles delving into police shootings, hashtag activism, mass incarceration and the death penalty.

We looked at the broader world with stories on U.S. foreign policy, nuclear weapons, the evolving U.S./Cuba relationship and the historic Colombian peace deal.

HIGH IMPACT ARTICLES

*"Young voters embrace Sanders, but not democracy."
Christopher Beem, Pennsylvania State University*

"American elections are ranked worst among Western democracies. Here's why." Pippa Norris, Harvard University

"Normalizing fascists." John Broich, Case Western Reserve University

"More Mexicans are leaving the US than coming across the border." David Cook Martin, Grinnell College

*"Donald Trump and the rise of White Identity in Politics"
Eric D. Knowles, New York University and Linda R. Tropp, University of Massachusetts Amherst*

Emily Costello

Senior Politics & Society Editor

Danielle Douez

Associate Politics & Society Editor



HIGHLIGHTS: SCIENCE + TECH

In an unusual election year, we provided science and technology context to campaign news. Our academic authors assessed particular platform positions, for instance on closing the digital divide, and summarized social science research on leadership styles. They also pointed out what candidates neglect when they ignore science. We ran a series of articles about funding for R&D --- connecting the dots between federal dollars, new discoveries and economic gains.

As part of a focus on cybercrime — and how to defend against it — we covered questions around election security and vote hacking. Through a wider lens, we looked at issues of cyber safety and privacy, both in terms of individuals' experiences as well as policy and law.

One of the biggest science stories of the year was the detection of gravitational waves by an international team of scientists, one of whom wrote an insider's take on the discovery for our readers. We coordinated coverage with The Conversation colleagues around the world — with articles on the discovery itself, its implications for future research, as well as how the media covers this kind of breakthrough.

Our desk also brought to light new research in psychology, publishing articles on biases, false confessions, how we understand other minds and a series about the science of humor.

Gaming was another focus area, with story topics ranging from Pokémon GO, to how gaming could improve your retirement, and the ethics of game design.

We also monitored developments in the rapidly advancing areas of artificial intelligence and robotics — and what they mean for human relationships, trust and jobs.

In recognition of the efforts of the Science + Technology editors in the U.S. and at our sister sites, RealClearScience listed The Conversation as one of the top 10 go-to resources for science journalism in 2016.

HIGH IMPACT ARTICLES

“New genetically engineered American chestnut will help restore the decimated, iconic tree” William Powell, State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry

“Protect your privacy during turbulent times: A hacker's guide to being cyber-safe” Timothy Summers, University of Maryland

“Why do science issues seem to divide us along party lines?” Lauren Griffin, University of Florida

“The Search for the Value of Pi” Xiaojing Ye, Georgia State University

Maggie Villiger

Senior Science & Technology Editor

Jeff Inglis

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