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The Use of Social Networks by African Americans and Emerging Trends

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The Use of Social Networks by African Americans and Emerging Trends

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Barry University

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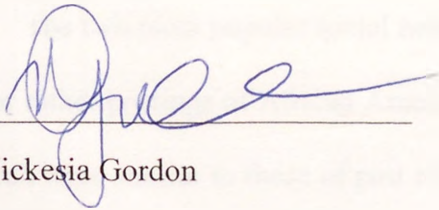for the completion of the Honors Program

by

Kelecia Smith

December, 2011
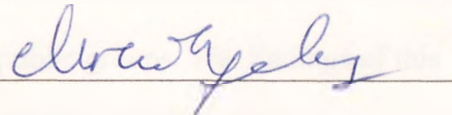
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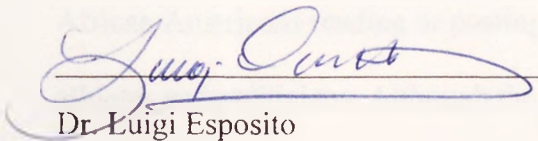_____   _____
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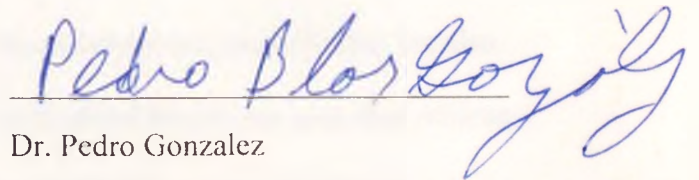
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Despite the issue of the digital divide, in which African Americans are least likely to have access to computer technology, it was noted that African Americans' use of social networks has increased. However, there has not been much research regarding how this particular demographic uses social networks. The primary purpose of this study is to observe not only how social networks are being used by African Americans, but also to identify any particular trends based on this usage.

The two most popular social networks, Facebook and Twitter, were used to gather data or rather postings of African Americans on public groups. The findings of this research were similar to those of past related studies, revealing that African Americans use social networks primarily for entertainment. Specific trends observed included African Americans reading or posting news about celebrities, in particular, but also athletes and politicians. Although the study highlighted this, it was seen that African Americans are using social networks for other worthwhile or beneficial purposes. However, these findings also hint that African Americans should not only use technology more as more of them have access to technology, but also use it to empower and make themselves, marketable and competitive, within this Digital Age.

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INTRODUCTION

It has been noted that the use of social networks and social media by African Americans has increased. For example, a survey done by college-bound high school students states that "African Americans are more likely (97 percent) than Hispanics (86 percent) and Whites (88 percent) to visit social networking sites." In addition to this, "African Americans also were more likely (93 percent) than Whites (84 percent) to have a profile page on a social networking site." According to BlackWeb 2.0, "When it comes to social media, we're [African Americans] not only using it at a higher rate, but we also have a different perspective on how we engage with the technology." According to the article, these different perspectives include African Americans using social networks for "sharing information, most notably information about the latest happenings in their neighborhood. It was also noted that blacks felt that social networking sites were a good way to keep abreast of government news." The article also adds that "Seven out of ten African Americans use social networking sites in comparison to six out of ten whites with a quarter of blacks online using Twitter." This trend is significant because the presence of African Americans on the Internet and social networks has increased, as this was significantly low compared to other groups, which is defined by what is known as the digital divide. This trend can make African Americans more competitive and, experience the advantages and benefits of utilizing social networks as others use this tool.

Social Networks

"Friend me on Facebook!," "Visit my MySpace page!," and "Follow me on Twitter!" are some common phrases we hear so often today. These are ways people use to network. As defined by the Oxford Dictionary, a network is "a group of people who exchange information, contacts, and experience for professional or social purposes." Although networking can be done in person or via other means, it is primarily done today online or via the Internet through what are known as Social Networking Sites (SNS). Social networks are utilized by not only peers and family members, but also by companies, professionals, celebrities, politicians, and many others as a means of communicating, keeping in touch, meeting new people, seeking knowledge, obtaining feedback, marketing and promotion, just to name a few.

Social networking through online tools, such as Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, and LinkedIn, are considered essential in this Information Age, also known as the Computer Age or Digital Age. Social networks are prominent for several reasons, which include their propensities for professional or business networking, communicating socially, marketing, education and raising politic awareness. As mentioned within an article by Pew Internet, "65% of adult internet users now say they use a social networking site like MySpace, Facebook or LinkedIn, up from 61% one year ago. This marks the first time in Pew Internet surveys that 50% of all adults use social networking sites." Also, social networks became essential, prominent and popular compared to social media because it is more interactive and involves two-way communication among individuals, while social media transmits and broadcasts a message through one-way communication. This interactive feature made social networks more interesting and relevant than social media.

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The user's ability to do something or participate is the advantage of social networks over social media. Pew Research centre further states that "in a separate question, when social networking users were asked for one word to describe their experiences using social networking sites, "good" was the most common response. Overall, positive responses far outweighed the negative and neutral words that were associated with social networking sites, (with more than half of the respondents using positive terms to describe their experiences. Users repeatedly described their experiences as "fun," "great," "interesting" and "convenient." As a result, social networking and Social Network Sites (SNS) have become popular among all ages, races, and occupations. However, despite their vast popularity, are there differences in the ways social or cultural groups in categories such as race, gender and ages use social networks? It is important to explore this question because social networks are increasingly being used for purposes beyond the traditional entertainment value generally associated with these sites. Social networking sites are now being used for things such as job searches, career networking, political and civic participation among others. Several of the ways in which these sites are being used are very important because of the potential they have to positively (or negatively) alter the course of one's life. For example, in the world of business, people are using social networking sites to make themselves more marketable. They also use these sites to gain knowledge, and/or assist with political change. Uses such as these can be beneficial for the individual and society as a whole.

This thesis, proposes to do an analytical account of the use of social networks by African Americans and the possible trends that may be emerging regarding their usage. It is a qualitative examination of the phenomenon which relies on online participant

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observation of public pages found on two social networking sites, namely Twitter and Facebook. Social networks and their usage are fairly new. As a result, there is limited research regarding this topic, and in particular, the use of social networks by African Americans. For this reason, I would like to assist in filling this gap to add information concerning this topic. In addition to this, I would like to use this study as a way to encourage African Americans about how to use social networks in beneficial ways, especially if the results display that their engagement is mainly for entertainment purposes.

Aims of the study

Today, social networks have become second nature for many. It is considered vital and a part of the daily lives of so many people, from all walks of life, professions, etc. The various ways in which families, friends, professionals, organizations, groups, and marketers utilize social networks have made it prominent and essential. For example, friends and families use social networks to communicate with each other on perhaps, a more regular basis than in person, especially if they are living in different cities or countries. Professionals use social networking sites to gain connections with persons within their fields to exchange ideas or for future job opportunities. Marketers, on the other hand, utilize social networks to make their products more known, gain more customers through promotions and encourage brand or product loyalty.

With this rise in the use of social networks has come an equal interest in research regarding what is a social network, the use of social networks, the effects of social networks, the importance of social networks, the amount of time spent using social

networks, and the advantages and disadvantages of social networks. However, there are still areas relating to social networks to which little attention has been given, such as social networks and African Americans. As a result, I chose to focus my thesis on this overlooked matter.

The main aims of this study involve investigating what African Americans use social networks for. These uses may include for entertainment purposes, employment or business purposes, educational purposes, political purposes or communication purposes. People in general use social networks to keep in touch with their friends or family, to keep others informed of their activities, to meet new friends, to network, to find a partner, to gain knowledge or views of others on specific topics (such as politics), etc. Further, based on what the findings are related to the use of social networks by African Americans, I would like to discover any patterns or emerging trends. These emerging trends may comprise dating, watching movies, listening to music, and keeping in contact with friends and family.

As a result, the research questions for this thesis paper are:

1. How are African Americans using social networks?
2. What patterns are emerging based on this usage?

This topic is significant and necessary to discuss because it affects everyone in some way, whether directly or indirectly. Social networks would have a more diverse user base, which is reflective in American society. It affects African Americans particularly, in terms of "surviving" in this Digital Age, using computer technology effectively (which includes social networks) as everything is dependent upon computer

technology. For example, many offices are requiring only electronic submissions of resumes. Also, many businesses such as airlines and retailers are providing deals for online users only. It is imperative for African Americans to take advantage of these positive uses of social networking sites in order for them to remain competitive or on par with other social or cultural groups. This research would highlight for what purposes African Americans utilize social networks and if the ways in which they do use them are potentially beneficial, especially considering the fact that social networks take up so much time in an individual's life.

Finally, based on the findings, I would like to interpret what the results of the research suggest for African Americans. What advantages and disadvantages related to their usage have emerged? I find this of importance, especially in today's society, since we depend so much on computer technology, completing tasks via the Internet and networking for many activities in our daily lives, including work. If African Americans are able to increase their presence online in beneficial ways, particularly via social networking sites, and it would make them more competitive and relevant compared to their counterparts or other demographics. As referenced by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, "How often and where the Internet is used differ by race or ethnic origin. Whites, (37.7%) and Asians/Pacific Islanders (35.9%), use the Internet much more than Blacks (19.0) and Hispanics (16.6%). Additionally, only Asians/Pacific Islanders and Whites have relatively greater access at home, while American Indians/Eskimos/Aleuts, Blacks, and Hispanics more often turn to access outside the home. In fact, Blacks and Hispanics are less connected everywhere (such as at home, school, library, or community center) than Whites are."

Considering there is limited research and information regarding how and why African Americans are utilizing social media, this thesis would help fill the information gap that currently exists. In doing this research and gathering the results of the data collected, this thesis can also promote the use of social networks by African Americans in a useful, beneficial and advantageous way. This study may contribute to individuals and/or society by making people more aware of the use of social networks by young African Americans.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The topic of the use of social networks by African Americans is a relatively new topic with little research. What are some of the reasons for this? Firstly, the popularity of social networks is fairly recent. As a result, there has not been much speculation about the new technology before it became prevalent as it is today. Secondly, the issue of the digital divide also plays an integral part as to why there has not been much study about the topic. This is due to the fact that the African American demographic is the most affected by the digital divide. In other words, African Americans are least likely to have access to computer technology and the Internet compared to other demographics.

The issue of the digital divide can be seen as a reason for the lack of research about African Americans not only online, but on social networks. This statement can be strengthened by the data presented by Education World, which states that, "Larry Irving, assistant secretary for communications and information for the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), has called the divide a "racial ravine." The divide *does* appear to affect black and Hispanic households most. According to an NTIA report titled, Falling Through The Net: Defining The Digital Divide, although black and Hispanic households are twice as likely to own computers today as they were in 1994, those households are still only 40 percent as likely to have home Internet access as white households are. In addition, whites are more likely to have access to the Internet from home than blacks' or Hispanics' access from *any* location. A survey conducted by The Public Policy Institute of California found that even in California, a hot bed of technology, only 39 percent of the state's Hispanic people accessed the Internet compared to 65 percent of white people." The digital divide is not

only concerned about those who have or do not have access to computers, but also how effectively computer technology is used. As a result, the skills needed to utilize the tool in beneficial ways are also important. This idea is related to this research, as it is determining how African Americans are utilizing social networks, which may be for entertainment or useful purposes.

Although the gap is not closed, there are more African Americans present online than before. It is noted that the increase of African Americans online was in line with the rise in popularity of social networking sites (SNS). African Americans' use of cell phones or rather smart phones, have also aided in the increase of their presence online and in particular, social networks; "With young African Americans serving as early adopters of new devices and social media, the "digital divide" has dramatically narrowed, being quickly replaced with the 'digital connection.' According to an eMarketer Report, African Americans own more cell phones and use more features than any other demographic group. And the number of black internet users is expected to grow 32% over the next several years, from 21.7 million in 2008 to 28.6 million in 2014" (Graves, 2011, p. 10). This information regarding African Americans relying more on mobile phones to connect to the Internet and social networks displays a trend about how African Americans are accessing social networks.

While the increasing numbers of African American users online is an important development, what is being done by African Americans when online is more essential. A previous study by Sherril Steele-Carlin and Education World, highlighted that the digital divide is not the issue but rather the lack of interest in technology by stating, "Many people, however, question whether a digital divide fueled by ethnic, geographic,

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societal, *or* economic factors exists. The major issue, say the digital dissenters, is not a lack of *access to* technology but a lack of *interest in* technology" (Steele-Carlin, 2000). As the interest in technology seems to have increased among African Americans, the question and focus of this study becomes, what are African Americans using social networks for? Although there is a little research on this topic, it has been noted by the few studies already done that African Americans may be utilizing social networks for the wrong reasons, that is, "play," and not for benefiting themselves. As Graves (2011) states, "today, our most pressing issue is not the quality of our connection but the quality of our engagement. A recent USA Today article, based on a July 2010 Pew Center research poll, reported that 46% of African Americans and 51% of Latinos use cell phones to access the Internet versus 33% of whites. However, the same article reported that minorities may be devoting more time on the Web to entertainment and less time to applying for jobs, building business networks, or expanding their commercial presence" (Graves, 2011, p. 10). This research is aimed at determining if this is not only true, but specifically in terms of social networks and in particularly Facebook and Twitter.

A study by Pew Internet based on Americans use of social media, found that the major reasons or motivations for using social media by majority of people was mainly for staying in touch with current friends (67%), staying in touch with family members (64%), connecting with old friends they may have lost touch with (50%), connecting with others who share the same hobbies or interests (14%), making new friends (9%), reading comments by celebrities, athletes or politicians (5%), and finding potential romantic or dating partners (3%). The idea or focal point of this previous research is similar to the scope of this research. However, this research would be specifically geared towards the

use of social networks by a specific demographic, that is, African Americans. Within the same study, although not focused mainly on how different demographics utilize social media, a trend about African Americans was highlighted. As mentioned within the article presenting this information, "while connecting with public figures [celebrities, athletes and politicians, in particular] has a relatively modest impact on users across a range of groups, both African Americans and Latinos show more interest in this activity than white users. One in ten black social media users and 11% of Latinos say that reading comments from public figures is a major reason for using these sites (compared with just 3% of white users). Black and Latino social media users are also more likely to say that this is a minor factor (31% of blacks and 26% of Latinos say this, compared with 16% of whites)." The finding of this trend among African Americans on social networks is similar to those that this study would be focused on observing.

Research has shown that Twitter is more popular among African Americans than any other demographic. African Americans seem to use Twitter more than any other social network. As a result, there has been more information regarding why this is. According to a website known as The Wrap, "A new report on Twitter says 24 percent of its U.S. users are black – meaning African-Americans are twice as well represented on the micro-messaging service as they are in the general population." As stated in an article entitled "African Americans love to tweet," "Twitter is the leader of the pack among African American social networkers, according to a study by the Pew Internet and American Life Project, an initiative of the Pew Research Center, a nonprofit research organization. The study shows that Twitter users are slightly more racially and ethnically diverse than the overall U.S. population. Among Internet users, 16% of African Americans use Twitter or

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similar status update services, compared with 9% of white users." This popularity of Twitter among African Americans highlights a trend that may also be observed within this study.

However, why is Twitter more popular among this particular demographic? As mentioned previously, it has been noted that African Americans' use of cell phones has resulted in their popularity with Twitter. As seen within the article, Why is Twitter more popular with black people than white? "black people (and Hispanics) are much more likely to access the Internet from mobile devices. Twitter is well-suited to mobile use, and its users are more engaged with the mobile Internet than the general population by a wide margin." Another reason for the popularity also given by this article is the popularity or presence of black celebrities on Twitter, which seems to be in line with the idea presented above about blacks using social media to read comments from celebrities, athletes or politicians. Other ideas for why African Americans prefer to tweet, include a few from an article called "Why do black people love to tweet so much?" which states, "(And we all know how much Black people hate talking when no one is listening or cares about what we have to say.) Twitter affords you the ability to express yourself." In addition to his the article also mentions, just as hip hop was a way for people in the ghetto to communicate with the people in the ghetto and know that nobody outside the ghetto was listening," "that's all that "Black Twitter" is, things that matter to us, that are about us." These reasons as to why Twitter is popular among African Americans, also gives insight to what they are using this social network for, which this study is highlighting.

Information regarding what African Americans are using social networks for is also more geared towards Twitter. Highlighting the idea that African Americans are using Twitter or social networks in general for entertainment or "non-empowerment purposes" is based on the observation that African Americans start trending topics on Twitter known as, "Blacktags" (from hashtags) for amusement and irrelevant things. In the article, "Black people on Twitter: When trending topics go wrong," it is highlighted that "With African Americans disproportionately represented in the Twitter game, trending topics often originate with and are perpetuated by black folks. According to Edison Research, "many of the 'trending topics' on Twitter on a typical day are reflective of African-American culture, memes [a viral idea or concept] and topics." Though many trending topics are about specific people, events or silliness like #liesmentell, #itsnotcheating, etc., the mood has recently shifted into far more ignorant territory. Why is this how we choose to wield our power on Twitter? Trendistic, which ranks Twitter trends, marked the most popular trend one day last week as #hoodhoes (and its similar tag, #hoodhoe). For 16 hours, users tweeted their definitions of a 'hood hoe'" (Williams, 2011).

In addition to the use of hashtags or rather "blacktags" to begin a conversation regarding what interests African Americans regarding entertainment or social life, African Americans seem to be using social networks, in particular Twitter, differently from other users. As stated in the article, "How black people use Twitter," "Black people—specifically, young black people—do seem to use Twitter differently from everyone else on the service. They form tighter clusters on the network—they follow one another more readily, they retweet each other more often, and more of their posts are @-

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replies—posts directed at other users. It's this behavior, intentional or not, that gives black people—and in particular, black teenagers—the means to dominate the conversation on Twitter" (Manjoo, 2010). This can also highlights an issue that is relevant to this study, which is trying to find what specific trends are emerging based on how African Americans use social networks or why Twitter is preferred.

Despite the findings from previous studies about the use of social networks by African Americans showing more entertainment-based or sometimes negative usage, there have also been findings that highlighted positive uses of social networks, which is also different from the uses of other demographics. Research by the Pew Research Center, states that "minority attitudes towards social media also diverge notably from those of whites. For example, minority Americans were very active using social technologies to share information during the 2008 election campaign. And when we asked about government outreach using social media, minority respondents were significantly more likely than whites to say that this type of outreach "helps people be more informed about what government is doing" and "makes government more accessible". They are also much more likely than whites to say it is "very important" for government agencies to post information and alerts on social networking sites. Minority Americans are also relatively likely to use digital technologies to keep up with what's happening in their neighborhoods. This is especially true of folks who don't know many of their neighbors by name—tools such as blogs, social networking sites and neighborhood listservs can serve as valuable tools for keeping up with local issues" (Smith, 2010). In other research, it is also seen that African Americans use social networks for aiding in causes. As stated in an article by Marketing Charts on a research

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by Georgetown University's Center for Social Impact Communication and Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide. "Minorities are significantly more likely than Caucasians to view social networking as a means of spreading word about and getting support for causes, according to a study based on data collected in late 2010 by Georgetown University's Center for Social Impact Communication and Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide. Results of "Dynamics of Cause Engagement" indicate 65% of Hispanics and African-Americans strongly or somewhat agree that online social networking sites increase the visibility of causes, 8% higher than the 60% of Caucasians who agree." In another study, it was found that young "African Americans were more likely than Whites to engage in civic activities, politically participate in online and offline settings, take part in political consumerism, talk about news, follow the news, and demonstrate overall interest in news" (Harp, 2010). This study may show that this same trend is seen by most African Americans on social networks. These studies are related to this thesis, in that, it identifies what African Americans are using social networks for and can infer the quality of using social networks by African Americans as mentioned previously.

Although not all of the studies reviewed for this research project were in consensus in their conclusion that African Americans use social networks mainly for entertainment, most of them suggested this idea or certainly highlighted that social networks are not being used by African Americans in beneficial ways. As a result, some of these articles presented ways that African Americans can change their usage of social networks for better. As stated in the article, "Use technology for empowerment not entertainment," "For young people who have grown up in the digital space: Innovate, adapt, and evolve.

Instead of just mastering online games and text messaging, use your skill and creativity to invent the next interactive platform, digital distribution system, or proprietary product or service. Just as important, be careful of how you present yourself on Facebook or Twitter because they are often reviewed by prospective employers. As a community, we can't afford to spend our time online for pure amusement. To advance in our personal and professional lives, we must make connections that offer value and empowerment" (Graves, 2011, p.10). Other research that stated positive uses of social networks by African Americans encouraged this behavior. Just as these previous studies have proposed either an encouragement or call for action regarding this issue, this research will do the same based on the findings.

Research on the uses of social networks by African Americans is not thorough as yet; however, it is an interesting topic that is gathering attention, especially in the media through news articles, blogs, etc. The literature reviewed for this research was not all directly related to the topic but gave insight or predictions that may be found in the findings for this study.

METHODOLOGY

This research is a qualitative study. As a result, this type of study relies on non-numerical data. Similar to this idea, Strauss and Corbin (1998) in the book entitled *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory*, defines qualitative research as "any type of research that produces findings not arrived at by statistical procedures or other means of quantification" (pp. 10 – 11). Qualitative study is the process of collecting and analyzing data, which may be in the form of interviews, videos and observations, which are not easily assessed. As defined in an article by QSR International, "qualitative research seeks out the 'why', not the 'how' of its topic through the analysis of unstructured information – things like interview transcripts, open ended survey responses, emails, notes, feedback forms, photos and videos. It doesn't just rely on statistics or numbers, which are the domain of quantitative researchers." As mentioned within the book entitled *Qualitative Communication Research Methods*, "in qualitative research, the processes of collecting and analyzing data are ultimately resolved by rigorously developing increasingly precise and useful language for describing, conceptualizing, interpreting, explaining, and critiquing recorded communication (Waite, 2007)" (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011, p. 12-13).

For this particular research, the data collected comes from indirect participation and observation of users interacting on social networks, specifically, webnography. Webnography, also known as online ethnography and virtual ethnography, is simply an observation or research method using online sources such as internet sites and social media sites or via some computer interaction. In this case, webnography was used to observe comments, interactions or posts of users on Facebook and Twitter.

This study did not include the involvement of individuals directly, but rather indirectly. Public pages on which African Americans self identify and participate via social networks would be considered the sample and would be used to analyze how African Americans are using social networks through their comments, posts, messages and inclusion in certain groups, circles or networks. For example, on Facebook, I would analyze public groups, which may be political or social, to observe the behaviors or involvement of African Americans on these particular themed groups. These themes may include professional groups, entertainment groups and political groups.

The social networks that I plan to analyze for this research are Facebook and Twitter. The reasons I chose the above mentioned social networks are based on the following:

- Facebook being the most populated social network online Facebook is seen as a social network that is related to social communication and the life of individuals "outside of work or school." However, professionals, marketers and businesses use this platform as well. Facebook, although not the first social network, is considered the most popular, as seen by the number of active users, that is more than 800 million, according to Facebook statistics. This social networking site was launched in February 2004. It was initially created for college students at a few Universities to be used as a rating site of students, which is compared to "Hot or Not." However, this idea grew to what it is known as today, allowing users worldwide to connect with others, comment on photos, interact, and share

common interests. Facebook has also been able to attract not only individuals on a social level, but also professionals, politicians, and businesses. The Facebook platform is not subjected to a particular target group or specific purpose of use. It is seen to be used by everyone and for anything, no matter their age, race, occupation, sex, culture, nationality, interests, etc. Facebook proves to have no barriers or limits on who uses the social network or how they use it. It is able to suit everyone and whatever their needs may be.

- Twitter – This has a mix in its uses, which include entertainment and most recently, assisting in social revolutions, known as "Twitter Revolutions." Also, it is noted that Twitter is popular among African Americans. As mentioned in the article by Business Insider, "According to Edison Research's annual report on Twitter, black people represent 25% of Twitter users, roughly twice their share of the population in general." The fairly new "trend," known as Twitter, was created in March of 2006 and launched July 2006. However, its popularity rose in 2011, having 100,000,000 active users, according to CEO Dick Costolo. As stated in the article by Time Techland, "the 100 million active number is only half the number of registered accounts with the service, and of that 100 million, almost 40% log in merely to see what other people are saying. More than 50 million users log in each day, and the daily average number of tweets is in the realm of 230 million—up 110% since January." Twitter is considered a microblogging site as it only allows 140 characters and is compared to Short Message Service (SMS) and Internet Relay Chat (IRC) client. Twitter has been noted to be used mainly by older adults, slightly more women than men ("fifty-three percent over forty-seven

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percent," as mentioned by Wikipedia), and celebrities. Twitter is used for simply knowing what others are up to, self-promoting, marketing, sharing news or knowledge and of course, networking.

The above reasons sparked my interest in the social networks that I chose. Using these two social networks would be helpful to this research by providing at least two different venues as well as a different mix of people and interests and provide a fairly broad spectrum of analysis which provides a basis for comparative analysis.

Data Collection Method

The data consists of public comments, dialogues and postings of individuals, collected from the two social networking sites previously stated, i.e. Facebook and Twitter. This data was collected using the concept of webnography, that is, observation in an online, specifically social network, environment. On each of these sites, the 5 most popular African American public groups were selected by using the search word "Africanamerican" Or "African American." The top five were determined based on the hierarchy each was given by the individual websites according to number of users or volume of site traffic. To select these groups for Twitter, a Twitter tool known as Twellow was used to sort the search of "Africanamerican" or "African American" public groups present on Twitter. This tool sorts and displays the most popular which is seen by the number of followers. After the first five groups were selected, the investigator began to "follow" each in order to observe and have access to the posts on each page. To "follow" a user or group on Twitter simply means to be updated with their posts, which appear on your "timeline" in real time. This is similar to receiving posts of "friends" in

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the "newsfeed" on Facebook. Similarly, on Facebook, "African American" was searched using the search box on the investigators personal page, which listed all African American public groups on the social network. The top five groups ranked according to most number of members or popularity were selected. Public groups were especially targeted for analysis since these were open groups which allowed access to and participation by anyone. These groups were connected to different activities or professions, such as education, politics, etc.

On each public group, an online or participant observation took place. This study did not include the involvement of individuals directly, but rather indirectly. The posts of self identified African American users who were members of the group were analyzed. Their comments, postings, and input to the group were evaluated to determine what the user was using the social network site for and later, to determine if there were specific patterns emerging based on the usage. Posts and comments from two months in the year 2011, i.e. October and November , for Twitter, were observed. For Facebook, however, the two most recent months for each public group were observed. As a result, some of the posts were older than those on Twitter. The top 20 comments, postings, "tweets" or input of the user's of the public groups on both Facebook and Twitter were used to and these were further classified under a categorized system developed by the researcher beforehand.

More specifically for this research, selective coding would be used by developing categories or themes that would assist in classing the comments or postings of the users to the group. These categories would include:

- Entertainment – This category would include movie sharing, music sharing, commenting about photos, fashion, competitions, games, books, sports and other hobbies, such as dance, theatre, singing, etc. This would also include providing information to others on the public group about these common interests. Keywords may also include movie (movie names), music (music genres and song titles), celebrity (also celebrity names), concert, tours, books (book titles, authors, etc.), TV and TV shows, talk shows, radio, sitcoms, download, album, mix tape, song, listen, dance, sing, video, etc.

- Career – This category would relate to professional or career groups such as accountants, lawyers, politicians, doctors, teachers, professors, actors/actresses, computer programmers, graphic designers, etc. This would also include professional or career related networking. Keywords may also include employment, unemployment, job market, etc.

- Business – This category would involve advertising, promotion, marketing, brand recognition, brand or customer loyalty and targeting an audience or demographic. Keywords may include deals, services, products, customers, clients, networking, small business, entrepreneur, etc.

- Education – This category would include schools, colleges and universities, areas of studies and, scholarships. This would also include research or education related networking. Keywords may also include grants, loans, colleges and universities, schools, professors and teachers, scholarships, tuition, majors and programs of study, courses and classes, etc.

- Interpersonal Relationships – This category would include communicating with friends and family, dating, meeting new people, keeping in touch with people overseas or living in another country, etc. would also be included within this category.

- Public Affairs – This would include political events, community events, religion, news, and local, federal and state government issues. Common interests regarding health issues, causes and awareness would also be classed within this category, which may include sharing information and experiences, getting advice from others, etc. Keywords may include life, names of sicknesses, awareness groups, etc.

The comments, postings and input chosen were then grouped within a table according to key phrases relevant to each category. This assisted in determining what, if any, themes were emerging. This process was done for both social networks (Facebook and Twitter).

Data Analysis Methods

Grounded theory was used to analyze the data. As described by Strauss and Corbin (1998), grounded theory is "derived from data, systematically gathered and analyzed through the research process" (p. 12). Grounded theory is simply a way to analyze, make sense of or put meaning to qualitative data, but by setting up a system to determine a theory. The data involved in grounded theory unfolds a theory and avoids speculation or deduction. Grounded theory works by setting up a foundation or system of how data would be handled, not focusing on the hypothesis or research questions. This

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allows the findings to be more accurate, objective and have as little bias as possible in favor or not in favor of the research questions. The concept of grounded theory is best used with another system known as coding, which specifies in which way the data would be set up or organized to be analyzed. The coding system used in this research was explained above.

Definition of Key Terms

- Network – people within the same "circle" or who keep in contact that share a common interests or exchange knowledge and ideas

- Social Network – a group of people that are connected that relate to and communicate with one another on a social level

- Social Network Sites (SNS) – an online platform that allows people to connect and communicate with each other, no matter the distance in interactive ways and in the form of two-way communication

- African American – a black American

- Entertainment – an activity that is done for enjoyment or amusement, which is usually done during an individual's sociable time and outside of their work life

- Social Media – one-way communication or broadcasting style that allows users to connect with others through multimedia but not necessarily in an interactive way or allowing feedback

- Digital Age/Computer Age – era of computer technology and ability to access information and connect with others instantly

- Webnography – research, in particular observation or ethnography, done in an online environment

- Short Message Service (SMS) – text messaging service, better known as "texting," which is a feature mainly of mobile phones

- Internet Relay Chat (IRC) client – text messaging done online, also known as chat

- Digital Divide – the gap between those that have access to computer and the Internet and those who do not; it is also concerned with the skills needed to effectively use computer technology

- Memes – a viral idea or concept

FINDINGS

Facebook

In some cases, the postings were not very recent or updated frequently. As a result, there was little data to be observed and classed, as being entertainment, career, business, education, interpersonal relationships or public affairs. During the data collection process and in particular, searching for the top five public groups on Facebook, generally, three out of five of the selected and most popular public groups seemed to have been related to the category of Entertainment. This was suggested by the public group's name. These names included African American Album, African American Art Song Alliance and African American Channel. A public group by the name of African American Autism Awareness suggested that it was related to the category of Public Affairs, as it deals with awareness and a particular disorder. Only one of the public group's names did not imply a relation to a specific topic, which was Black America. From this information alone, entertainment seemed to be most popular topic of interest among African Americans on the Facebook pages that are ranked as the most popular by the website according to their sheer numbers in membership. Also, the names of the public groups hinted at the type of content that the group interacted with. However, when each group was looked more closely, entertainment did not always emerge as the dominant topic.

African American Album

Postings per Category
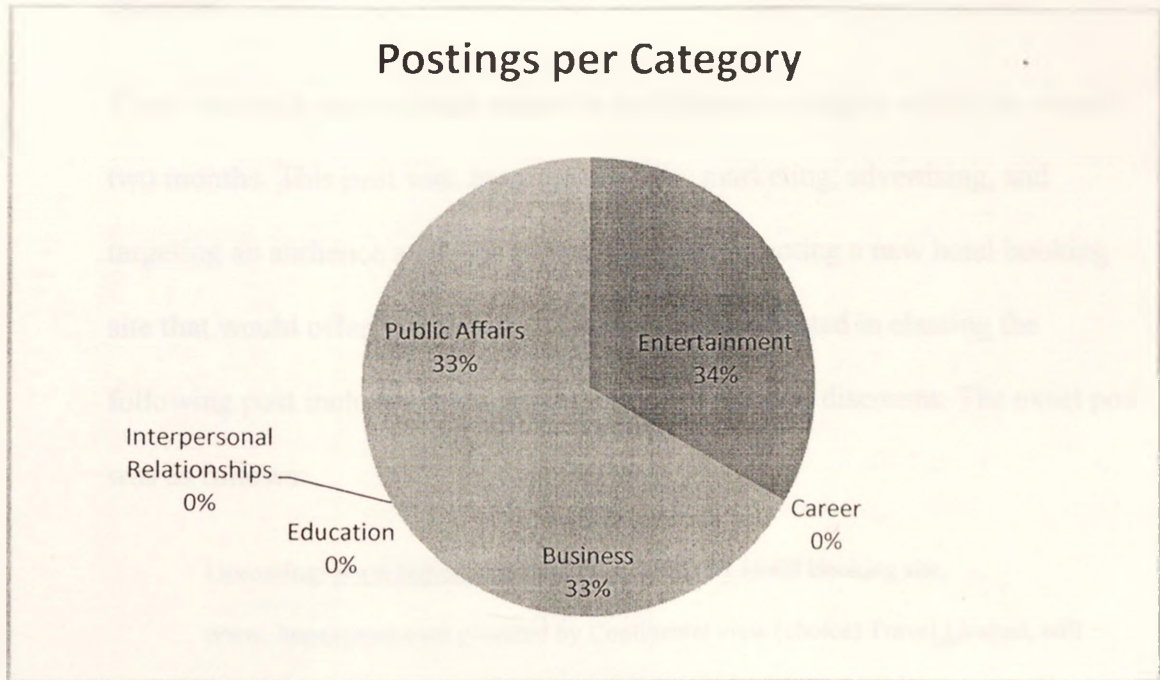
This public group, which is focused on music, contained postings from the Public Affairs, Entertainment and Business categories. As seen in the chart above, all three of these have relatively equal amount of postings.

Entertainment

During the most recent two months on this public group, there was only one posting within this category. Although the name indicates that the content for this group would be entertainment-based, during the two month time span, the Entertainment category had the same amount of postings in comparison to the

others. The posting was classified as Entertainment since as it dealt with fashion, design and "liking" a photo for voting purposes.

Business

There was only one post that related to the Business category within the recent two months. This post was, more specifically, marketing, advertising, and targeting an audience as it was geared towards promoting a new hotel booking site that would offer "great deals." Keywords that assisted in classing the following post included deals, prices, rates, service and discounts. The exact post was as follows:

> Upcoming: www.hnpexpress.com Nigeria's No. 1 Hotel Booking site,
> www. hnpexpress.com powered by Continental view (choice) Travel Limited, will specialize in hotels.
> We will bring to you thousands of hotels in Nigeria with great deals, incentives and availability across Nigeria offering you the best possible rates and guaranteed secure reservations.
> Prices and availability will be constantly updated by our partner hotels.
> Ensuring we provide the best service we say and ensuring our clients receives the quality they expect at the very best value for money, we will be selecting our hotels partners carefully and continuously be reviewing them. contact: info@hnpexpress.com
> Visit www.hnpexpess.com today and subscribe to be the first to know when the site will go live and the first to get hotel discounts and incentives code. **November 7, 2011**

There was one post that indirectly related to public affairs. It was a video that entitled "Progeny Walk for Life." No other information was provided along with the video. However, the name of the video included a keyword and was being used to raise awareness for Sickle Cell. This is a health issue and can be categorized as public affairs.

The African American Art Song Alliance

Postings per Category

- Interpersonal Relationships 0%
- Public Affairs 0%
- Entertainment 33%
- Career 0%
- Education 67%
- Business 0%
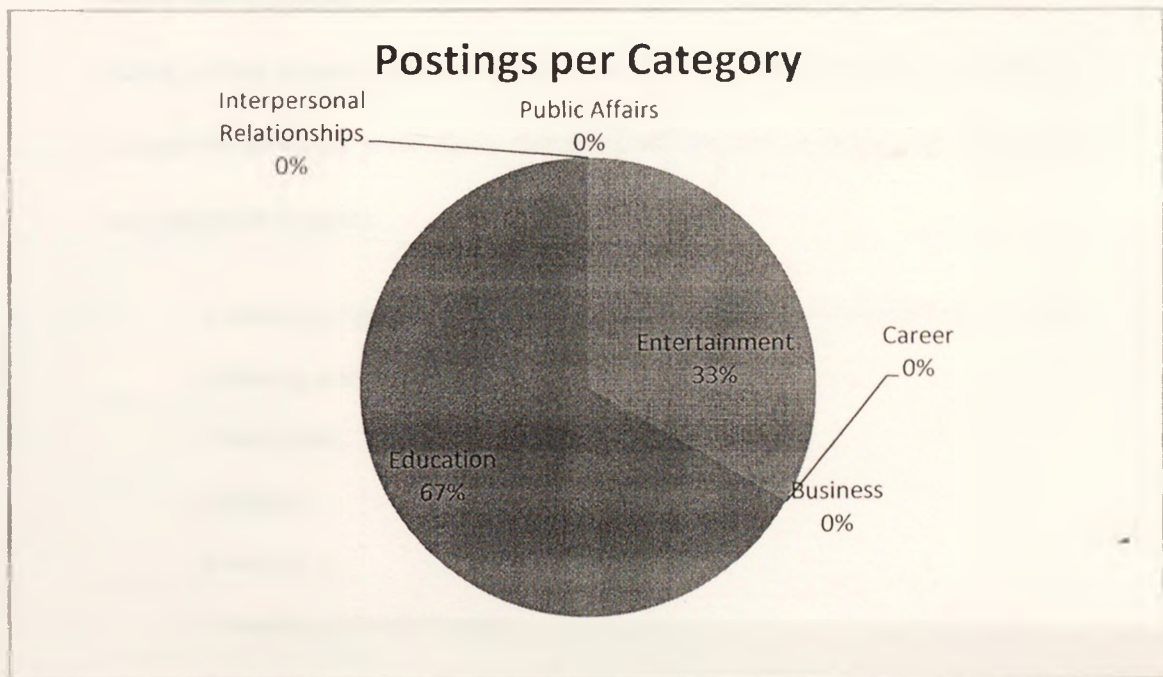
Figure 2

For this group dedicated to music, most of the postings were classed within the Education category.

Entertainment

Within this public group that also is classed as entertainment, there was one post relating to this category. The post was a call for auditions. Keywords that linked this post to entertainment were choir, concert, touring, auditions and music.

Education

For this "entertainment" public group, the Education category had the most posts, i.e. two. One of the posts was in reference to what is called a "masterclass," in which musicians can learn from a professional within the field. The other post was a user inquiring about a voice major or program at several universities they listed, which is seen below. The keywords that placed these posts within the Education category were class, names of universities, schools, doctoral, teachers and program (major).

> Wondering if anyone can give any feedback on the doctoral program in voice at the
> following schools:
> Florida State,
> Michigan,
> Kentucky,
> University of South Carolina.
> Who are the teachers that you would recommend to study with? Thanks in advance for
> your suggestions! **October 1, 2011 at 6:15pm**

Postings per Category

Career 0%
Business 0%
Entertainment 33%
Education 0%
Public Affairs 67%
Interpersonal Relationships 0%
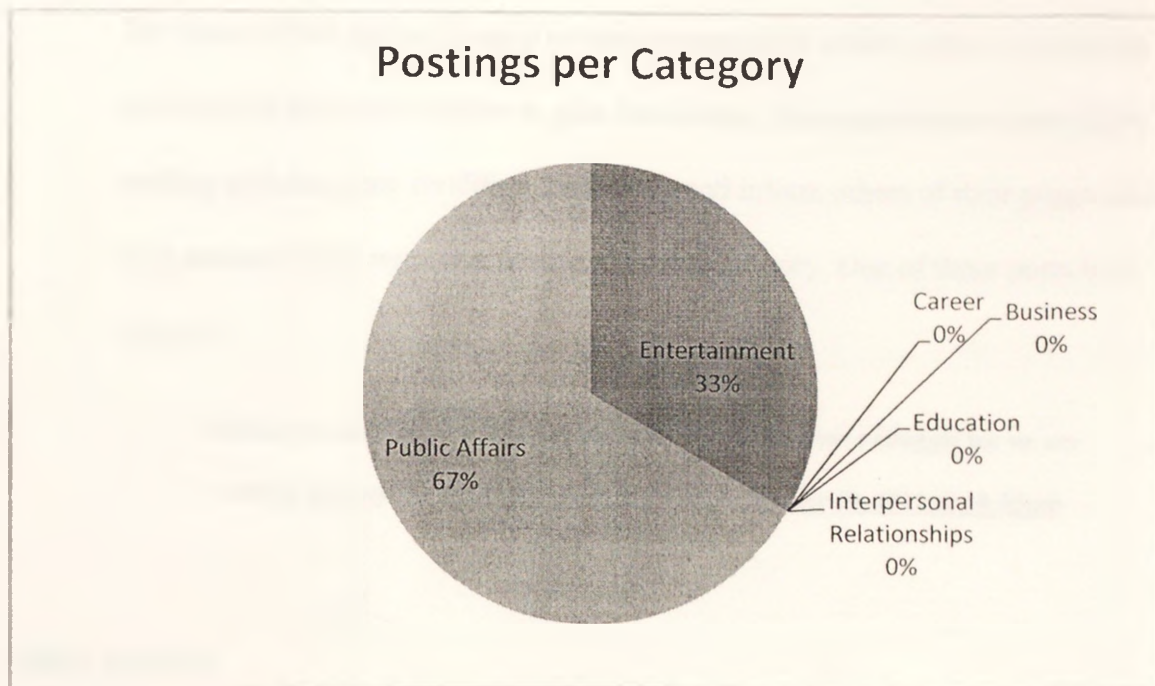
Figure 3

As seen above, the postings for this group dedicated to public awareness of Autism, majority of the postings were classed as Public Affairs.

Entertainment

Although the main focus of this public group is to make people aware of autism, there was one post relating to entertainment. The post was by a mother of an autistic child stating how proud she was of his accomplishment in writing and publishing his CD single entitled "Love, Happiness, and Autism" to assist in raising awareness.

The focus of this public group is to raise awareness of autism. Also, it is used as

an outlet for those with autism to gain knowledge, share experiences with others

dealing with the same condition, encourage and inform others of their progression

with autism. There were two posts within this category. One of these posts is as

follows:

> Hello everyone! My son was diagnosed in June! It has been a struggle but we are
>
> working through the difficulties and roadblocks. **October 10, 2011 at 10:05pm**

Black America

Postings per Category

Interpersonal Relationships 0%

Education 0%

Public Affairs 0%

Business 50%

Entertainment 50%

Career 0%
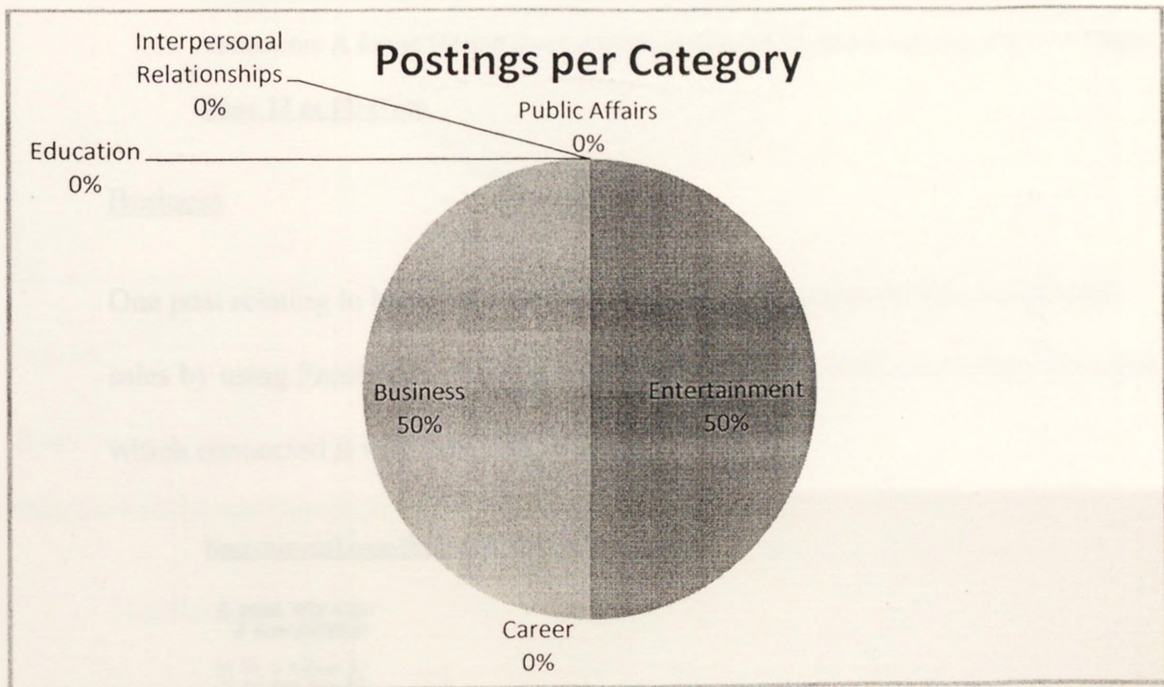
Figure 4

Despite the few postings on the group, both the Business and Entertainment categories contained equal postings.

Entertainment

This public group did not seem to be related to anything in particular and therefore, contained a mix of content or topics. However, during the two most recent months, only one post was associated with entertainment. This post which mentioned the keywords films, authors, and artists is seen below:

African-American Independent Films, Documentaries and Shorts on Vimeo

vimeo.com A forum for and about African-American filmakers, authors, artists and lives

June 12 at 12:47pm

Business

One post relating to business linked to an article giving tips on how to increase sales by using Facebook, which is seen below. The keyword seen within this post, which connected it with business, was sales.

http://tinyurl.com/facebook-start-making-cash

Make Money With Facebook!!!! 2

African American Channel

Postings per Category
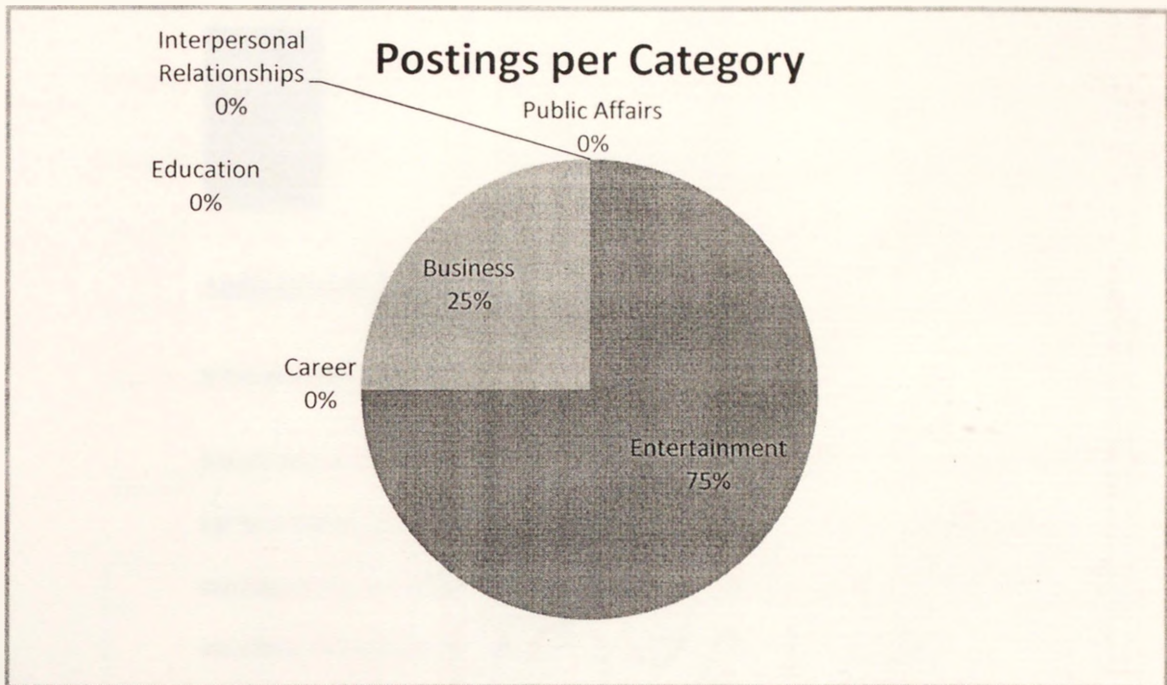
Figure 5

There were not many postings on this group's page. However, as shown above, the Entertainment category had the most postings.

Entertainment

Although not the most popular group among the top five, this public group which is centered around entertainment was the only group that, not only had the most content, but also the most content relating to the category the group falls under.

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Within the two most recent months, there were three postings within this category. One of the postings included information regarding a book and the author, as seen below:

> Sharing Book News: Interivew with author of Passing Love, Jacqueline E. Luckett. She gives authors great advice on obtaining an agent! Jackie also reads from her latest book! Audio here:http://www.audioacrobat.com/note/CPTcM3ds.
>
>
>
> **AudioAcrobat AudioNote**
>
> www.audioacrobat.com
>
> Nicole-Marie Handy has loved all things French since she was a child. After the death of her best friend, determined to get out of her rut, she goes to Paris, leaving behind a marriage proposal. While there, Nicole chances upon an old photo of her father-lovingly inscribed, in his hand, to a woman N... **October 18, 2011 at 9:45pm**

Business

Within this category, there was only one posting which was a promotion or an invitation to a social event.

Twitter

Contrary to the number of postings per public group on Facebook, the public groups on Twitter contained an extensive amount of data or rather, tweets. Similar to the public group names on Facebook which hinted what the group is about or the category it is related to, some of the Twitter public group names did the same. The public group Uptown Magazine suggested it would relate more to entertainment, while The Grio, which is a part of NBC, and The Atlanta Post suggested a mix of news relating to any category or topic. The public group Normbond did not indicate its focus but dealt with various categories, while the public group BlackDoctor.org highlighted health issues and public awareness about such issues.

The Grio

Postings per Category

- Public Affairs 19%
- Entertainment 38%
- Career 11%
- Business 15%
- Education 17%
- Interpersonal Relationships 0%
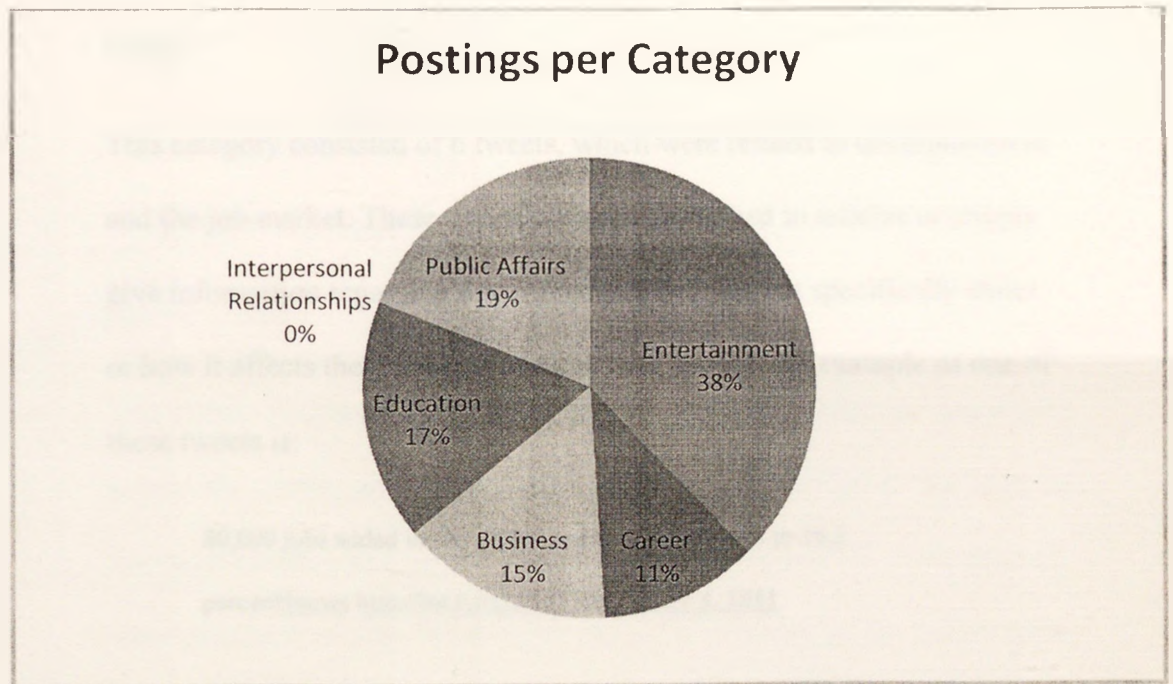
Figure 6

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As displayed above, the majority of the postings on this public group, which is a part of NBC news, were related to the Entertainment category.

Entertainment

This category, along with another, had the most posts or rather "tweets" during the recent two months. For this study, twenty posts were recorded as there were many posts relating to entertainment within the time frame. Many of the posts for entertainment were news or rather "gossip" stories about celebrities, such as the following tweet:

Why the #Beyonce #baby bump #rumours are #ridiculous What do you think? http://ow.ly/6ZtuV17 Oc

Others were about basketball and the lockout, TV shows, music, and books.

Career

This category consisted of 6 tweets, which were related to unemployment and the job market. These tweets are not only linked to articles or simply give information regarding unemployment or jobs, but specifically about or how it affects the African American community. An example of one of these tweets is:

80,000 jobs added in Oct., black unemployment dips to 16.2 percent#news http://bit.ly/rGCjaK November 4, 2011

Business

The business category for this public group contained eight tweets. These tweets focused mainly on black small businesses, black buying power and best cities for blacks to do business, as seen in the tweet below. Just as the career section on this public group, majority of the tweets or articles posted are directly related to African Americans.

> Slideshow: Top US cities for blacks to do business #moneyhttp://bit.ly/uSxO9h
>
> **November 15, 2011**

Education

All of the postings relating to education, which are also identified by the hashtag #education, are news that involves education or students. Some of these include student arrests, skills of black students, lack of books for months and scholarships. There were nine postings within this category.

> Are black students lacking basic skills? #educationhttp://bit.ly/sws4ss
>
> **November 20, 2011**

Public Affairs

The Public Affairs category was another that was popular on this public group. As a result, more than twenty postings were related to this topic in the most recent two months. Therefore, the top twenty of these postings were observed closely. Within this category, majority of the tweets dealt

with politics. Others were news, church and health. An example of one of the tweets included:

Obama campaign launches first ads #politics http://bit.ly/vcNCMN **November 29, 2011**

Norm Bond

Postings per Category
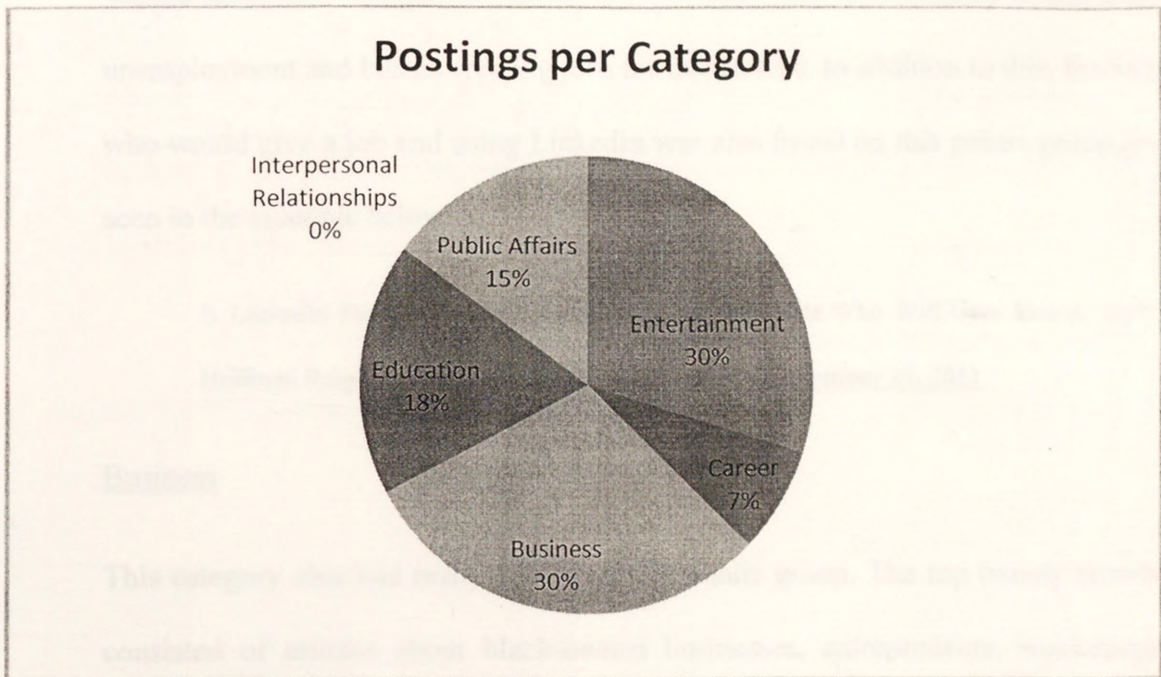
Figure 7

As seen above, the postings on this group pertained mostly to the Entertainment category along with the Business category.

Entertainment

Also for this public group, the Entertainment category had the most tweets. Therefore, the top twenty tweets were recorded. These entertainment tweets

included news about TV shows and a new African American network, sports, movies, radio, theater, African American writers, celebrity gossip and music videos.

> NBA Season Likely Canceled; 5 Reasons the NBA Will Never Be a Great League Again | @RollingOuthttp://bit.ly/tmZw82 **November 15, 2011**

Career

Within the career category, there were five tweets that were mainly focused on unemployment and blacks creating jobs for themselves. In addition to this, finding who would give a job and using LinkedIn was also found on this public group, as seen in the example below:

> Is LinkedIn For Old People? "Like The Kind Of People Who Will Give You A Job?" Hoffman Responds http://budurl.com/6cau #linkedin **October 21, 2011**

Business

This category also had many tweets on this public group. The top twenty tweets consisted of articles about black-owned businesses, entrepreneurs, marketing, African American based consumer research site, online sales and marketing and black buying power. Majority of these articles were encouraging African Americans to find black-owned businesses and support them, such as the one below:

> GOOD GRIEF!!!RT "@normbondStatistics indicate that 95% of Blk consumer dollars are spent with non-Blk owned businesseshttp://phillytrib.com/businessarticles/item/1598-black-shopping-expo-keeps-dollars-in-community.html **December 1, 2011**

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Education

Twelve tweets on this public group were linked to the Education category. These postings included African American lessons in schools, teacher evaluations, college students and student achievement. One of these tweets was:

> Great article! RT @normbond: JUST IN: Center Helps Black Male College Students Thrivehttp://ow.ly/1fsqj3 **November 3, 2011**

Public Affairs

There were ten postings that fell under this category. This included postings mainly about politics. Other postings were about diseases and church. One of these postings that highlighted diseases was:

> HOT Info: National African American Cancer Coalition to target cancer rates and mortalityhttp://ow.ly/1fNGS2 **November 23, 2011**

Postings per Category

Interpersonal Relationships 0%
Public Affairs 10%
Education 19%
Entertainment 42%
Business 25%
Career 4%
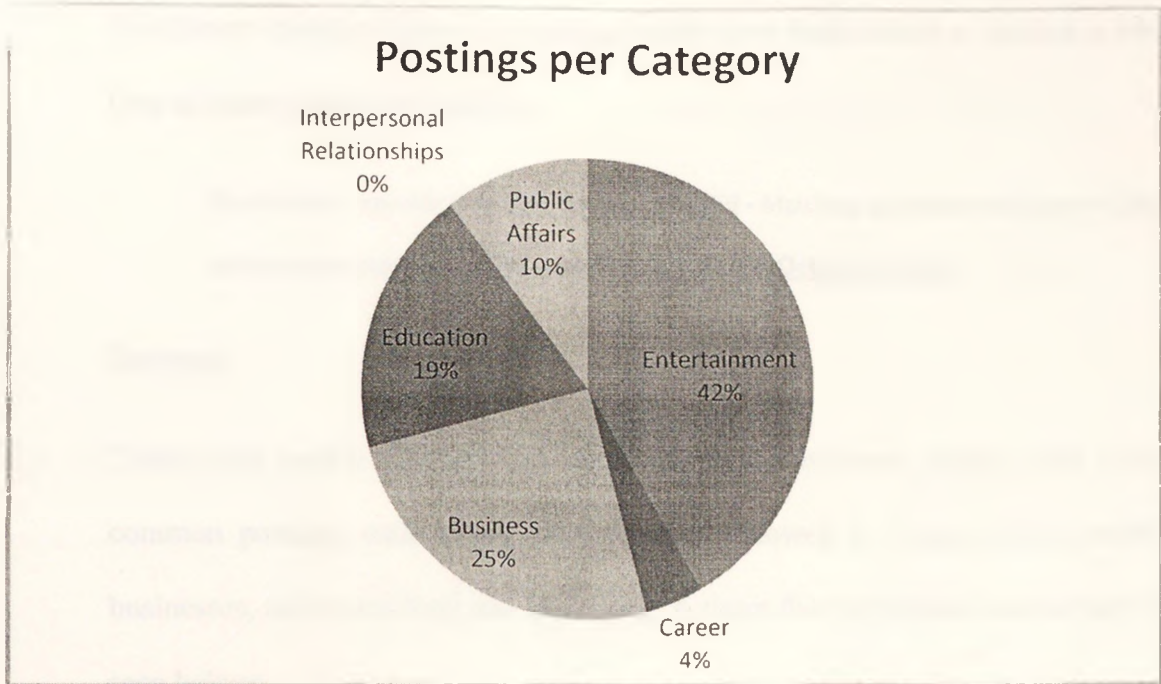
Figure 8

As presented in the chart above, the Entertainment category contained the most postings, despite this being a news site.

<u>Entertainment</u>

Again, the Entertainment category had many tweets. The top twenty tweets for this category were observed. Most of these tweets classed under Entertainment were about celebrities. A few of the other postings were linked to games, sports, black films and black actors and actresses. The one tweet on games is seen below:

> Zynga Announces Move from Facebook To Launch Own Gaming Platform http://ow.ly/1f7Cv8 **October 13, 2011**

Career

The Career category had two postings, which were both related to getting a job. One of these tweets is as follows:

> The 9 Most Available Jobs That Are Hard To Fill - Matching potential employees to jobs on the marketplace is more th...http://ow.ly/1eXGCZ **October 3, 2011**

Business

There were twelve postings that were considered business related. The most common postings were about entrepreneurs, followed by buying black, small businesses, and technology and marketing. A tweet that highlighted technology is seen below:

> Making Technology Relevant - Embracing technology is essential for business development.http://ow.ly/1eJUTQ **September 19, 2011**

Education

For this group, there were nine postings related to education. The content of these tweets consisted of universities, teachers or educators and salaries, student loans, graduates, money that should be spent for education and the Education Act. Although all of these postings do not pertain specifically to African Americans, one that does is found below:

> Blacks in Berkeley Are Beating National High School Graduation Rate http://ow.ly/1eJ3Kb **September 16, 2011**

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The five postings classed under public affairs were all about politics and specifically President Barack Obama, as seen in one of the tweets below:

> Should Democrats Seek A Challenger To Obama? - by Wayne Hodges Is having a black
>
> president worth high unemployment, ...http://ow.ly/1eQEKx **September 26, 2011**

Uptown Magazine

Postings per Category

- Public Affairs 9%
- Interpersonal Relationships 20%
- Education 11%
- Business 3%
- Career 0%
- Entertainment 57%
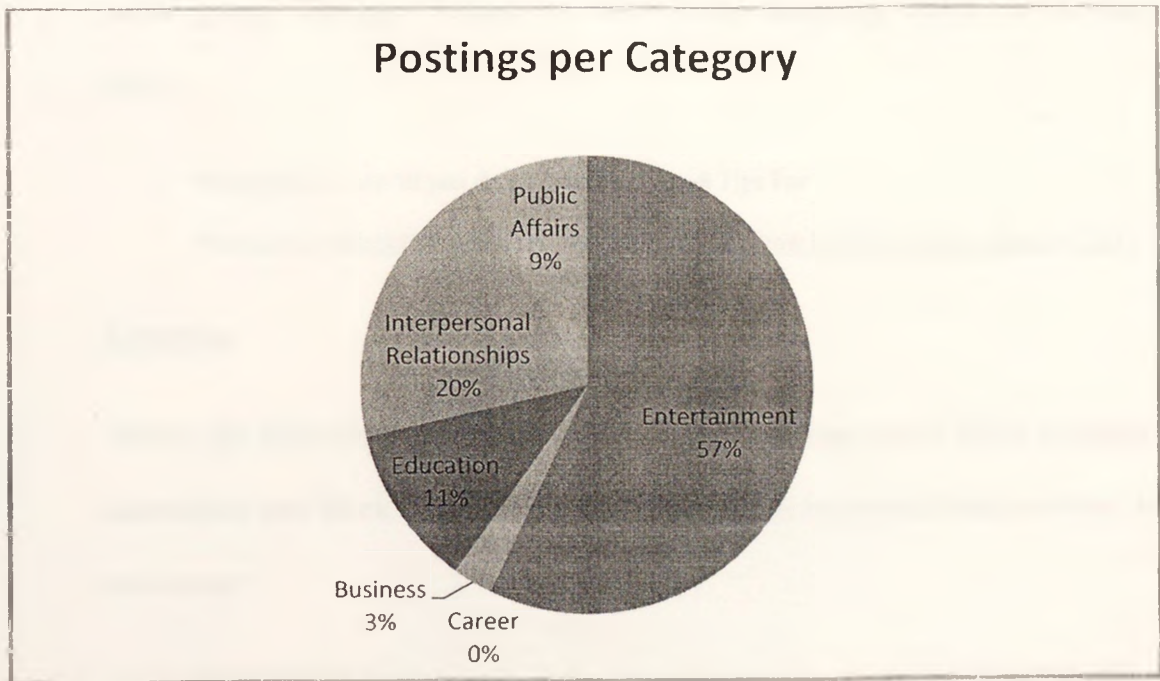
Figure 9

As displayed in the chart above, the Entertainment category contained the most postings, which

may be due to the fact that the group is a magazine.

Entertainment

For this public group, the Entertainment category contained twenty tweets. Many of the postings were about celebrities. However, some were also about artists, TV, films, music video, music awards, and sports. A posting of a video is seen below:

Beyonce Gets Ready To 'Party' [VIDEO] fb.me/1k92eOTXm **October 25, 2011**

Business

One tweet about shopping was classed within the Business category for this public group. This post focused on Black Friday shopping, which can be seen below:

Preparing to shop 'til you drop? Check out our 8 Tips For

Navigating #BlackFriday before you head out! http://ow.ly/7EA2p **November 24, 2011**

Education

Within the Education category, there were four postings about Black students, universities and Black educators. One of the postings regarding Black students is as follows:

94 Percent Of Arrested Students Are Black Or Latinohttp://fb.me/x9FXKqiq **November 30, 2011**

Interpersonal Relationships

Dating and intimate relationships were the focus of the seven postings for the Interpersonal Relationships category. One of these is seen below:

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Do "The Rules" on Dating Still Apply? Yes— They Worked For Me fb.me/TM1RdjaB

November 3, 2011

Public Affairs

For this public group, there were only three postings classed under Public Affairs.
These postings were directly linked to politics, as seen below:

Cain 'Reassessing' Presidential Campaign Runhttp://fb.me/1ktE7imEl

November 29, 2011

BlackDoctor.org
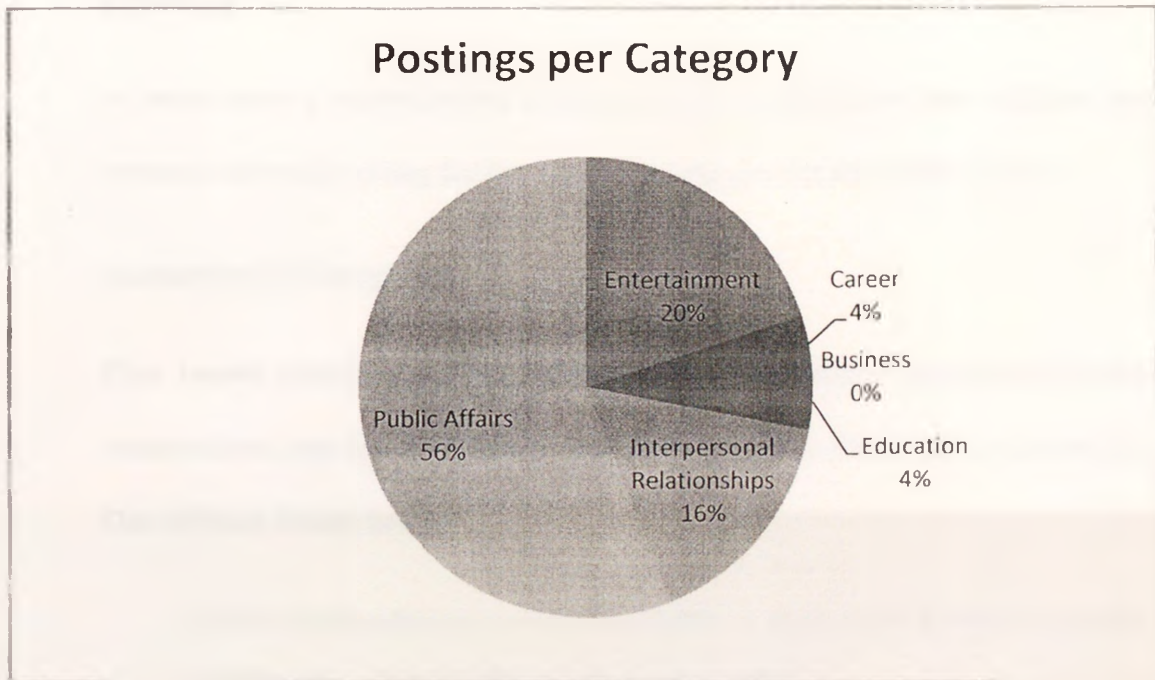
Figure 10

As seen in the chart above, the Public Affairs category had the most postings, perhaps due to the
group's focusing on health.

Entertainment

Five postings that were classed under the Entertainment category mentioned celebrities. However, these "entertainment-classed" tweets were still related to health, as seen in one of the postings below:

> "Don't Go Chasing Waterfalls..." Singer T-Boz of TLC talks to us about her secret brain #tumor --> http://ow.ly/72d20

Career

One post within the Career category encouraged users to find a doctor in their neighborhood.

Education

A tweet about a university and information they found about black children and sweets is the only posting for the Education category for this public group.

Interpersonal Relationships

Four tweets classed under the Interpersonal Relationships focused on healthy relationships, cure for relationships, and dealing with an illness and a relationship. One of these is seen below:

> Healthy Relationships are a part of being healthy --> Here's 10 Traits of Having a healthy Relationship --> http://ow.ly/7x6iT **November 17, 2011**

Public Affairs

Within this category, there were fourteen postings. Thirteen of these focused on
awareness of specific illnesses, while one mentioned President Obama and
bringing troops home from Iraq.

> You can't "just tell"... You have to know. "What to Look For: #HIV " -->
> http://ow.ly/7ilUS 3 Nov

DISCUSSION

There were several major themes of the study. Entertainment emerged as the dominant pattern, followed by business, public affairs and education. From the very start of the research, there seemed to be indications of what African Americans utilize social networks for. Several of the public groups' name suggested not only what the group was about, but also gave an idea of what the content or postings would be related to and consequently, what theme or category would be most popular among users. As seen on Facebook, three out of five of the public groups' names were related to music and could have been an indication that entertainment may be part of the answer to the first research question of this thesis, that is, "How are African Americans using social networks?" At least this would be the case regarding the Facebook pages examined. On Twitter, one of the public groups' names suggested a strong relationship to entertainment, Uptown Magazine, while two others, The Grio and The Atlanta Post, suggested a mix of news that could be related to any category or topic. Another public group called, BlackDoctor.org, highlighted health issues and public awareness.

Theme One – Dominance of Entertainment

Despite the initial indications that African Americans may be using social networks for entertainment purposes mostly, based on the names of the top five public groups, the postings within the groups themselves were not always in line with this initial speculation. For each of the public groups on Facebook, there were very little postings. The postings from the two months examined for the study on the Facebook public groups reveal that:

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- The first group, called African American Album, had the most postings for the Entertainment, Business and Public Affairs categories. All three of these categories had an equal amount of postings.

- The second group, known as The African American Art Song Alliance, had the most postings relating to the Education category, followed by the Entertainment category.

- The third group, African American Autism Awareness, had the most postings for Public Affairs, followed by Entertainment.

- The fourth group, Black America, had the most postings for both Business and Entertainment.

- The fifth group, African American Channel, had the most postings for Entertainment, followed by Business.

Most Popular Category based on postings from each public group on Facebook	
Categories	Tally Marks
Entertainment	III
Career	
Business	III
Education	I
Interpersonal Relationships	
Public Affairs	II

Table 1

From the above information for the postings on Facebook, entertainment and business were the two most popular categories engaged in by African Americans on these sites.

On Twitter, during the months of October and November 2011, the majority of the public groups had over twenty tweets or postings per day. The content was frequently updated and was very recent. From these postings it was revealed that:

- The first group, called The Grio, had the most tweets pertaining to the Entertainment category, followed by Public Affairs.

- The second group, Norm Bond, had the most tweets for both Entertainment and Business.

- The third group, known as The Atlanta Post, had the most tweets that were related to the Entertainment category, followed by the Business category.

- The fourth group, Uptown Magazine, had the most tweets for the Entertainment category, followed by Interpersonal Relationships.

- The fifth group, BlackDoctor.org, had the most tweets for the Public Affairs category, followed by Entertainment.

Most Popular Category based on postings from each public group on Twitter	
Categories	Tally Marks
Entertainment	IIII
Career	
Business	I
Education	
Interpersonal Relationships	
Public Affairs	I

Table 2

As seen from the above information for the postings on Twitter, entertainment was the most popular category or used by African Americans.

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When the information is combined, entertainment remains the most popular

category, followed by business, public affairs and education.

Most Popular Category based on postings from each public group on both Facebook and Twitter	
Categories	Tally Marks
Entertainment	VII
Career	
Business	IIII
Education	I
Interpersonal Relationships	
Public Affairs	III

Table 3

Although there were postings on both social networks for each of these categories, the

Career and Interpersonal Relationships categories had the least postings on any of the

public groups.

The above information helps to answer the first research question, that is, "How

are African Americans using social networks?" Based on the findings, African Americans

seem to be utilizing social networks for entertainment purposes mostly. Specifically,

African Americans seem to be using mostly Facebook for both entertainment and

business purposes almost equally, while Twitter is being used overwhelmingly for

entertainment.

Theme Two - Celebrity News

In analyzing the nature of the postings on each public group and social network, several patterns emerged. As identified above, entertainment is the main purpose for which African Americans are using social networks. But what specifically about entertainment are they most interested in? On all of the public groups, specifically on Twitter, a pattern was noticed on postings about celebrities. Many of these postings were celebrity gossip postings. Others were about what the celebrities were up to, such as recording a new film, or "where they are now," such as updates on the cast of "Fresh Prince of Bel-Air." Examples of these postings are seen below:

Why the #Beyonce #baby bump #rumours are #ridiculous What do you think? http://ow.ly/6ZtuV

Wiz Khalifa Throws Amber Rose A Birthday Party (Photos), Ocho Cinco's Dad Sues Kanye & Jay-Z, 25 ... http://conta.cc/oe9E4l #constantcontact

In addition to the above celebrity postings, there also seemed to be a pattern in tweets about African American TV and the 2011 NBA lockout. These are issues which are also classified as entertainment. Examples of these are seen below:

HOT Info: African American TV network launches in Phila. - A new television network aimed at African Americans launc...http://ow.ly/1fWQFN

NBA Cancels Preseason As The Both The League And Players Fail To Reach An Amicable Decisionhttp://ow.ly/1eZqSr

Due to the limited number of postings on Facebook, a pattern was not easily discernable.

Theme Three – Divergence and Convergence between Twitter and Facebook usage

Although the number of postings on the Twitter pages surpassed those on Facebook, there were still a few similarities. Some of the public groups' names found on both Facebook and Twitter suggested a category that it would be more focused on entertainment. Another similarity between the two was that African Americans used both social networks mainly for entertainment purposes.

As mentioned above, there was not enough data available on the public groups on Facebook in order to determine patterns. This was one of the differences between the public groups on Facebook and Twitter. Facebook had little postings, which were not recent. On the other hand, the public groups on Twitter not only had a lot of information, that is, more than twenty tweets per day, but also frequent updates. Evidently, the postings on Twitter public groups were more current and reflected recent news, than those found on Facebook public groups.

From this study, it can be said that Twitter seems to be more popular among African Americans than Facebook. This idea was highlighted in one of the articles mentioned within the Review of the Literature. More postings or tweets may be seen on Twitter as compared to Facebook. Other reasons for this may include the environment of Twitter, which is more open, public and current. Unlike Facebook, users can follow others or groups without permission and freely, whereas on Facebook, groups may be closed or private. One also needs permission to become someone's "friend" on Facebook, which makes it less accessible to those who are not part of the friend network. This limits frequency and volume of input on Facebook which does occur on Twitter since the latter has a more open format. Twitter also allows rapid, but short information for postings.

Other Categories

The pattern in the postings that were related to the Career category dealt with jobs and unemployment. Again, there was no content for this category to determine a pattern for the public groups on Facebook. However, this pattern was seen on the public groups present on Twitter. An example of this is seen below:

Unemployment rate falls to lowest level in more than two years #newshttp://bit.ly/rNnQaG

The most obvious trend in terms of the postings within the Business category on Twitter was that of talk about African American businesses. There were a lot of posts about entrepreneurship, small businesses and "buying Black." An example highlighting this is seen below:

When It Comes to Black Buying Power, Don't Believe the Hype - It is important to debunk the illusion of the black bu...http://ow.ly/1eo5gA

On Facebook, the trend for business related postings was marketing. An example of this is seen below:

You're Invited to OBS Holiday Mixer -It's the holiday season and time to shake up the creative juices! Or maybe that's drink some "Creative Juices"! Relax, network, socialize - Whichever, Come Party & Network with OBS!

Admission: RSVP: http://obsholidaymixer2011.eventbrite.com/

You're Invited to OBS Holiday Mixer

Friday, December 9 at 7:00pm

The Education category did not necessarily reveal a particular pattern. However, many of the postings, especially on Twitter, were news about education topics.

There were not many posts relating to Interpersonal Relationships. The posts that did appear where found on the Twitter public group pages. However, a pattern seen among the few postings observed focused on intimate relationships, i.e. how to keep a relationship healthy. They also related to dating and the dating scene for African Americans. An example of this is seen below:

CAUTION: Relationship Advice From The Lonely, Bitter Woman fb.me/BYeYEPCy

The postings for Public Affairs were predominantly about politics, most of which appeared on Twitter. This is seen in the following example:

President Obama's Revision of No Child Left Behind Is More Of The Same http://ow.ly/1eQKXu

Limitations of the Study

Although the study provided useful information, there were limitations that may have affected the findings. These limitations included the lack of information present on Facebook to make a more rounded and sound judgment or observation about how African Americans are using Facebook as a social network. Another limitation was the use of public groups, which may not reflect solely what African Americans are using social networks for. Some of the uses may not be done on public groups, such as those used for this study. Another possible limitation of this study is the possibility that majority of the postings on the public groups, especially on Twitter, were posted by the administrators of the public group.

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CONCLUSION

The finding of this research, that being, African Americans use social networks for entertainment, is corroborated by at least one previous study i.e. "Use technology for empowerment not entertainment," which indicated that African Americans use technology, in particular, social networks for entertainment more than anything else. Although using social networks for this purpose is not a bad thing, I agree with the call for action within the article. African Americans, a demographic that has the least access to computer technology, should learn be open to using technology for diverse reasons. As more African Americans are gaining access to technology, the more it should be used to enhance, empower, network, advance and add value to their lives. Access should also enable them to become more competitive with others who are using technology as a beneficial tool in terms of jobs, education, and other "non-entertainment" activities.

African Americans are not only using social networks for entertainment, but specifically for information about celebrities. This finding was also similar to a study mentioned within the Review of the Literature. Research done by the Pew Research Center found that 5% of American users stated that their main reason for using social media is to read comments by celebrities, athletes or politicians. For African Americans, a major reason or rather pattern when using social networks is to read about celebrities, athletes or politicians, such as "celebrity gossip."

Although African Americans use social networks primarily for entertainment, there are a few other but lesser uses, observed. As highlighted within this study African Americans use these sites for other purposes such as business, education and public affairs (especially, politics). A similar finding was reported by Georgetown University's

Center for Social Impact Communication and Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide, which noted that African Americans utilize social networks for promoting causes. These behaviors or uses are ones that should grow and be encouraged.

It was highlighted that African Americans are not only using social networks for entertainment, but specifically for information about celebrities. This finding was also similar to a study mentioned within the Review of the Literature. Research done by Pew Research Center found that five percent of American users stated that their main reason for using social media is to read comments by celebrities, athletes or politicians. For African Americans, a major reason or rather pattern when using social networks is to read about celebrities, athletes or politicians, such as "celebrity gossip."

As African Americans have been noted to have a significant presence on Twitter, as mentioned in studies in the Review of the Literature section, they should use this advantage to better themselves. This can be done by not focusing most of their usage of social networks on entertainment, but rather more on other beneficial purposes. Some of these purposes may include networking, gaining knowledge and experience from others within the same career, promoting awareness and causes and reading news about their surroundings.

What do these findings mean? African Americans, as previously mentioned and noted in previous studies, are using social networks mainly for entertainment purposes. However, this study, unlike previous ones, display that African Americans are also using social networks significantly for other purposes as well. These include business, politics or news (public affairs) and education. With this new study revealing this information that previous studies either did not discover or disclose, it seems as if African Americans

are doing more than what many think. This study indicates that African Americans use of social networks are becoming more diverse and increasing in more beneficial purposes, just as the presence of African Americans online and on social networks are increasing

As noted in a previous study, African Americans are utilizing mobile technology more than other demographics. There is an indication of why African Americans' presence online has also increased. Similarly, the dominance of Twitter by African Americans can also be attributed to this fact. Twitter, which is mobile-friendly, due to its short posts or "tweets" of 140 characters, can be accessed and interacted with very quickly. This feature seems to be a driving factor for African American use of this particular social network.

Similarly, as stated in a previous study, African Americans "love to be heard" and to be acknowledged by getting feedback. This preference seems to be in line with the use of Twitter, especially, for African Americans, which is used to get a discussion going through hashtags, or rather, blacktags, as mentioned previously. African Americans are using Twitter to speak about things which concern them, just as they did with hip hop. Now, this trend has carried onto the digital age and Twitter, in particular.

In connection with the above stated, there is a concern of the "white fear" assumption of African Americans and their "blackness." However, African Americans like any other demographic should be aware of how they use social networks and portray themselves. As jobs and businesses utilize social networks to know more about an individual, it is essential for everyone to make sure they conduct themselves in an appropriate manner when online and on social networks. Although this should be done,

this does not mean that African Americans should not express themselves based on their culture or their concerns that are relevant. African Americans, like others, should be able to act informally, such as when communicating with peers, and formally, when in the workplace. Therefore, African Americans should not be discriminated against based on their culture when looked at by businesses but rather by their credentials.

As highlighted within this study and previous research, African Americans are dominating Twitter. This demographic has the largest presence than any other on this particular social network. As a result, with the increase of African Americans online and their increase of using social networks as an asset, African Americans may be able to use this to have an advantage over others. With social networks and computer technology being the way for the future and being depended on for jobs, networking, etc., African Americans may be able to surpass their competitors very soon. Their presence online can make a change in not only the digital divide, but also important issues, especially those related to African Americans.

With the presence of African Americans is great, African Americans can gain a lot from being on social networks, which are used extensively by businesses to network and relay information, such as job openings, etc. As a result, businesses and academic institutions can tap into the "black market" and enhance diversity.

This study can be used as hope for African Americans to continue accessing computer technology and to use it for enhancements, which is seen to be increasing. Also, this study can serve as a basis to show that African Americans are catching on to what can be accomplished by utilizing computer technology and social networks.

Perhaps, in the near future, African Americans would be dominating their presence online across all borders and have an advantage over their competitors, due to their computer and online use.

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APPENDICES

Motivations for Using Social Networking Sites

Motivations for using social networking sites

Based on adults who use social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn and/or Twitter
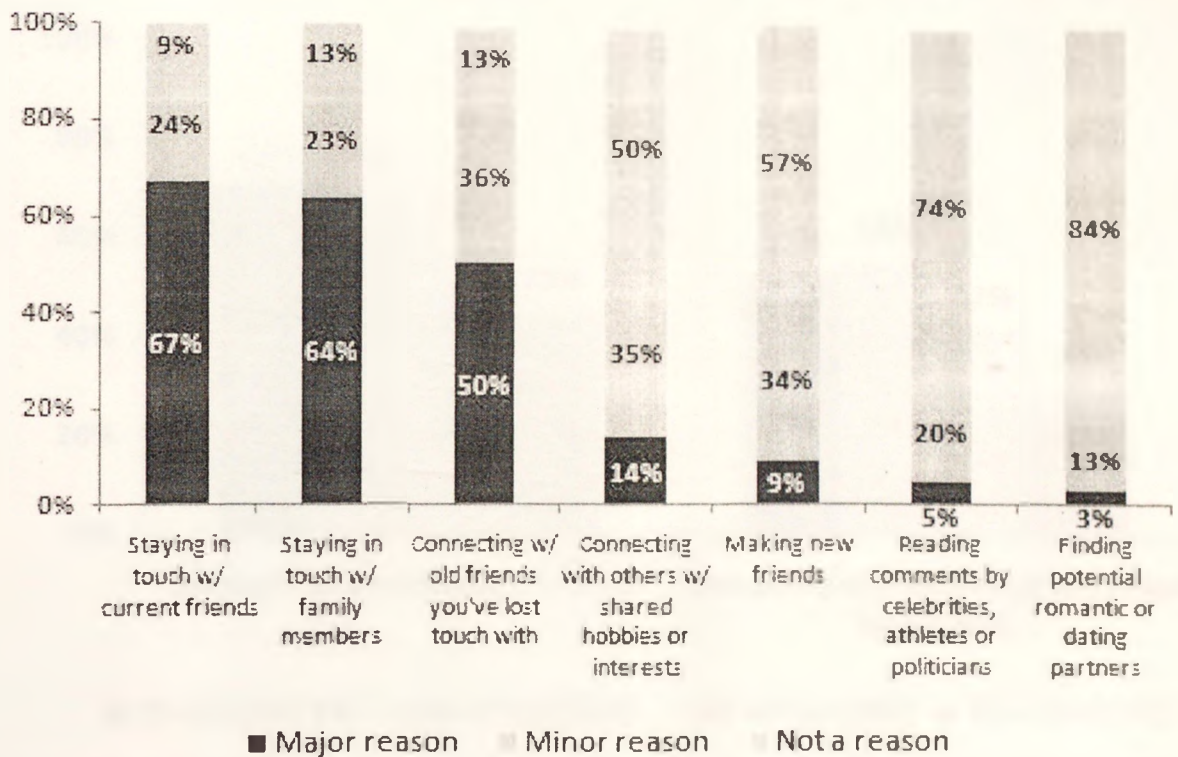
■ Major reason   Minor reason   Not a reason

Frequency of Social Networking Site Usage to Stay Connected with Friends

Staying in touch with current friends and reconnecting with old ones

% of social networking site users within each group who say the following are a "major reason" fo their use of social networking sites
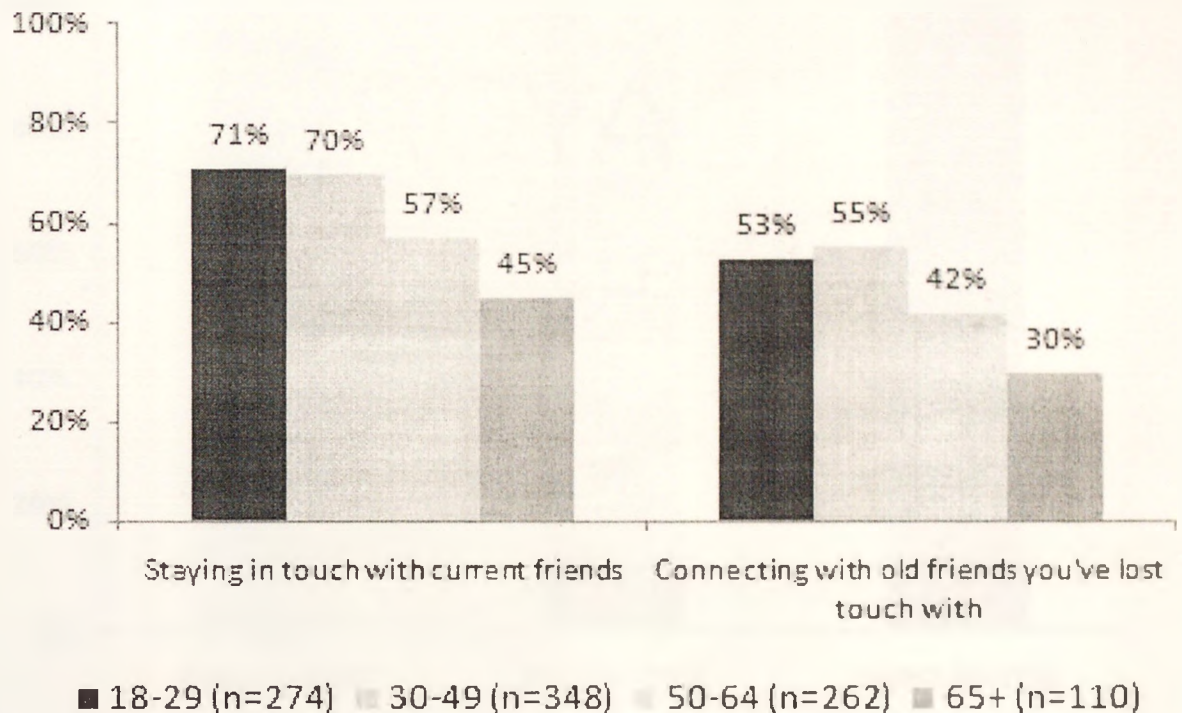
■ 18-29 (n=274) ▨ 30-49 (n=348) ▨ 50-64 (n=262) ▨ 65+ (n=110)

Source: The Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project, April 26 – May 22, 2011 Spring Tracking Survey; n=2,277 adults ages 18 and older, including 755 cell phone interviews. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish. Margin of error is +/-3 percentage points for SNS users (n=1,015)

Frequency of Using Social Networking Sites for Entertainment Purposes

Reading comments by celebrities, politicians or athletes

Based on adults who use Twitter and/or social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace or LinkedIn
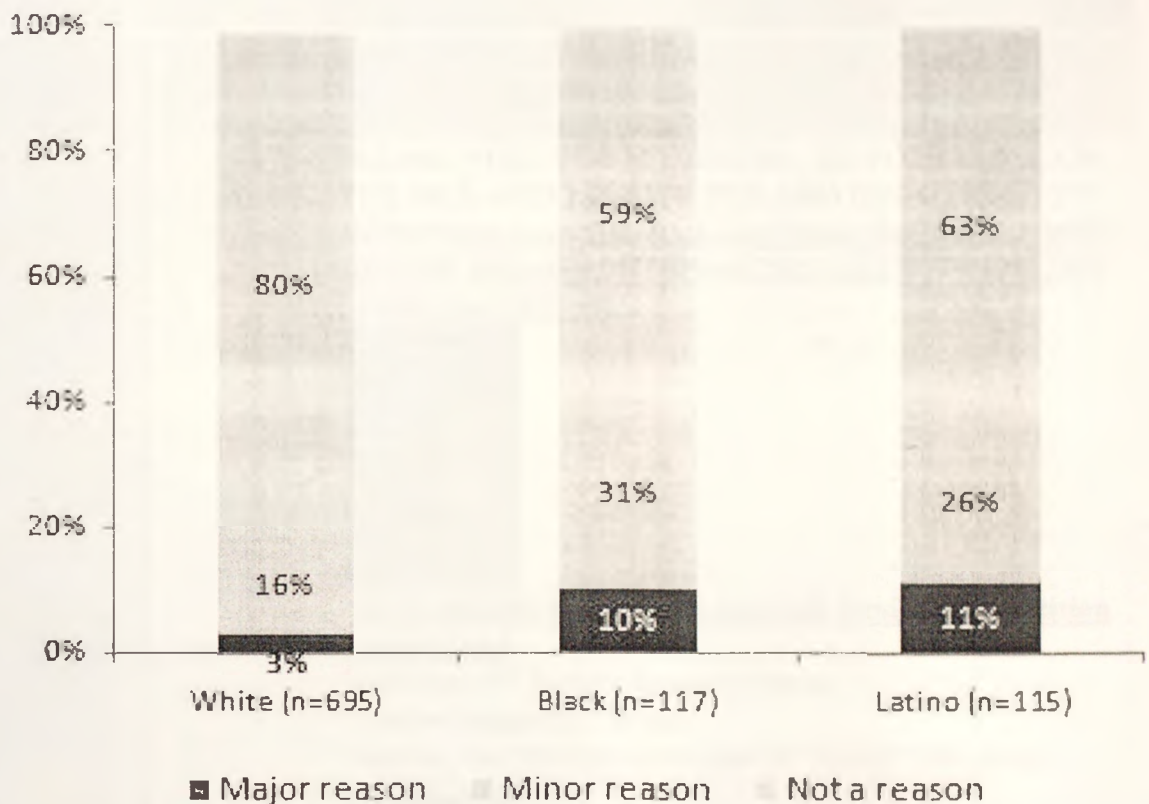
■ Major reason　　Minor reason　　Not a reason

Source: The Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project, April 26 – May 22, 2011 Spring Tracking Survey; n=2,277 adults ages 18 and older, including 755 cell phone interviews. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish. Margin of error is +/-3 percentage points for SNS users (n=1,015)

Sample Postings from Facebook and Twitter Social Networks

Note: All postings in Appendix D were taken verbatim from these two social networks. To maintain originality of the postings, no corrections on typos and/or grammatical errors were made to the postings.

Facebook		
Name of Public Group	**Entertainment**	**Posting/Comment/Content**
African American Album		PLEASE VOTE FOR MY DRESS!! TO VOTE CLICK ON THE PICK AND LIKE IT!! PUB AND GET OTHERS TO VOTE!!http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=1015029 5012316150&set=a.10150294987501150.327299.12557945 6149&type=1&theater **VOTE HERE! Terry Costa Catwalk Design Competition Contestants!** Contestant #7: Keisha Kenneth-Nwosa Creative Images by Design Vote for your favorite contestant by "liking" their photo! September 30

Business	Posting/Comment/Content

African
American Album

Upcoming: www.hnpexpress.com Nigeria's No. 1 Hotel Booking site,

www. hnpexpress.com powered by Continental view (chioce) Travel Limited, will specialize in hotels.

We will bring to you thousands of hotels in Nigeria with great deals, incentives and availability across Nigeria offering you the best possible rates and guaranteed secure reservations.

Prices and availability will be constantly updated by our partner hotels.

Ensuring we provide the best service we say and ensuring our clients receives the quality they expect at the very best value for money, we will be selecting our hotels partners carefully and continuously be reviewing them.

contact: info@hnpexpress.com

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http://www.facebook.com/pages/Nigerias-No-1-Hotel-Booking-Online-wwwhnpexpresscom/303824012979666?sk=info
hnpexpress.com
www.hnpexpress.com
November 7

Public Affairs	Posting/Comment/Content

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=43ylCm-usuI&noredirect=1
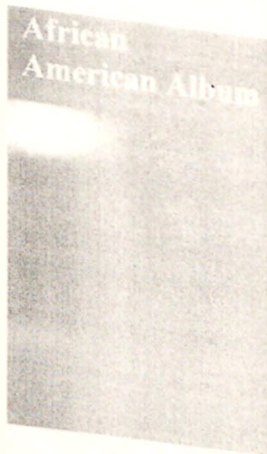
Progeny Walk For Life 1
www.youtube.com
17 hours ago

Facebook	
Entertai nment	**Posting/Comment/Content**
	Toronto based profession chamber choir, Nathaniel Dett Chorale, is holding auditions for the 2011/12 season, August 29 & 30 in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. For more informationhttp://nathanieldettchorale.org/about/auditions-2/ **Auditions «** nathanieldettchorale.org The Nathaniel Dett Chorale is Canada's first professional choral group dedicated to Afrocentric music of all styles. We have a demanding concert and touring season, and we're looking for skilled individuals committed to working hard while having fun. August 19

Facebook	
Education	**Posting/Comment/Content**
	SUBMISSION DEADLINE EXTENDED FOR ART SONG MASTERCLASS WITH ROGER VIGNOLES. November 15th is the new deadline. The New york Singing Teachers' Association Great Coaches Series, now in its third year, presents world renowned pianist and coach, Roger Vignoles, who will work with collaborative duos on French, German, English, and Russian repertoire. Mr. Vignoles, who serves on the faculty of The Royal College of Music,

has partnered with such illustrious singers as Sarah Walker, Thomas Allen, Susan Graham, Lorraine Hunt Lieberson, and Dame Kiri Te Kanawa. We look forward to sharing in his deep knowledge and understanding of the Art Song repertoire.

Participants for this masterclass should be established singer/pianist duos who have worked together for a period of time on the repertoire submitted. All submissions should be sent to Elizabeth Saunders at events@nyst.org and should include resumes, an audio clip, either an mp3 or an online link, and a list of three pieces from which Mr. Vignoles will select.

The New York Singing Teachers' Association presents: The Josephine Mongiardo Great Coaches Series featuring Roger Vignoles followed by a Holiday Reception
Monday December 5th, 7:00-9:00pm
Grace Dodge Hall, Room 179
Columbia Teachers College
525 West 120th Street
between Broadway and Amsterdam Avenue

African American Art Song Alliance
October 25 at 10:51pm

Wondering if anyone can give any feedback on the doctoral program in voice at the following schools:

Florida State,
Michigan,
Kentucky,
University of South Carolina.

Who are the teachers that you would recommend to study with? Thanks in advance for your suggestions!
October 1 at 6:15pm

Facebook		
Name of Public	**Entertain ment**	**Posting/Comment/Content**
African American Autism Awareness		Keep hope alive, I'm so proud of my son Myles, he continues to make great strides. He wrote and published his latest CD single - Love Happiness and Autism! To help raise awareness of the ASD. October 12 at 2:29am

Facebook		
Name of Public Group	**Public Affairs**	**Posting/Comment/Content**
African American Autism Awareness		Newly diagnosed....help!!! November 16 at 4:06pm
		Hello everyone! My son was Diagnosed in June! It has been a struggle but we are working through the difficulties and roadblocks. October 10 at 10:05pm

Facebook		
Name of Public Group	**Entertain ment**	**Posting/Comment/Content**
Black America		 **African-American Independent Films, Documentaries and Shorts on Vimeo** vimeo.com A forum for and about African-American filmakers, authors, artists and lives. June 12 at 12:47pm

Facebook		
Name of Public Group	**Business**	**Posting/Comment/Content**
Black America		http://tinyurl.com/facebook-start-making-cash
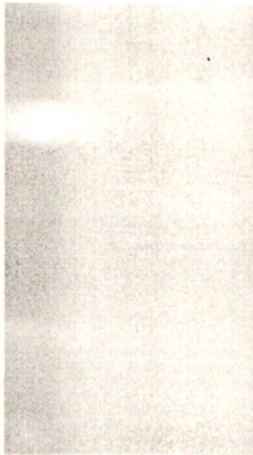
Make Money With Facebook!!!! 2
www.hyperfbtraffic.com
YES, you WILL get a shocking amount of TRAFFIC and
SALES within 62 minutes!In fact, you don't need... ...curious?
Read on to discover the secret...
September 5 at 5:42pm

Facebook		
Name of Public Group	**Entertainment**	**Posting/Comment/Content**
The African American Channel		Check out this 30 second spot that I directed. Give it a minute to load. It's called Who's The Big Dog? http://www.crashthesuperbowl.com/#/gallery?video=16221 **Doritos® Presents: CRASH THE SUPER BOWL** www.crashthesuperbowl.com Don't miss your chance to take on Hollywood for the glitziest Crash yet. Grab your camera and create your Doritos® commercial before November 21st. It's time to step up and take on Hollywood. Make an awesome spot, and you could win a million dollars and the opportunity to work on a future Doritos p... November 23 at 7:13am www.dancesandwich.com/inspiration **Inspiration	Why You Should Never Dance While Making A Sandwich** dancesandwich.com Anna received the story of Why You Should Never Dance While Making A Sandwich as one large visualization..right after she dropped a tomato on the kitchen floor dancing to some

funk music. Her son, then five years old, promptly informed her that the splattered tomato was prime evidence why she should...
November 4 at 9:56am

Sharing Book News: Interview with author of Passing Love, Jacqueline E. Luckett. She gives authors great advice on obtaining an agent! Jackie also reads from her latest book! Audio here:http://www.audioacrobat.com/note/CPTcM3ds.

AudioAcrobat AudioNote
www.audioacrobat.com
Nicole-Marie Handy has loved all things French since she was a child. After the death of her best friend, determined to get out of her rut, she goes to Paris, leaving behind a marriage proposal. While there, Nicole chances upon an old photo of her father-lovingly inscribed, in his hand, to a woman N...
October 18 at 9:45pm

Facebook		
Name of Public Group	**Business**	**Posting/Comment/Content**
The African American Channel		You're Invited to OBS Holiday Mixer -It's the holiday season and time to shake up the creative juices! Or maybe that's drink some "Creative Juices"! Relax, network, socialize - Whichever, Come Party & Network with OBS! Admission: RSVP: http://obsholidaymixer2011.eventbrite.com/ **You're Invited to OBS Holiday Mixer** Friday, December 9 at 7:00pm November 17 at 9:36pm

Twitter		
Name of Public	**Entertainment**	**Posting/Comment/Content**
		Beyoncé to Rihanna: Take a year off to

80

rest http://soc.li/oaNIVWN@theGrio I love that RiRi asks Bey for advice lol
28 Nov

Jimi Hendrix: Legendary guitarist would have been 69 on Sunday #entertainmenthttp://bit.ly/sqg67Z
27 Nov

Pa. exhibit showcases legendary black photographerhttp://soc.li/c2yQnNb
27 Nov

The young rapper Astro gives all sorts of attitude on 'X-Factor'..Should he have been eliminated? http://soc.li/s6IaBAa@theGrio
18 Nov

#Griofam do you remember this? VIDEO Am I A Good Man - Them Two youtube.com/watch?v=Nar79l… via @youtube
Flag this media
YouTube
17 Nov

Winehouse wrote full 3rd CD, planned supergroup #entertainmenthttp://bit.ly/suuh1V
17 Nov

Betty Wright and the Roots make musical 'Movie' #entertainmenthttp://bit.ly/sVCe19
14 Nov

Blacks play more video games, but little diversity behind the scenes #news http://bit.ly/tlOA2g
11 Nov

@theGrio @rantoddj no NBA? at this moment don't care now. Got hockey, football and MMA. At this rate it'll fall behind NASCAR
11 Nov

Diverse black women dominating daytime TV?http://on.thegrio.com/uplZBa
5 Nov

Joe keeps it 'Good, Bad & Sexy' with 9th album #entertainmenthttp://bit.ly/tCzAWi

5 Nov

Queen Latifah tapped to host daytime talk show #entertainmenthttp://bit.ly/u4cF6o
31 Oct

Faith-based films gaining foothold in Hollywood #entertainmenthttp://bit.ly/tpfq4x
30 Oct

How Ron Washington is making baseball history #opinionhttp://bit.ly/tHuURV
26 Oct

James Brown inducted into Ga. Radio Hall of Famehttp://on.thegrio.com/qIll52
22 Oct

Will and Jada among new owners of 76ers http://ow.ly/71DSq
19 Oct

T.I. makes his debut as author with 'Power and Beauty' Are you going to read it? http://ow.ly/72RSP
19 Oct

Why the #Beyonce #baby bump #rumours are #ridiculous What do you think? http://ow.ly/6ZtuV
17 Oc

Has hip-hop activism made a comeback?http://on.thegrio.com/pdgbdK
16 Oct

Adele forced to cancel 10-city US tour due to illness #entertainmenthttp://bit.ly/mRkTRu
4 Oct

Twitter		
Name of Public	Career	Posting/Comment/Content
		Unemployment rate falls to lowest level in more than two years #newshttp://bit.ly/rNnQaG 2 Dec

82

		Slow improvement in job market #news http://bit.ly/uAJfDj 17 Nov
		Unemployment falls in 75 percent of US citieshttp://on.thegrio.com/rVnWIc 6 Nov
		80,000 jobs added in Oct., black unemployment dips to 16.2 percent#news http://bit.ly/rGCjaK 4 Nov
		In Detroit? Did you check out the 'Offenders Only' job fair?http://ow.ly/6XkBt 14 Oct
		103,000 new jobs in September; black unemployment dips #moneyhttp://bit.ly/pBSZcH 7 Oct

Twitter		
Name of Public Group	**Career**	**Posting/Comment/Content**
Norm Bond		"As the Black unemployment rate has continued to climb, I think people are realizing that there's not.." | http://bit.ly/tVQvaR 24 Nov
		Event directed toward those who believe that "black people must create their own jobs" >>http://bit.ly/tVQvaR 23 Nov
		Is LinkedIn For Old People? "Like The Kind Of People Who Will Give You A Job?" Hoffman Responds☛http://budurl.com/6cau #linkedin 21 Oct
		Robert Johnson, First Black American Billionaire, Proposes Plan To Reduce Black Unemploymenthttp://huff.to/qjZJJ6 via@huffingtonpost 12 Oct
		JUST IN: Unemployed Seek Protection Against Job Biashttp://ow.ly/1f4O0R

10 Oct

Twitter		
Name of Public Group	Business	Posting/Comment/Content
The Atlanta Post		Black Female? Addicted to Retail? Then At Least Buy Black! - by Tre Baker There was a great post on the Black female...http://ow.ly/1fb5Xg 17 Oct
		Entrepreneur Spotlight: Nadege Fleurimond - By Marc W. Polite One of the most difficult things about starting a busi...http://ow.ly/1f1BeL 7 Oct
		The Entrepreneur Behind Dangerous Negro - by Makula Dunbar When Dewas presented with an opportunity to better himsel... http://ow.ly/1eZp5F 5 Oct
		African-Americans More At Ease With Digital Marketing, Google Says http://ow.ly/1eN3Pt 22 Sep
		African-American Tech Entrepreneurship Gets Center Stage | Blogs | ITBusinessEdge.com:http://bit.ly/ofnjXd via @AddThis 21 Sep
		10 Things Successful Entrepreneurs Have In Common - by Sakita Holley The beauty of studying successful entrepreneurs...http://ow.ly/1eKLsC 20 Sep
		Making Technology Relevant - Embracing technology is essential for business development.http://ow.ly/1eJUTQ 19 Sep
		Small Business and the Simple Math of Job Creationhttp://www.huffingtonpost.com/carol-roth/small-business-job-creation-_b_957616.html 15 Sep
		Jobless claims post surprise rise | Reutershttp://www.reuters.com/article/2011/09/15/us-usa-

economy-idUSTRE78C33C20110915 via@reuters
15 Sep

African-Americans Leading Consumers of Virtual Goods? - We don't know if we should be happy or sad about this news? ...http://ow.ly/1eEGUK
12 Sep

Inc.'s Top 10 Black Entrepreneurs - In Inc magazine's annual accounting of the top 500 fastest-growing companies, Af...http://ow.ly/1eBA6X
8 Sep

When It Comes to Black Buying Power, Don't Believe the Hype - It is important to debunk the illusion of the black bu...http://ow.ly/1eo5gA
24 Aug

Twitter		
Name of Public Group	Education	Posting/Comment/Content
Atlanta Post		NY Education Experts Say State Should Spend More - By Charlotte Young Columbia University's Teacher College educatio...http://ow.ly/1f4te9 10 Oct
		Lower Teacher Salaries Results in Fewer Opportunities For Studentshttp://ow.ly/1eSSay 28 Sep
		Will Student Loan Forgiveness Help Stimulate The Economy? - With American's mounting debt and economist warnings of ...http://ow.ly/1eSPjk 28 Sep
		UCLA Graduate School Looks To Become Private - By J. Smith UCLA's Anderson Graduate School of Management is willing ...http://ow.ly/1eLUpn 21 Sep
		Blacks in Berkeley Are Beating National High School Graduation Rate http://ow.ly/1eJ3Kb 16 Sep

85

The 10 Schools That Generate The Most and Least Debt For Its Gradshttp://ow.ly/1eHG91
15 Sep

NY Educators Propose Solutions to Curb Test Grading Cheatinghttp://ow.ly/1eCqor
9 Sep

Black Church's Protest of FAIR Education Act Typifies Hypocrisyhttp://ow.ly/1ezgaH
6 Sep

University of Miami 'Booster' Scandal: Get Real & Pay NCAA Athletes http://ow.ly/1enYem
24 Aug

Twitter		
Name of Public Group	**Public Affairs**	**Posting/Comment/Content**
The Atlanta Post		President Obama's Revision of No Child Left Behind Is More Of The Same http://ow.ly/1eQKXu 26 Sep
		Should Democrats Seek A Challenger To Obama? - by Wayne Hodges Is having a black president worth high unemployment, ...http://ow.ly/1eQEKx 26 Sep
		Why Nader and West's Plan to Challenge Obama Won't Work - Let's forget the six candidates and concentrate of develop...http://ow.ly/1eM8wB 21 Sep
		Why Obama Can't Afford To Remain Silent On The Troy Davis Case http://ow.ly/1eGPoN 14 Sep
		What You Need To Know About Obama's Jobs Plan - by Tyrus Townsend On Thursday evening, President Obama addressed a j...http://ow.ly/1eDTCZ 11 Sep

Name of Public Group	Interpersonal Relationships	Posting/Comment/Content
BlackDoctor.org		Healthy Relationships are a part of being healthy --> Here's 10 Traits of Having a healthy Relationship --> http://ow.ly/7x6iT
		17 Nov
		Common Cures for...Your Relationship! --> http://ow.ly/78zjv
		25 Oct
		We're here for you! #GetWellSoon RT @neosoulceo: Right now I need ginger ale, chicken soup, and a heating pad. Being sick & single is tough
		19 Oct
		#ADHD and your relationship -- What's the connection? --> http://ow.ly/6NvFf
		4 Oct

Name of Public Group	Public Affairs	Posting/Comment/Content
BlackDoctor.org		STUDY: Only 25% of Americans with #HIV are receiving treatment... -> http://ow.ly/7LpD9 #WorldAIDSDay #WAD2011
		1 Dec
		Today is #WorldAIDSDay - This year's theme: Getting to Zero. Join the conversation on facebook http://ow.ly/7K5WF #WAD2011
		1 Dec
		Fibroids is something that is hitting Black women hard. Please share this w/the women you care about --> http://ow.ly/7K3ip
		30 Nov
		How to beat #bloodpressure -- the easy way! >>> http://ow.ly/7wLei
		17 Nov
		New #ProstateCancer Guidelines --> http://ow.ly/7wId0

17 Nov

You can't "just tell"... You have to know. "What to Look For: #HIV " --> http://ow.ly/7ilUS

3 Nov

#KnowBetterDoBetter -- "Surprising Signs of a Heart Attack" --> ow.ly/78wrq

25 Oct

We are EXCITED about president @BarackObama is bringing home ALL troops from Iraq! We look fwd to families being reunited! #POTUS

21 Oct

#Diabetes and #Alzheimers -- what's the connection? --> ow.ly/73F1c

20 Oct

#PancreaticCancer affects the Black Community too --> ow.ly/6TNQ8

11 Oct

Moving through #BreastCancer Awareness Month, we ask u to name YOUR friends & family who've suffered from this disease. We honor them!

6 Oct

What's the link between #BreastCancer and #Obesity ? Find out here --> http://ow.ly/6OCAn

5 Oct

Could it be true??? "Fewer Women are dying from #BreastCancer " --> http://ow.ly/6Oq29

5 Oct

#SoiKnowItsReal Go see a doctor, start eating healthy and share healthy info with your friends and family - http://ow.ly/6M1SM

3 Oct