THE CONVERSATION US

Writing for the public

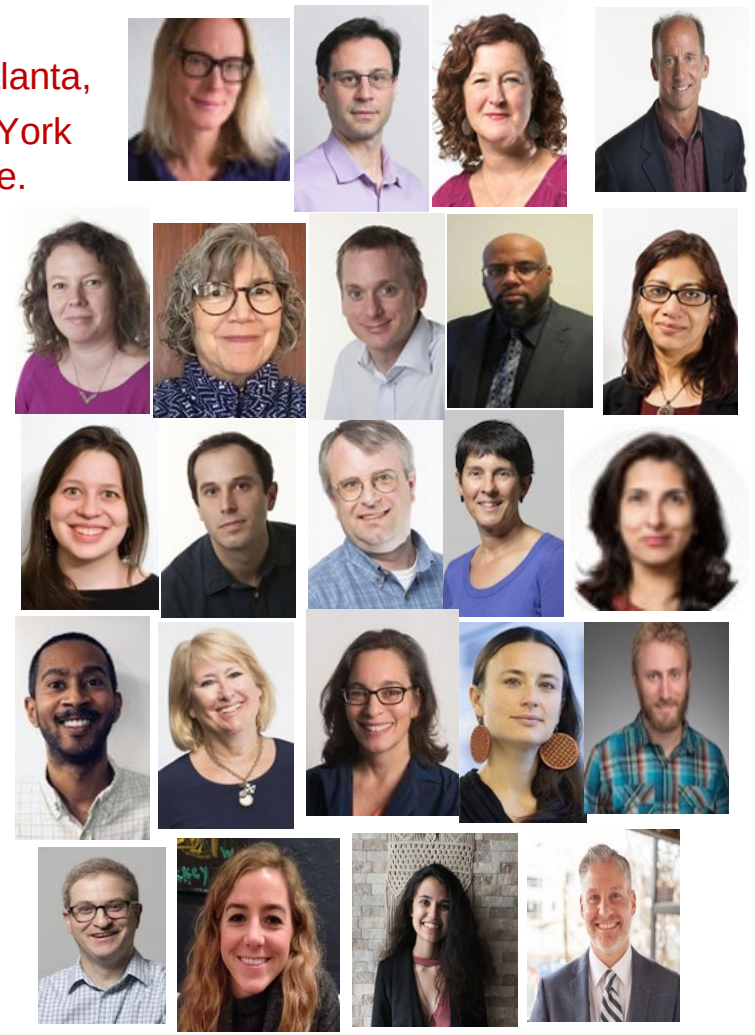
What is The Conversation?

- Launched in the U.S. in October 2014
- Initial team of 8 editors has grown to 18
- Nonprofit – no advertising
- Free to read, free to republish
- Other editions in:

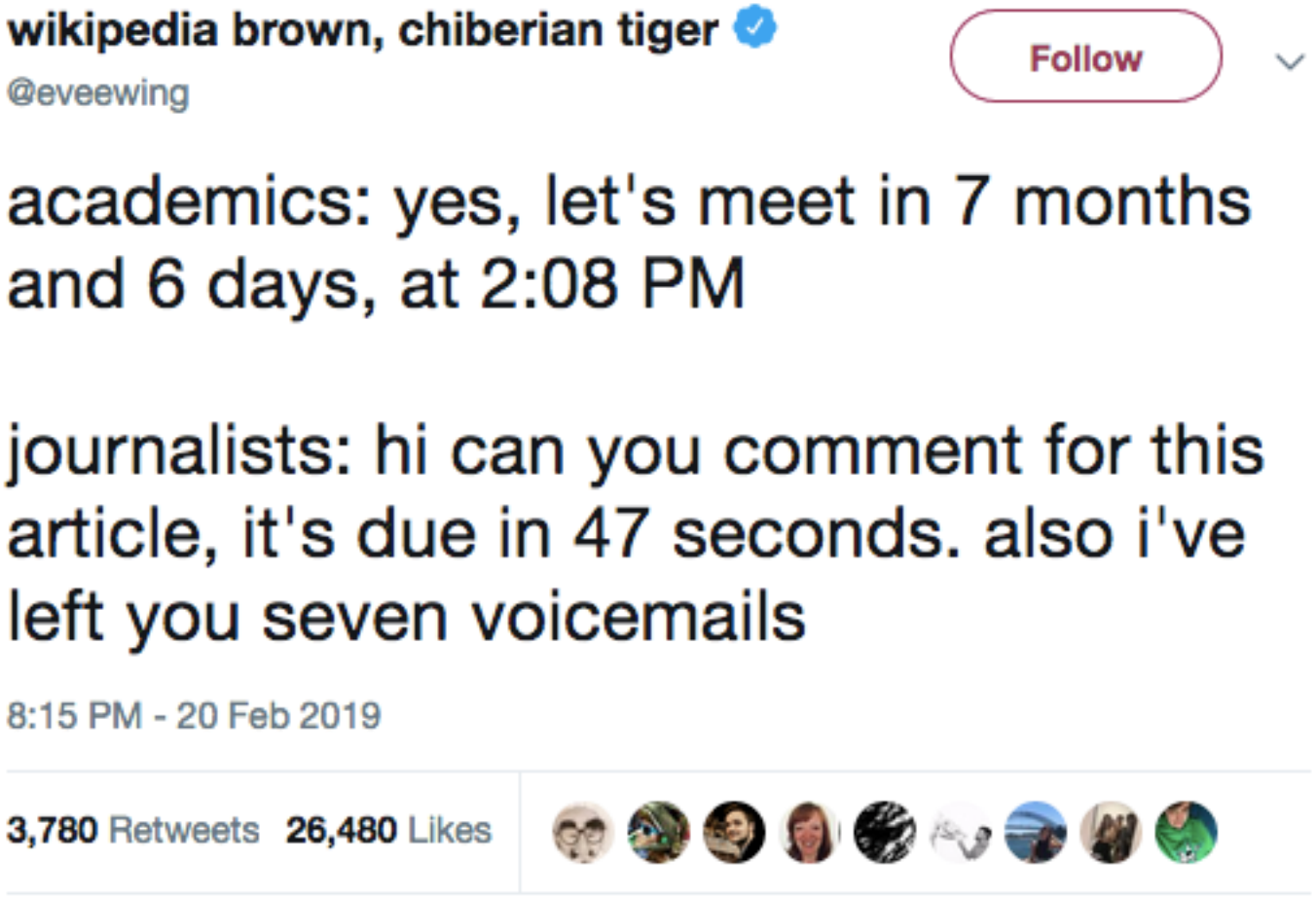
  Australia, UK, Africa, France, Canada,

  Indonesia, New Zealand and Spain

Editors in Boston, Atlanta, DC, New York and Seattle.



How The Conversation is different



An editorial collaboration

How The Conversation is different

- All contributors are affiliated with academic institutions.
- Not traditional op-ed. **Explanatory journalism.**
- An **editorial collaboration** between scholar + journalist/editor. Both sides must approve final copy.
- Statements in articles must be backed up by links to research or other evidence.

Who reads The Conversation?

- Monthly unique visits to site: average = **over 2.5 million**
- Through republication: **~8 million reads per month**
- Daily TCUS newsletter recipients: **63,000**
- Dedicated audience development team promote stories with republishers + social

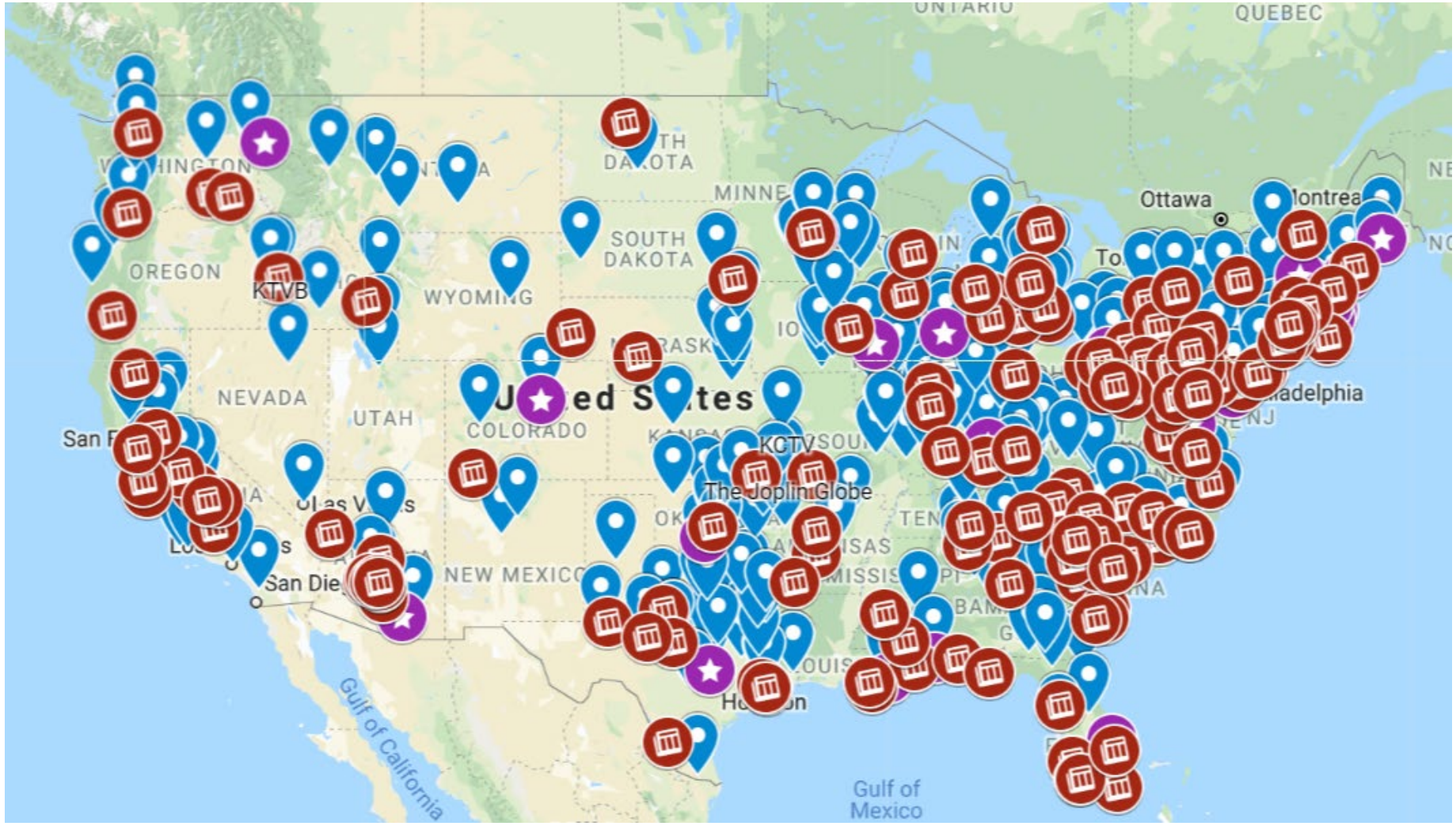
CNHI COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER HOLDINGS, INC.

Newsweek

PBS NEWSHOUR

Local Impact

A map of local news outlets that picked up TCUS articles



Blue icon: Online only ; Red: Print only ; Purple: Both)

2018 Author Survey*

*457 completed surveys; 4,939 authors sent survey

“I had a positive experience working with The Conversation editors” **90%** Strongly agree/agree

“Was your Editor clear on what they wanted in your first draft?” **92%** Yes

“Were the edits your Editor gave you helpful?” **93%** Yes

“How likely are you to recommend that a colleague write for The Conversation?” **90%** Very likely/likely

2018 Author Survey*

Post-publication outcomes of writing for The Conversation

43% Approached for other academic collaborations

31% Increased citations of scholarly articles

23% Used article or metrics as part of grant or other funding

14% Influenced policy by a decision maker

51% Request for radio interview

38% Request for print outlet interview

27% Request to write article for different outlet

17% Request for TV interview

7% Book proposal (or other book publishing)

Let’s talk about pitching

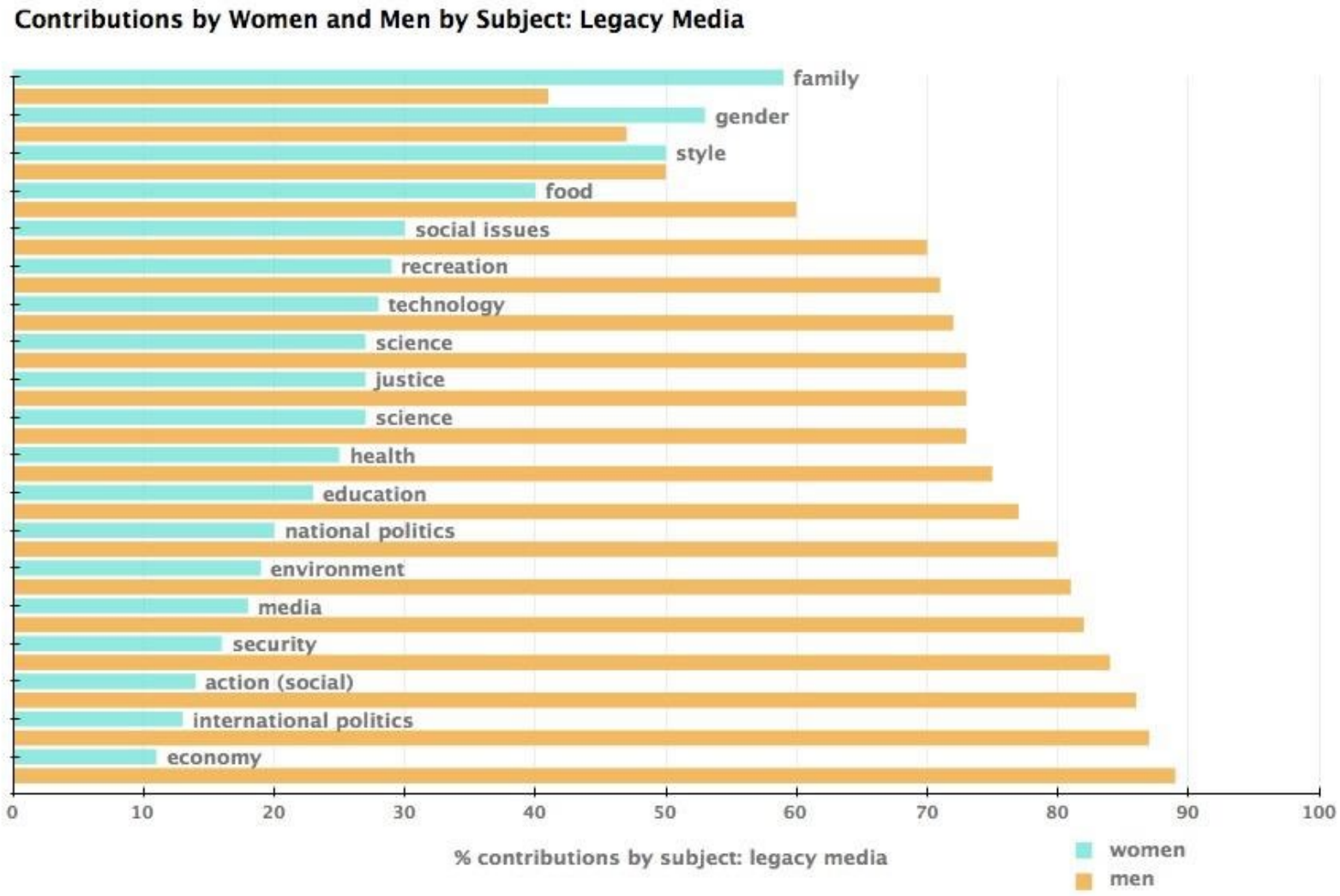
https://theconversation.com/pitches/new

What we’re looking for

- Is it of general interest?
- Are you an expert on the topic?
- Is it timely?
- Can you cover it in 400-1,000 words?

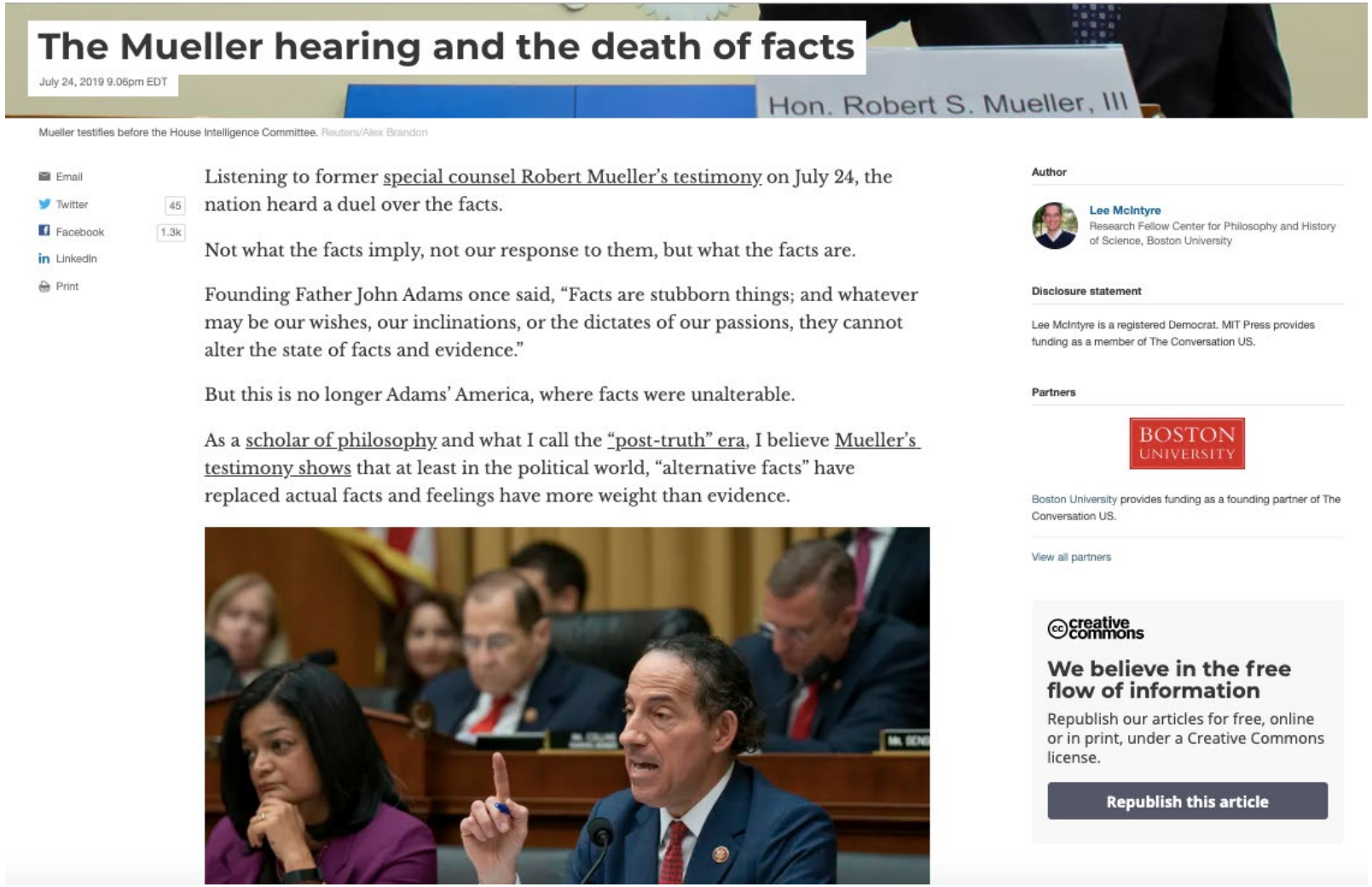
"I don't know why I don't care about the bottom of the ocean, but I don't."

Adding your voice to the discourse



Adding context to the news

What does your research contribute to a discussion of something that's in the news now?



The Mueller hearing and the death of facts

July 24, 2019 9.06pm EDT

Hon. Robert S. Mueller, III

Mueller testifies before the House Intelligence Committee. Reuters/Alex Brandon

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Listening to former special counsel Robert Mueller's testimony on July 24, the nation heard a duel over the facts.

Not what the facts imply, not our response to them, but what the facts are.

Founding Father John Adams once said, "Facts are stubborn things; and whatever may be our wishes, our inclinations, or the dictates of our passions, they cannot alter the state of facts and evidence."

But this is no longer Adams' America, where facts were unalterable.

As a scholar of philosophy and what I call the "post-truth" era, I believe Mueller's testimony shows that at least in the political world, "alternative facts" have replaced actual facts and feelings have more weight than evidence.

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Disclosure statement

Lee McIntyre is a registered Democrat. MIT Press provides funding as a member of The Conversation US.

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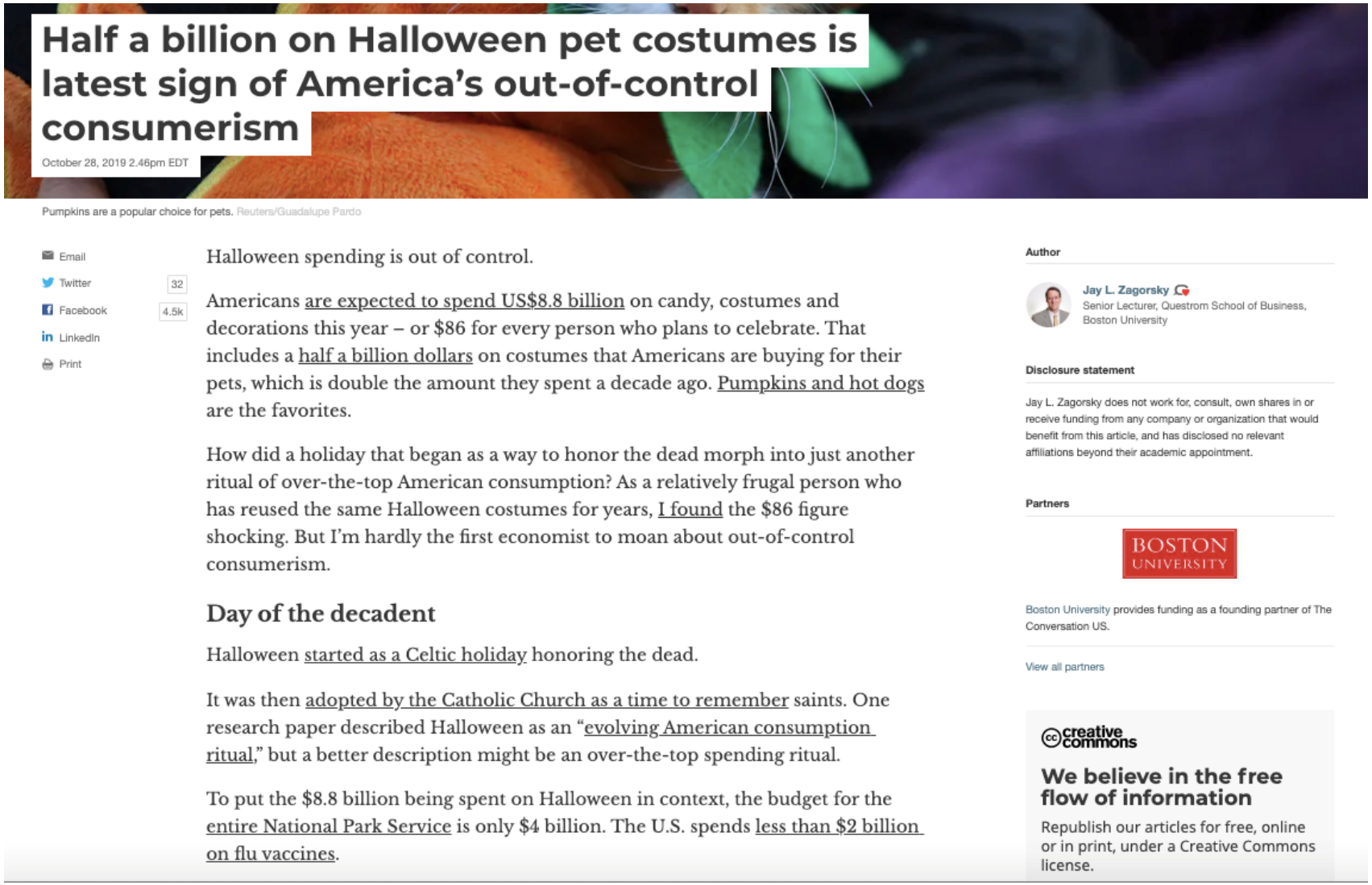
The art of the news peg

- Why now?
- An ongoing trend, an event, an anniversary?



Half a billion on Halloween pet costumes is latest sign of America's out-of-control consumerism

October 28, 2019 2.46pm EDT

Pumpkins are a popular choice for pets. Reuters/Guadalupe Pardo

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Halloween spending is out of control.

Americans are expected to spend US$8.8 billion on candy, costumes and decorations this year – or $86 for every person who plans to celebrate. That includes a half a billion dollars on costumes that Americans are buying for their pets, which is double the amount they spent a decade ago. Pumpkins and hot dogs are the favorites.

How did a holiday that began as a way to honor the dead morph into just another ritual of over-the-top American consumption? As a relatively frugal person who has reused the same Halloween costumes for years, I found the $86 figure shocking. But I'm hardly the first economist to moan about out-of-control consumerism.

Day of the decadent

Halloween started as a Celtic holiday honoring the dead.

It was then adopted by the Catholic Church as a time to remember saints. One research paper described Halloween as an "evolving American consumption ritual," but a better description might be an over-the-top spending ritual.

To put the $8.8 billion being spent on Halloween in context, the budget for the entire National Park Service is only $4 billion. The U.S. spends less than $2 billion on flu vaccines.

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Disclosure statement

Jay L. Zagorsky does not work for, consult, own shares in or receive funding from any company or organization that would benefit from this article, and has disclosed no relevant affiliations beyond their academic appointment.

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New research

- Based on your expertise
- Sharing cutting-edge scholarship with non-experts
- Could be research coming off embargo