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Sonia's Wiki Wonder



By Marty Kaplan

Seconds after the networks say that it's Sotomayor, her Wikipedia entry is updated. My *Encyclopedia Britannica* can't do that; that's why it's boxed in my closet. The newspapers that hit my driveway a couple minutes ago can't do that; that's why on-paper distribution is dying. TV can go wall-to-wall with the story in an instant, but I can't post my own reaction on their wall; that's why unsocial media is archaic.

There's plenty to be said on behalf of history's long view, recollection in tranquility, experts, gatekeepers, chinstrokers, thumbsuckers and all the other paraphernalia of old media. But surely it won't be long before news from nowhere — news in the context of no context, news not part of the system of mass self-communication — will widely seem to be as flat and pallid and blinkered as history without economics, women and people of color is now almost universally regarded.

UPDATE: Seconds after I make this point on my Facebook wall, a pal comments that the *Britannica* is online and keeps up to date. I go the EB site to see whether its Sotomayor article has been refreshed. Turns out there's no Sotomayor article there to be updated. Nor does it make a place for this real-time conversation.

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