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Defining News:
A Ten-Nation Perspective

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Defining News:
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Worldwide, the consumption of news and information is higher than ever before. But twenty years of Internet news and a decade of social media have permanently altered the patterns of behaviors associated with how consumers look for news and even how they perceive what "news" is for them. As the media landscape changes and old approaches no longer fit, it may be time to re-assess the fundamental definition of "news."

Traditional news values have been defined and extensively studied by Western researchers, but little attention has been paid to the correspondence of these definitions of news with consumers' behavior in different countries. The challenge of defining "news" is complicated by the fact that almost any event has some news value in an age of niche-news. More importantly, the process by which news is defined has changed because of a shift in the locus of power to distribute information. In traditional media, professional journalists (especially editors and publishers) have had disproportionate power to define what constituted "news." But social media are shifting the locus that defines news from journalists to the public, with "news" becoming whatever a person chooses to share with others, and "newsworthy" being measured by the degree to which a story is shared and reshared.

The most significant impact of this shift in the locus of power to define news is the potential transformation of news consumers from comparatively passive receivers of news distributed by traditional news organizations on predictable schedules to active seekers of news and information whose appetite is whetted by the morsels of information distributed through social media.

This study addresses these questions with a survey of news consumers in ten countries (Brazil, Canada, Chile, India, Mexico, Peru, Russia, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States). This inquiry begins with an exploration of traditional news values, then proposes a set of research questions designed to test the correspondence of these journalistic values with those of news consumers in general and specific groups of news consumers in the ten countries selected for this study. The analysis then compares two dimensions of news values: conceptual dimensions of newsworthiness (proximity, prominence, novelty, etc.) and self-reported interest in specific categories or types of news stories.

The findings of this study have the potential to impact the newsroom by steering editors toward specific content that has a stronger interest among news consumers. At a time when people depend on information technologies such as smartphones to the point of addiction, patterns of news consumption are in flux around the world. As a result, it may be necessary for scholars to re-think what values are important in the modern news age. At the heart of this inquiry is the basic question of whether there is a common set of “news values” for news consumers around the world, or whether patterns vary by country or culture. In the process, this study also addresses the fundamental question of whether news consumers have the same “news values” as journalists, or whether news consumers have different concepts and operationalization of news. This inquiry begins with an exploration of media use, traditional news values, and categories or news. It then proposes a set of hypotheses designed to test the correspondence of these journalistic values with those of news consumers.

Media Use

There has been a huge shift in the consumption of news content by audiences. From passive consumers of news and entertainment programming, audiences over the past decade increasingly use mobile and online platforms for personalized news content. In the United States, online-only news services like Yahoo News and Huffington Post are listed alongside traditional news organizations (CNN, NBC, New York Times) as the most popular places people go for news online (PewResearchCenter, 2015). Globally the trend is similar and reflects the move by audiences toward online and mobile news consumption (Newman, 2015). This shift to 24-7 news-on-demand gives the consumer both choice and control over what is read or watched. Since the beginning of modern mass media, the journalists were the gatekeepers who decided what would become the daily news. Now we have entered an era where the consumer decides what is news. This change demands a re-examination of how news is defined and how people perceive one story to be more newsworthy than another.

News Values

There is extensive research published regarding global news flow, news values, and how an event is distributed through news organizations to be consumed by audiences. Shoemaker (2006) noted that “news” is a primitive construct needing no definition in ordinary conversation, but difficult to define without using the term itself (p.105). News reflects a change that occurs in time; it is interpreted uniquely by the individual for him or herself. News is a commodity that organizations try to package and sell in society. News tends to be negative, and the absence of news is often perceived as somewhat positive. Categories of ‘hard news’ and ‘breaking news’ tend to be negative (disasters, crime, etc) and in the era of social media, are increasingly brought forward by citizens (so-called ‘citizen journalism’).

While many scholars credit Lippmann (1922) with first broaching the topic, Galtung and Ruge (1965) published the seminal article on global news values. The authors identified a dozen factors used by elite newspapers of the day to decide which stories would shape perceptions of the world through news coverage and publication. As noted earlier, the values associated with news tend to reflect concepts that are complex and difficult to operationalize (Shoemaker, 2006). Some examples of terms or phrases identified in studies include terms like “meaningfulness,” “relevance,” and even “surprise.” These terms may be applied to events and stories in a number of different ways, which is why the list continues to evolve.

After Galtung and Ruge, a number of subsequent studies supported the list of factors with some re-definition and re-naming which led to further expanding or restructuring the list (Golding and Elliott, 1979; Gans, 1980; Bell, 1991). McGregor (2002) re-cast the dozen factors into eight general factors: frequency, threshold (including absolute intensity and intensity increase), unambiguity, meaningfulness (including cultural proximity and relevance), consonance (involving predictability and demand), unexpectedness, continuity, and composition. McGregor re-packaged the values in her analysis and concluded that four additional news values needed to be included: visualness, emotion, conflict, and the “celebrification” of the Journalist.

Harcup and O’Neill (2001) examined the 12 factors and suggested adding factors labeled (a) reference to something positive, (b) reference to elite organizations or institutions, (c) agendas, promotions and campaigns, and (d) entertainment with subcategories of picture opportunities, reference to sex, reference to animals, humor, and showbiz/TV. In their conclusion, the authors suggest a revised updated list of 10 news factors or characteristics of events leading to publication in UK newspapers: 1. the power elite, 2. celebrity, 3. entertainment, 4. surprise, 5. bad news, 6. good news, 7. magnitude, 8. relevance, 9. follow-up, 10. newspaper agenda.

Westershahl and Johansson (2015) proposed three primary values of importance, proximity, and drama. But they admit they are “proxy variables, more or less effectively summarizing a complex journalist judgement (sic) about news values.” All three values were also influenced by what the authors termed “ideology.”

Lee (2009) built upon Shoemaker and Cohen (2006) by testing their contention that “deviance and social significance” encompass most of the preceding lists of news values. Lee tested a model whereby news values (deviance & social significance) predicted amount of media coverage which in turn could be used to predict degree of audience attention for a given event. In testing the model, Lee reported that deviance and social significance were predictors of audience attention when mediated by the media coverage.

Different societies and forms of government have different expectations of news (Shoemaker, 2006). For example, in a democratic society, the role of the news media is not to mirror the world as it is (to include more of the good news happenings), but to draw attention to problems and situations that need solutions. In an authoritarian society, news media are charged with portraying the world in the way those in power want it portrayed. News media are an arm of the state and support the institutions of power. These poles (democratic versus authoritarian) are admittedly ideals or extremes and no country is all one and not the other.

Social Psychological Perspective on News

Another perspective approaches news consumption, value and relevance from that of the individual. These psychologically-oriented studies focus on information processing and suggest that news is information that the individual is driven to attend to, while also (often) seeking out additional related information. This approach to news values uses terms such as “involvement, salience, functionality, concern, interest, etc.” to reflect interest in an issue (Knobloch, Carpentier, and Zillmann, 2003, p.93). These authors found that alarming, danger-conveying information presented by the news media and public information campaigns are most effective when the messages emphasize salient information. For example, initial reports of devastating tornadoes emphasize the magnitude of the damage while follow up reports could be aimed at people in the path of future storms (likelihood).

Eilders (2006) also re-imagined news values and argued for six descriptor-categories explaining journalistic selection: relevance (or reach), damage (related to controversy, aggression, and conflict), elite persons (famous names or celebrities), continuity (follow up information about a significant event), proximity (geographically near), and elite-nation (rich and influential nations or cultures). She also suggested five values in the selection process by the audience: relevance/reach, conflict/controversy, elite persons/prominence, continuity, and unexpectedness.

Global News Trends

The literature on news values is not complete without a mention of global news flow. A consistent thread the past century of media history has been concern regarding media imperialism. Media imperialism has often been conflated with U.S. global (media) hegemony through much of the latter 20th century (Boyd-Barrett, 2015). But the notion that first-world, information-rich nations continue to dominate or at least influence news in lesser-developed nations continues, albeit more nuanced. The expectation remains, for example, that the U.S. election is followed more closely by people in India compared to overall American interest in elections held in India.

More recently it appears that the diffusion of mobile broadband media technologies worldwide has had a democratization effect on news consumption. According to Chadha and

Kavoori (2000, 2015), there is some evidence that media imperialism processes are in decline. In place of dominant foreign information sources we see the establishment of local-news for local-audience media systems in many (if not all) countries and cultures. Although governments continue to warn of encroachment by outsiders through media imperialism, Chadha and Kavoori suggest a greater danger is rising rampant commercialism brought about by market-driven models of media programming. As has occurred in developed media systems, the shift to a market-driven model often comes at the expense of diversity, public broadcasting, and too much emphasis on entertainment programming.

Such trends underscore the need to investigate whether emerging media cultures are bringing about new or revised news values. This democratization of news may reveal dominant news values from the perspective of the consumer rather than from the perspective of the journalist. The ideal of democratized news flow may now be in its nascent stage.

Therefore, since news content is now emerging in all countries, it is time for scholars to re-examine the assumptions regarding categories and types of values in news stories across countries and cultures. News media organizations in the 21st century must provide content that is popular at home. Simply because a story is reported by a European media conglomerate does not necessarily mean it is perceived as ‘news’ in South America.

News and Topic Areas

To help examine how news values may be different between countries, the notion of “news topic areas” must be considered. News organizations, journalists, and media scholars typically organize news by topic areas. The number and type of topic areas is wide and ever-changing, but there are some overarching terms that enable scholars to make meaningful comparisons. Traditional categories of news events often include terms such as politics, natural disasters (calamity), international relations, business, crime, and sports. Additional common topic labels are science, entertainment, health, education, and religion. The labels are not rigid or exclusive, and events easily overlap into three or more areas. For example, a famous athlete announcing her retirement can be categorized by audiences as sports, business, celebrity, entertainment, international news, or a combination thereof.

Nevertheless, news professionals often have to categorize events with discrete labels like “politics” or “crime.” News consumers have been accustomed to searching and finding news stories using the same labels. Virtually any subject that concerns an individual could be part of that individual’s personal news feed.

Therefore, this exploratory study investigates the relative importance of standard news values from the perspectives of news consumers across ten nations. In particular, this study assesses characteristics associated with “newsworthiness” which relate to **salience,** which in turn gives it **value** to the individual attending to it. As noted by Eilders (2006) and others, traditional characteristics of news may be summarized generally along the lines of proximity (location), prominence (elites), conflict (damage, controversy), timeliness, impact (magnitude), novelty (unexpected). Other values include trust (source credibility), appearance/packaging (good writing, good soundbites/quotes, lots of specific ‘facts’ as well as analysis or interpretation to tell us its significance). These traditional characteristics are related to the event or story itself, but an examination of news in the age of social media has to put as much emphasis on salience of the event or story to the individual.

This discussion suggests that the starting place for understanding how news consumers define news in different countries should include analysis of news topics, news values, and news consumption. Given the breadth of such a topic, this exploratory study seeks to establish the most basic of baselines in these three areas across multiple nations. Therefore, three broad research questions are proposed:

RQ1. What is the relative importance of news topics across the ten countries in the study?

RQ2: What is the relative importance of news values across the ten countries in the study?

RQ3: What are the relationships between Internet use and both values and news topics?

Methodology

This study employed a 10-minute, online survey measuring media consumption, news topic preference, news values and demographic information. The survey was administered to three samples of respondents representing ten countries.

Subjects:

Because the data collection included respondents from ten countries, it was expected that the response rate might vary significantly across countries. In order to maximize the response rate and the number of respondents in each country, three different tools were employed to identify and recruit respondents.

First, the database of registered users for 1World Online was donated to the researchers. This database included approximately 21,000 registered users from more than 100 countries. Inspection of the dataset revealed that ten countries (Brazil, Canada, Chile, India, Mexico, Peru, Russia, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States) had at least 150 members in the dataset, with all of those countries except the United Kingdom and Brazil having more than 200 members in the dataset. Two independent samples of 200 each were selected at random (using the random number generator within Excel) from the database from those countries represented by 400 or more members. Countries with fewer than 400 members in the database had those members divided equally between for the first two data collection methods.

The first method used an un-incentivized appeal, asking respondents in an email to click a link to answer questions about news in their country. The second method used an incentivized appeal, offering one of five $100 Visa gift cards to be given in a random drawing at the conclusion of the study. Those solicited via email received three follow-up emails reminding them to complete the survey. The third data collection technique used Amazon's Mechanical Turk tool to attempt to identify a convenience sample of up to 50 respondents in each country to complete the survey. Table 1 reports the number of responses and response rates (where relevant) received from each methodology. The 572 responses received were then reviewed to remove responses that were out of range for individual variables and those responses with questionable validity (those that appeared to be "straight-lined" or "speeding" through the survey).

Measures

Four sets of measures were created for this study. News values were measured by asking respondents to rate each of eight news values derived from Galtung & Ruge (1965) and Harcup & O'Neill (2001) on a scale of one to 5, where 1 is "not at all important" and 5 is "extremely important." News topics were measured by asking respondents to use a "fill-in the blank" answer asking them to indicate how many articles they would like to read each day for each of 13 topics derived from (Shoemaker & Cohen, 2006). Media use was measured asking respondents how many hours they used each day on average to consume five different types of media including television, talk radio, Internet for news, Internet for content other than news, social media, and newspapers. Finally, demographic items were added at the end of the questionnaire.

Data collection and analysis

The survey was created with the 1World online survey tool. For the first two data collection waves, MailChimp was used to send individualized and personalized emails to each prospective respondent. The same tool was used to send reminder emails three, six and nine days after the initial invitation. All such emails identified the universities sponsoring the study and containing a link to the online survey on the 1World website.

The English language survey was translated into four languages (Spanish, Russian, Ukrainian, and Portuguese) by native speakers of each language. A second translator was then employed to do back-translations of the survey that could be compared to the initial version to ensure accurate translations. All invitation and follow-up messages were similarly back-translated and verified before they were used.

Data Analysis:

The data collection procedure (10 countries with three samples each) resulted in 30 separate files. These files were combined into a single file for cleaning and analysis using SPSS v.20.

Results

The analysis began with a comparison of news values and topics across the ten countries included in the study, followed by tests of the hypotheses.

RQ1. What is the relative importance of news topics across the ten countries in the study?

Salience was operationalized in this study by asking respondents how many online stories they would like to read on an average day in each of the 13 content areas identified for study. As reported in Table 1, the mean number of stories ranged from 1.5 (religion) to 4.5 (science and technology). Surprisingly, respondents to this study generally had higher interest in “niche” news topics than topics that are typically identified as core news topics. Science and technology topic received the greatest interest (4.5), with human interest third (3.7), entertainment fourth (3.5), and business fifth (3.3). Among more traditional news topics, international affairs ranked second on the list (3.9), with internal politics ranking sixth (3.3), government ninth (3.1), and domestic crimes twelfth (1.9).

One-way AVOVA analysis indicated significant differences across countries for all topics except internal politics, international affairs, and government. The greatest variations (as measured by eta squared) occurred for religion (eta squared=.17), domestic crimes (eta squared=.10), and sports (eta squared=.9). Means by country are reported in Table 2

One reason for the variation in demand for individual topic by country may be that demand for stories varied widely across all topics, with respondents from India and Peru reporting interest in reading the highest number of stories (64.6 and 56.8, respectively), and respondents from Brazil, the U.S., Canada, and the UK interested in reading the lowest number of stories (34 to 35) ($F=3.3$; $df=9$, $p=.001$). Means and standard deviations for all countries are reported in Table 3.

RQ2: What is the relative importance of news values across the ten countries in the study?

The pattern of interest in the eight traditional news values was substantially different. As reported in Table 4, respondents rated traditional news values of proximity, novelty, and continuing event as most important (mean=3.7, 3.6, and 3.5, respectively), with the lowest importance assigned to show business news (2.0) and negative news (2.5).

One-way ANOVA indicated that the measures of importance of the eight news values varied significantly across the ten countries studies ($p<.001$ for all ten analyses). Means for the eight values by country are reported in Table 5.

RQ3: What are the relationships between Internet use and both values and news topics?

The questionnaire included two measures of Internet use: number of hours per day using the Internet to get news, and number of hours per day using the Internet for other purposes. Table

6 reports the correlations between hours using the Internet to get news and the eight news values; Table 7 reports the correlations between hours using the Internet to get news and the 13 news topics. Significant correlations ($p<.05$; two-tailed) were observed between Internet use for news and all news topics, except for domestic crime and international affairs, but only two news values were related to Internet use for new: reference to something negative ($r=.133$; $p=.004$) and coverage of elite nations, institutions, and persons ($r=.122$; $p=.009$).

Discussion

This exploratory study examined news consumers across ten nations and their perspectives and interest in news values and topic areas reflected in their media use and interest. The most significant finding of the study may be the interrelationships among time spent consuming online news, news topics, and new values. The relatively strong relationships between the topics and time spent consuming online news relative to the weak or non-existent relationships between news values and consumption support the proposition that salience of news topic may be a much better predictor of news consumption than the values that journalists use to describe news. In other words, rather than being related to traditional news values such as proximity, prominence, and novelty, news consumption, news consumption is more strongly related to specific topics of interest to the public.

The results of this study can help news organizations create rubrics for news events that allow inclusion of a wider range of topics. As news work becomes more mechanized and deterministic, organizations need to continue focusing on the popularity of story types. For example, Guerrazzi, Grant, and Wilkinson (in press) found that the event—content—is more important than the packaging. In other words, the relevance or salience of the story supersedes how that story is reported. Salience is even more important than “quality.” Therefore, media organizations and journalists must maintain perspective and find the best stories to present to the specific audiences reached by an outlet or publication. If there are time and resources, journalists can focus on the best way of telling that story. This research builds upon the content perspective by re-emphasizing the essential appeal of news as new information that an individual wants to know, and wants to know more about.

Similarly, news managers can now understand that it’s not the fault of a writer whose stories are rarely read; it may reflect the types of stories the writer was assigned. A smart editor has to identify events that need to be reported in order to reach the niche audience.

Before the Internet, Tuchman (1973) famously identified the routinization of news work. The rise of the Internet and social media have altered those routines. Instead of a factory pushing a product to an end user, perhaps news work is more like a collaboration, where input from the public helps determine the not only how a topic is covered but also which topics are covered in the first place.

Given the rise of social media in the dissemination of both breaking news and other types of reporting, an “intelligent system” is emerging in which feedback from within the system (consumption of news and sharing of news) provides strong indicators to editors and publishers regarding the type of content that is of greatest interest to news consumers.

The results of this study must be interpreted cautiously because of the nature of the sample. Although three methods were utilized to help balance the data collection across the ten countries studied, there is no way to ensure that results from any one country are comparable to the results for any other specific country.

A second set of limitations relates to the ten countries studied. Although the ten countries were selected to be broadly representative, the fact that major countries in Asia, the Middle East, and Africa were not included limits the generalizability of the results globally.

Accordingly, future studies should take pains to include countries such as China, Indonesia, South Africa, Egypt, Germany, France, etc. to be more representative of the global audience. Future studies should also consider more sophisticated measures of salience of news stories, perhaps allowing users to indicate choice of or preference for specific stories rather than generic story topics.

Perhaps the ego-driven human element of “pride” should be taken into consideration when evaluating these results. Since respondents to this study generally indicated interest the academically prestigious “niche” news topics of science and technology, a skeptical evaluator may question the veracity of the self reporting. It’s possible that survey respondents may be loathe to admit to a preference for pedestrian media offerings.

Finally, more sophisticated measures of time spent consuming news may also provide greater insight into the factors that both predict time spent and those that predict effects of news consumption.

Taken as a whole, the results reported herein indicate that there are significant differences in news values, topic preference, and time spent consuming news across countries. Researchers should therefore be careful in applying the results of news studies from one country to another; instead they should conduct studies that include more than one country in the sample.

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Table 1

Mean number of stories by Topic

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Science & Technology	469	0	30	4.53	4.02
International Affairs	469	0	100	3.90	5.44
Human Interest	469	0	30	3.71	3.38
Entertainment	469	0	80	3.54	4.73
Business/Commerce/Industry	469	0	42	3.33	3.76
Internal Politics	469	0	100	3.29	5.83
Cultural Events	469	0	20	3.23	2.65
Education	469	0	30	3.19	3.28
Government	469	0	30	3.08	3.52
Health/Welfare/Social Services	468	0	30	3.00	3.04
Sports	469	0	25	2.47	3.07
Domestic Crimes	469	0	20	1.94	2.40
Religion	469	0	13	1.47	2.27
Valid N (listwise)	468				

Table 2

Mean number of stories by Topic by Country

	Domestic Crimes	Business/Commerce/Ind	Sports	Cultural Events	Internal Politics	International Affairs	Human Interest	Health/Welfare/Social	Education	Entertainment	Science & Technology	Religion	Government
Brazil	1.23	3.04	1.20	2.71	2.89	3.55	3.38	2.48	2.71	3.38	3.86	0.84	2.75
Canada	1.52	3.52	1.80	3.02	2.74	3.30	3.48	2.36	2.52	3.00	4.14	0.74	2.36
Chile	1.36	3.64	2.55	3.69	3.12	4.21	4.43	4.11	4.64	3.50	4.88	1.57	3.83
India	2.73	4.93	5.55	2.64	6.42	4.39	5.77	5.38	4.91	8.42	6.91	2.50	4.05
Mexico	1.26	4.39	2.30	4.17	3.60	4.39	4.49	3.17	3.99	3.51	5.62	1.19	3.26
Peru	3.47	4.41	4.00	4.18	2.88	4.88	6.00	4.82	5.24	3.88	6.18	3.18	3.71
Ukraine	3.49	3.17	3.39	3.07	3.34	3.55	4.07	3.26	3.59	3.50	3.88	3.64	3.95
US	1.85	2.54	2.27	2.60	2.69	3.04	2.99	2.49	2.30	3.06	4.31	0.87	3.10
Total	1.94	3.33	2.47	3.23	3.29	3.90	3.71	3.00	3.19	3.54	4.53	1.47	3.08

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics for Story Total by Country

Country Code	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
India	64.58	22	58.99
Peru	56.82	17	31.22
Ukraine	45.89	29	16.39
Chile	45.55	42	45.29
Mexico	45.34	77	34.14
Russia	38.91	61	30.91
UK	34.89	47	19.29
Canada	34.50	50	27.79
US	34.10	67	27.67
Brazil	34.02	56	20.97
Total	40.71	468	32.24

Table 4

Importance of Traditional News Values among all Respondents

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
The news happens somewhere close to you.	470	3.68	1.237
The news event is unexpected.	469	3.57	1.150
The news continues about an ongoing event.	470	3.54	1.015
The news includes elite nations. institutions and persons.	466	3.09	1.208
The news has visual power.	465	3.07	1.143
The news is emotionally appealing.	464	3.00	1.196
The news includes reference to something negative.	463	2.49	1.075
The news is related to show business or celebrities.	466	1.99	1.021
Valid N (listwise)	459		

Table 5

Mean Importance of News Values by Country

	The news happens somewhere close to you.	The news continues about an ongoing event.	The news event is unexpected.	The news includes elite nations. institutions and persons.	The news is related to show business or celebrities.	The news includes reference to something negative.	The news has visual power.	The news is emotionally appealing.
Brazil	3.96	3.77	4.07	3.38	2.02	2.55	3.23	3.23
Canada	3.12	3.08	3.14	2.69	1.84	2.02	2.82	2.86
Chile	3.93	3.33	3.74	3.43	2.12	2.62	3.43	3.48
India	4.30	3.96	3.48	3.43	3.22	2.70	4.00	3.78
Mexico	4.09	3.77	4.01	3.29	2.21	2.71	3.26	3.51
Peru	3.59	3.47	3.65	3.76	2.82	2.41	3.29	3.47
Russia	3.82	3.98	3.62	3.48	1.56	2.97	2.77	2.39
UK	2.94	3.19	3.25	2.31	1.58	2.10	3.02	2.71
Ukraine	3.97	3.55	3.21	3.29	1.83	2.45	2.90	2.55
US	3.34	3.28	3.21	2.55	1.86	2.25	2.66	2.63
Total	3.68	3.54	3.57	3.09	1.99	2.49	3.07	3.00

Table 6

Correlations between Hours Using Internet to Get News and News Values

	Hours Using Internet to get News
The news happens somewhere close to you.	.005
The news continues about an ongoing event.	.034
The news event is unexpected.	.025
The news includes elite nations. institutions and persons.	.122**
The news is related to show business or celebrities.	.048
The news includes reference to something negative.	.133**
The news has visual power.	-.031
The news is emotionally appealing.	.003

Table 7

Correlations between Hours Using Internet to Get News and News Topics

	Using Internet to get News
Domestic Crimes	.069
Business/Commerce/Industry	.136**
Sports	.168**
Cultural Events	.103*
Internal Politics	.097*
International Affairs	.080
Human Interest	.139**
Health/Welfare/Social Services	.153**
Education	.189**
Entertainment	.201**
Science & Technology	.113*
Religion	.125**
Government	.096*

Landscape, Identity and Challenges of Journalism Education in Malaysia

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Abstract

Journalism is a very popular subject has been taught in Malaysia for more than 40 years. Advances in technology and changes in the media landscape today are influencing the way that future Malaysian journalists will work. As a profession, journalism generally operates under constraints coming derived from political, economic, social, cultural and technological developments. There should be a good balance between practice and contextual knowledge in studying journalism. Many journalism scholars (see Comrie, 2003; Deuze, 2006; Reese & Cohen, 2000) agree that journalism education should prepare students by providing knowledge (education) and skills (training) to reflect best practices. This study has three objectives: (1) to describe the journalism education landscape in Malaysia; (2) to investigate the Malaysian national identity as portrayed in journalism practices; and (3) to identify values that integrate the knowledge and skills needed by Malaysian journalism students. Weaver and Wilhoit (1996 in Deuze, 2006) claimed that studying the work of media professionals can help prepare students for career in news media organizations. Using the qualitative in-depth interviews as a method of inquiry, this study is based on interviews lasting 30-40 minutes with prominent media educators, journalists and editors working in Malaysian mainstream media and news agencies. Findings from this study portray the landscape, identity and challenges of journalism education in Malaysia.

Keywords: Malaysia, Journalism Education, Challenges, Journalism

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Introduction

Journalism education is one of the most popular subjects offered by many universities and colleges worldwide. It has been recognized in higher learning institutions through the establishment of departments and faculties or schools (Netzley & Banning, 2011; The Poynter Institute for Media Studies, 2013). Medsger (as cited in Wahl-Jorgensen & Hanitzsch, 2009, p. 44) claimed that journalism education was first offered as part of the liberal arts degree in 1869 at the Washington and Lee University, Lexington, Virginia, US. There is no doubt that journalism has since then been one of the most popular and established programs in many universities.

As a profession, journalism works within a range of constraints and influences originating in legal and regulatory codes of practice to the less visible influence of proprietors, organizational routines, market forces, cultural bias, patriotism, professional ethos, and a gender, racial or class imbalance in the work force (Harcup, 2009, p. 17). Journalism has been called "a noble mission of providing members of the public with a diverse 'market place of ideas' to both inform and sustain their sense of the world around them" (Fowler-Watt & Allan, 2013, p. i). Practicing and teaching journalism under these constraints and influences has not been easy.

Teaching journalism is important because it prepares students for a career working in news media organizations and studying the work of those people editorially responsible for different types of storytelling in a wide range of news media (Weaver & Wilhoit, 1996, p. 4). What makes the curriculum of journalism education unique is that the development of each curriculum is in line with the progress of journalism in the respective countries or continents. For example, a study done by Ponyter reflects more on Western-based institutions where he highlights the different viewpoints of academics and the industry players involved in journalism education. On the other hand, Latin America scholars and policy-makers are more concerned with media organizations being developed as ideological organizers (Castillo Rojas, 2014). Gulf-based countries believe that journalism education should focus on journalism ethics and religion (Pintak, 2013). For African countries, the main concern of journalism education is on the development and challenges of online journalism (Mabweazara, Mudhai, & Whittaker, 2014).

In Asia, we are still struggling to balance Western-centric curricula and national needs (Ullah, 2014). In the case of South Korea, there is a need to develop "the synthetic knowledge model" where students should be equipped with multiple skills and the universities have to attract and sustain experienced professors with both industrial and academic abilities as mentors in the journalism schools (Soo, 2010) . According to Loo (2013), in Asia, it has been argued that journalists report news in order to facilitate state-based agendas and policies. In the West, however, journalists practice 'transparent reporting' which champions freedom and not being forced to align to any state-based views. There has been a call for scholars to conduct research on the journalism profession and its related issues especially in developing countries where less is known about these issues (Memon, 2014).

As for Malaysia, journalism studies have been taught since the 1970s. For more than 40 years, together with the advances in technology and changes in the media landscape today, journalism studies has no choice but to transform or progress to meet the needs of future Malaysian journalists. Like other developing countries, studies that are specifically on journalism education in Malaysia are few. Most studies either focus on journalism as a practice or media/communication education in general (see Loo & Mustafa Kamal, 2010; Mustafa Kamal, 2005; Nain, 2003; Rizalawati, 2009; Zaharom & Mustafa Kamal, 1994).

Realizing the importance of journalism education in producing professional journalists, UNESCO has proposed a journalism curriculum model for new developing countries (UNESCO, 2007). However, this curriculum model has been criticized by many scholars. For example, Freedman (2010) that UNESCO fails to consider the obstacles and problems faced by developing countries which have diverse national, social, economic, political, religion and cultural contexts. A recent study conducted by Awan, Rizalawati, Norhafezah, and Norizah (2015) echoed this belief. The study investigates the suitability of this model in journalism studies offered by public universities in Malaysia. Findings show that the UNESCO model does not suit Malaysia's journalism curriculum because most of its universities have their own niche areas. For example, journalism studies in Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) are tailor-made to produce a good journalist with managerial skills because UUM is a management university. In other words, besides the core journalism subjects, journalism students at UUM are also required to take managerial subjects such as Managing Electronic Journalism, Basic Entrepreneurship and Fundamentals of Management.

This paper attempts to provide empirical evidence by gathering the perspectives from media practitioners such as news editors and journalists on the current state of Malaysian journalism education. It also seeks to identify knowledge attributes that contribute to Malaysian journalism practices. The objectives of this paper are to: (1) view the journalism education landscape in Malaysia; (2) investigate the Malaysian national identity portrayed in journalism practices; and (3) identify values that integrate the knowledge and skills needed by Malaysian journalism students.

What is Journalism Education?

Journalism education, by definition, usually covers practical skills and contextual knowledge. Irrespective of the needs, demands, culture, laws, and national histories, proper journalism education must strike a balance between practical and contextual knowledge. Journalism education has to not only reflect the journalism practices of a particular country, but also has to equilibrate its practicality between skills and knowledge. As stated by Ahmad Murad (2002), journalism education is perceived by many as ‘the backbone for the journalistic profession’. In other words, journalism education has to reflect journalism practices which contribute significantly to the functioning and well-being of society.

However, no matter how well-crafted the journalism education is, or how good the trainee journalist is, the reality is that not all media employers are seeking the same skills in a prospective journalist. The skills required of trainee journalists vary depending on the organization and position. Despite the fact that all university-based journalism programs structure their courses around a similar range of core subjects (all of which have a technical bent), Tanner, O'Donnell, Cullen, & Green (2014, p. 11) suggest that there is at least some agreement among educators about what industry expects from a graduate. However, such expectations are in a flux due to unprecedented rapid communication and technological changes. These changes have created new challenges for university-based journalism programs (Kraeplin & Criando, 2005; Martin, 2008). Most journalism schools have to continually offer new subjects, such as new media, by revisiting their journalism curriculum to suit these changes and challenges. However, to find one model that fits all is rather challenging.

Nonetheless, Pavlik (2013) claims that American journalism education is still clinging to traditional journalism practices rather than creating and developing an innovative relationship with the entrepreneurial modes of curriculum. He argues that it is urgent for journalism education to move beyond traditional journalism principles. An interdisciplinary strategy is a must in order to redirect future of journalism if it is to remain dynamic. Topics such as digital media entrepreneurship and innovation are the way forward to capturing the audience’s interest. Thus, collaboration with the media industries especially digital-based companies is encouraged to leapfrog journalism education to a new phase. It has been noted in journalism education that multimedia and multiculturalism need to be considered in the curriculum (Deuze, 2006; Kumari, 2014). Future journalists need to be part of the advanced technology if they are to make the most of their learning experiences.

Media and Journalism Education Landscape in Malaysia

In Malaysia, journalism education is subsumed under mass communication studies. It is a specialized program taught as part of the school or faculty of mass communication, media studies, human sciences or arts in many universities. Its institutionalization in Malaysia began in the early 1970s when *Universiti Teknologi MARA* (UiTM or formerly known as *Institut Teknologi MARA* (ITM)) officially became the first institute to set up a School of Mass Communication and offered a Diploma of Mass Communication in 1972 (Syed Arabi Idid, 2000, p. 102). Shortly after that other universities followed suit and offered journalism courses.

Journalism education is very much reflects how journalism has been practiced in a country. Therefore, in order to study Malaysian journalism education, one has to look into its practice. Journalism practice in Malaysia comes in somewhat different “forms” because it needs to consider all demographic contexts, and the complex background of ethnicity and religion. Malaysian scholars like Faridah (2002) agree with A. Samad (1991, p. 29), a Malaysian journalist, that "the press are given ample opportunities to express their views but the right to free expression must be balanced against the larger interests of the nation". Both of them shared similar views on the importance of national unity where Faridah (2002, pp. 51-65) cautions that:

> ... they (the media) must be carefully used to guide the minds and opinions of the public in the desired direction. Perhaps most precarious is the way in which the Malaysian government rationalizes its control over the media. Several of the reasons given have to do with the internal sensitivity resulting from Malaysia's multi-ethnic background and national security. Amongst development-oriented priorities that have always been the platform for national development plans are national unity, economic and political stability, work ethics and the inculcation of proper values. Hence, the role and performance of the mass media are the direct concern of the government, especially in times such as the present when the nation is beset with numerous social, economic and political challenges.

In Malaysia, the media operates under two different entities: government and private organizations. Radio and Televisyen Malaysia (RTM) is owned by the government while other television stations belong are owned by private companies (see Juliana, 2006; Zaharom & Mustafa Kamal, 2000). However, most Malaysian media groups work very closely with the government. For example, "60% share of the *Utusan Melayu*, one of the mainstream newspapers, is owned by UMNO, the political party in Malaysia, since 1961"(Mohd Safar, 2004, p. 255), while other major newspapers, such as *The New Straits Times* and *Berita Harian*, are owned by a government proxy. *The Nanyang Siang Pau* - a leading Chinese language newspaper in Malaysia – is owned by the Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA), the Malaysian Chinese political party; and *The Tamil Nesan* – a leading Tamil language newspaper – is owned by the Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC), which is the Malaysian Indian political party (see for example Zaharom & Wang, 2004). Apart from the print media, electronic media such as RTM1, RTM2, TV3, NTV7 and 8TV are no exceptions to Malaysia's laws and regulations. It is no exaggeration to say that the media is owned and controlled by the government and most shareholders are individuals with links to the government, if not the politicians themselves.

Journalism education in Malaysia has undergone many changes. These changes are reflected in different rulers' practices and policies. Historically the media in Malay[si]a had been controlled by different colonial masters for example, the British (1786-1957) and the Japanese (1942-1945). Under British colonial rule and during the Japanese occupation, the media in Malaysia was largely controlled by the state. Newspapers were subjected to licensing and censorship conducted by the British colonial administration (Mustafa Kamal, 2000, p. 99); see for example, Lent (1977). The phases of media transition in dealing with government constraints were evident before British colonial rule ended. The first phase began in the early 1800s when the media was used to disseminate the agenda of Malaysia's colonial masters. The first newspaper – *The Prince of Wales Island Gazette* – was published in English in 1805, followed by the *Universal Gazette* in 1828 (Mohd Safar, 1992; Syed Arabi, 1989). As reflected by their titles, these publications were there primarily "to serve the business community and the expatriates of the colonial government" (Hoo, 2000, p. 118).

Following these, hundreds of newspapers in different languages were published, but all faced another hurdle when the Japanese took over Malaya. During their occupation in 1942-1945, the Japanese installed privately-owned newspapers and banned all existing publications, resulting in the first rigid censorship of newspapers (Mustafa Kamal, 2000; Syed Arabi, 1989). The Japanese relegated the existing media to 'cold storage', whilst publishing their own newspapers, disseminating their political propaganda – 'Asia is for Asia' – supporting their sphere of influence and promoting Asian resistance to European rule. This political ideology eventually affected the growth and trends in press practices in Malaya.

After the Japanese left in 1945, the British controlled the press again, and during that time focused on freeing the country from Communist threats (Syed Arabi, 1989, p. 44). They imposed strict controls as outlined in the *Sedition Ordinance and the Printing Presses* Act in 1948 as a counter-insurgency measure. In the 1950s the press played an important role in helping the country gain independence. It managed to inculcate a spirit of nationalism in society, and its role changed from serving the colonial masters to setting the country free. When Malaysia obtained its independence the people of Malaya wanted a Malayan identity. Many Malay journalists became prominent in the fight for independence (Hoo, 2000, p. 120) such as Pak Sako, A. Samad Said and Said Zahari. Mustafa Kamal (2000, p. 99) supports the view that the "press restrictions in the colonial days took on a different garb following Malaya's independence".

To suit the multi-ethnic needs of media consumption, Malaysia has a range of information and media formats. It offers a wide variety of print and electronic media, including increasing numbers of online newspapers and Internet news. It provides various types of information in different languages and this represents the character of Malaysian society. For example, newspapers are published in different languages in Malaysia, such as *Utusan* and *Berita Harian* are in Malay language, *The Star* and *The New Straits Time* in English, *Nanyang Siangpau* and *SinChew Jitpoh* in Mandarin and *Tamil Nesan* is in the Tamil language. These ethnic language newspapers are vehicles that voice the aspirations, hopes and fears of the racial or ethnic groups they represent (Hoo, 2000, p. 118). The diversity of media, even those catering to different ethnic groups in Malaysia, does not mean that there is a recognizably free press. This is what Zaharom (2000) refers to as "more of the same" where there are many forms of media to serve each ethnic group but the content, rules and practice are just the same. Despite representing specific interest groups, newspapers are still bound by the same press regulations and laws imposed by the government, such as the Printing and Presses Publications Act (PPPA), (1972), the Official Secrets Act (OSA), the Internal Security Act (ISA), the Sedition Act (1984), and many other regulations (Hoo, 2000; Lee, 2000; Mustafa Kamal, 2000).

The State of Journalism Education in Malaysia

The practice of journalism in Malaysia - with its landscape and identity – has somehow shaped how it is taught. As mentioned earlier, journalism education in Malaysia has now existed for more than 40 years, and the first program was at Universiti Sains Malaysia in 1970, and full-fledged School of Mass Communication at the Universiti Teknologi Mara (formerly known as Institut Teknologi Mara) in 1972. In general, according to Ahmad Murad (2002), journalism education in many Malaysian public universities comprises several components as follows:

1. Writing skills (newswriting and editing abilities)
2. Language and critical thought (language and logic)
3. Substantive knowledge in providing content (social science and the humanities, such as sociology, economics, history, political science, media laws, etc.)
4. Knowledge of communication as a field of study (marketing, advertising, public opinion, communication research, international communication, etc.)
5. Computer and production skills (information technology, video production, graphics, etc.)

Nonetheless, most of the journalism education offered by the public universities in Malaysia has embedded subjects on knowledge and skills according the niche areas favored by the universities (Awan et al., 2015). For example, UUM focues on management while IIUM concentrates on Islamic religion.

Being a Commonwealth country, Malaysia has been influenced by the British educational system in terms of academic structure and curriculum. Moreover, most academics in Malaysia were trained abroad mainly in the United Kingdom, the United States and Europe (Ahmad Murad, 2008). Only recently has the trend shifted to Australia and New Zealand due to lower tuition fees, since most Malaysian scholars in public universities are funded fully by the Malaysian government. Most of them return to the country and serve various higher learning institutions having learnt much from their supervisors in Western universities. As a result, the way the journalism curriculum has been designed evokes a Western influence. Most higher learning institutions have been looking to the Western world due to its rapid technological advances and techniques in journalism. Most references are in English which is the nation's second language. It is also the business language of the country. Malay is the national language but only a few references in journalism are written in it. Most public universities offer journalism in the Malay language but the references are mostly in English.

Methodology

In order to understand the knowledge and skills needed by journalism graduates, we conducted in-depth interviews with five news editors who are working in the mainstream media in Malaysia. The interviews have been transcribed verbatim and analysed thematically. Data has been analysed and the focus is on their feedback on eliciting the deficiencies or gaps in knowledge and skills taught at university and in the industry. The in-depth interviews have identified the knowledge and experiences needed to contribute to the Malaysian journalism model.

For this study the interviews were designed as semi-structured and a topic guide was used to ensure comparability across the cases. An effort was made to be as 'authentic' as possible in the interviews (proceeding as in a normal conversation) in order to put the respondents at ease. These in-depth interviews with Malaysian media practitioners present a dialogue on journalism education, identity and challenges. The interviews were carried out face-to-face in Malaysia, followed by e-mails and/or Internet communications for further clarification. Each interview was lasted approximately 45-60 minutes. This paper concludes with a summary of what has been discovered about journalism education and its practices in Malaysia, and a note on what possible changes will occur in the future. Furthermore a thematic analysis served to find similarities in respondents' thematic statements. The thematic analysis was derived from questions based on the main research objectives, the conceptual framework, and the literature review. The coding process started once we had completely summarized the transcribed data from the interviews. The major themes used were to identify: (1) the core values; (2) knowledge; (3) attitude; and (4) skills needed. Some themes necessarily overlapped, but overall they provided a useful overview and interpretation of expert perceptions of journalism practices and education.

Analysis and Findings

The interviews with media practitioners demonstrate that there are various interpretations of journalism education in Malaysia; indications of what could contribute to better journalism curriculum across the country. Respondents offered their perspectives on the overall core values needed in the journalism profession. Most respondents agreed that knowledge, attitude and skills were very much influenced by the niche of each university. Respondents also claimed that the universities help to shape students' perceptions of the profession. However, they also discovered most journalism graduates are lacking certain skills and it has become a major issue. The overall claims by respondents about the current state of universities which offer journalism programs suggest that journalism education in Malaysia is moving slow but steadily towards its ideal journalism practice.

The respondents have defined the core values of journalism as important elements to the graduates. The data suggests important findings concerning the: (1) core values of journalism, (2) knowledge (theory and practices), (3) the importance of journalistic skills (writing, language, etc.), and (4) journalism students with good attitudes (passions, desire, responsibility, etc.). Some of the general, anticipatable, and most visible barriers to adopting Western-centric curricula are: (1) lack of qualified faculty to teach the recommended courses; (2) inadequate or obsolete computer equipment, instructional materials, and support to conduct practical and investigative courses suggested in the model; (3) students without the requisite educational backgrounds and language abilities to succeed with the kinds of rigorous, challenging content the report advocates; (4) university administrative structures that protect corrupt practices and cannot effectively recruit, compensate, and retain qualified faculty; and (5) a scarcity of profitable media organizations that will attract successful graduates of such programs and reward them with jobs that allow them to practice their new skills. Other obstacles that may impede implementation of the curricula include: insufficient financial resources to provide such education; incompatibility with a country's historical, religious, political, and cultural values; and governmental controls on both the press and university curricula (Richard Shafer, 2008).

Meanwhile, journalism education should teach students how to identify news and recognize the story in a complex field of fact and opinion, how to conduct journalistic research, and how to write for, illustrate, edit and produce material for various media formats (newspapers and magazines, radio and television, and online and multimedia operations) and for their particular audiences. It should give them the knowledge and training to reflect on journalism ethics and best practices in journalism, and on the role of journalism in society, the history of journalism, media law, and the political economy of media (including ownership, organization and competition). It should ensure that they develop—or that they have as a prerequisite—the linguistic ability necessary for journalistic work in their country, including, where this is required, the ability to work in local indigenous or vernacular languages. It should prepare them to adapt to technological developments and other changes in the news media (Breit, Obijiofor, & Fitzgerald, 2013; UNESCO, 2007).

1. Core Values

Respondents have identified the important core values which will contribute to consolidating journalism education in Malaysia. Respondents agree that the history of a country is one of the main issues that needs to be understood by every journalist.

> *"Being responsive to local realities…understand the journalistic responsibilities – understand history, values, ethics, community, materials" – R1*
>
> *"Understand the country constitution, history" – R2*
>
> *"Produce independent and specialize journalist – quality and credible journalist" – R3*
>
> *"New journalist-lack of principles, work because of money and job versus ethics" – R4*

According to Breit, Obijiofor and Fitzgerald (2013), the role perceptions of journalists are often influenced by the social, political, and cultural structures in the countries where they work. There is a need for journalists to have some diverse global theoretical, practical, and research perspectives, including local cultural knowledge and recognition of the value of cultural, political, social, and economic differences (Breit et al., 2013, p. 127). Also, respondents addressed the humanistic values such as influence of ideologies wielded by patriots.

"As a journalist before, I was influence by the father to listen to news, read newspaper and very much inspired by Tun Mahathir which most of the journalist in the 80's and 90's helped government to convey/transmit the information to the society" – R3

However, besides the core values, respondents also highlighted some holistic role in journalism.

"Provide an objective information, write objectively, no manipulative. Does not include partial reporting, must be holistic and does not report one sided (must balance). To include a credible source - check your source, check accuracy" – R4

2. Knowledge

Most of the respondents claim that knowledge is important in the field of journalism. Journalism students are urged to have knowledge that it is as diverse and mature as possible. Respondents also highlight the ability to understand well the constitution and be able to write on topics such as press freedom and human rights. Young graduates were also strongly encouraged to understand political developments not only in their country but in others as well.

"Strengthen the knowledge and able to claims or write from different perspectives of backgrounds. Need to include psychology, sociology, law, political, economy, international journalism, and international relation in the curriculum" – R1

"Need to also understand the constitutional (social contract during independent), understand the constitutional before you understand the social contract (knowledge on constitutional). I would like to suggest a subject in the curriculum such as history/journalism in Malaysia and development. In order to become good journalist, need to understand the history and development of the country" – R2

"Understand the current political situation and political development in Malaysia. Therefore it is strongly suggested a subject on Political system in Malaysia. However, basic knowledge is a must. But need to also guide them to be creative by learning technology" – R3

"Knowledge must be diverse on local and international. Subjects suggested Principle of journalism, Media ethics, Broadcast Journalism, Mass Media Theory, New Media/ Social Media, International issues/relation, Science, Environmental issues, Literature of Journalism (history of Journalism) and Philosophy of Journalism" – R4

3. Attitude

Base on attitude, most of the respondents highlight that young journalists should have a good sense of positive thinking and good attitude if they want to be good and responsible journalists.

"An ideal characteristic of young journalist is idealism and idealism in journalism is more than just work. This idealism may also contribute to the society. We serve the society" – R1

"To be a journalist is about interest, love to read newspaper, being independent, able to apply censorship/self-censoring. Training development was different for those who graduated over sea and local and this will identify the output versus the outcome. A good attitude for me is like to ask question, bravery (brave to ask questions)" – R2

"A good journalist must have a passion in journalism. To have meaning of journalism example care for the society. The students themselves must have good personality, good command of the language and general knowledge. It's not so much about the subjects" – R3

"Need to be responsible, committed, open minded, no bias, not prejudice, holistic writing and this attitude is very difficult to build" – R4

4. Skills

Respondents also claim that the skills needed are not only language and writing but also soft skills which are very important.

"…when we talk about journalism, it has to do with expressions, it has to do with culture, it has to do with writing, it has to do with thought, it has to do with political and social life. So, it's not only the skills of writing news" – R2

"Students need to be exposed in reality than in the classroom. Journalism students needs on job training and able to give opinion" – R3

"Skill of writing, understanding about society - knowledge on the society, political system, economic" – R5

Although journalism education should not just reproduce technical skills but also replicate a particular occupational ideology, based on notions of individualism, professional objectivity and independence from the state (Golding, 1977 in Du Toit, 2013, p. 154), analysis based on the respondents' comments suggests an array of understandings of the role of the journalism education curriculum in Malaysia. Most respondents thoroughly understand journalism education in Malaysia as having originated from the West and in the context of Malaysian journalism it is still all about developing the nation and maintaining cultural unity among the ethnic groups. The understanding of the ongoing process of the struggles of the nation's development can be seen from the responses given.

According to Du Toit (2013, p. 157), scholars writing about journalism education point out that the shifting role of knowledge within the global economic order has important implications for the function and status of the media, and that this has impacted on the way in which universities teach about media topics and themes. The majority of respondents concur that there are several obstacles and dilemmas faced by journalism education today. They claim that journalism education provides ready material from Western scholars, but these are too idealistic to be applied in our culture, politics, economy, environment, etc. Based on the argument made by Gaunt (1992), these ideas are often seen to clash with local understandings of the role of journalism in the developing world (Gaunt, 1992 in Du Toit, 2013, p. 154). Most of the respondents urge the lecturers to go back to the industry and gain industry experience. They also claim that the universities need to conduct a serious and in-depth analysis to weed out the irrelevant knowledge/facts that are taught. Furthermore, due to the lack of understanding of what journalism training should entail, the universities have failed to prepare the students to become good and responsible journalists.

Conclusion

Journalism education in Malaysia operates based on the media industry's feedback, political and government influence and increasingly, technical aspects such as writing skills, attitude, and knowledge in various areas. These have been the major issues among young journalists who graduated or will graduate from the universities. Journalism students are expected by the industry to have good core values, positive attitudes, a good amount knowledge of what is happening in the world and not just Malaysia, and competent skills. A multidisciplinary knowledge that incorporates psychology, political science, sociology, international relations, literature and management are important for journalists to prepare them for their careers. However, some of the basic knowledge such as principles and history of journalism, history of society, and advances in technology are just as important as the main syllabi for the journalism curriculum across the universities. Skills such as writing, language, critical thinking, creative thinking and understanding the new media are also required. The major issue that was discussed by the respondents concerned attitude. Most graduates need to be more responsible, passionate, positive thinking, brave, committed, dedicated, and open minded, when they are engaged in the process of checking their stories and facts for the betterment of society.

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Journalism education for conflict resolution: an examination of migrations in value from journalism's products to its processes.

David Baines & Fiona Wyton

WJEC4 Strand: *Journalism education and an informed citizenry*

This paper explores connections between journalism education and an informed citizenry through a case study in Northern Ireland in 2011-13. *Distinctive Voices Collective Choices* was delivered by the charity Headliners, which provides children and young people, including those who are marginalised and disengaged, with journalism skills so they can identify issues which are of concern to them, and have their voice on those issues heard in the public sphere. This project engaged 398 children and young people to work together across cultural and community fault-lines to explore issues of sectarianism, overcome engrained social, political and religious divisions and prejudices and to work towards the goal of a shared vision and future.

The project used media tools and journalism skills to enable groups from nationalist / Catholic and unionist / Protestant and minority ethnic communities to tackle together hard issues of sectarianism, racism and conflict. It set out to encourage personal development, foster critical thinking, develop skills to enhance employability, and enable the young people to produce reports for publication and broadcast which demonstrated how communities *could* resolve conflict and share hitherto conflicted ground. The children and young people who took part in the project were from primary schools (ages 5-11), secondary schools, (11-18) and special schools (5-18 for children with learning difficulties). The journalistic *outputs* in the form of magazines, video and audio reports and photography were in many cases outstanding pieces of work, but the primary aim of the project was to achieve a series of social *outcomes*. These included building the confidence, resilience and skills of the young participants as they worked together to understand each other's culture and communities, to overcome segregation and prejudice and to be at ease with each other.

The project was funded by the International Fund for Ireland, an independent international organisation established by the British and Irish Governments in 1986. It is financed by contributions from the USA, EU, Canada, Australia and New Zealand to promote economic and social advance and encourage contact, dialogue and reconciliation between nationalists and unionists throughout Ireland.

Headliners began life as Children's Express UK in 1994, which had in turn been inspired by the Children's Express organisation founded in New York, USA, in 1975 but which ceased to operate in 2001. In 2007 Children's Express UK reconstituted itself as Headliners to accommodate digital developments in media. It encourages the development of young people through journalism and media skills, by giving them a voice, and a hearing, on issues that they identify as being of concern to them. The journalism they produce has been published by mainstream media organisations such as the BBC, Sky News, national and local newspapers and it is also hosted on the Headliners website.

Ireland and conflict

Before giving an account of the project it is important to offer some context to the divisions within the communities concerned and the history of conflict and oppression out of which they arose.

The island of Ireland has a tortured past. From the 12th century onwards it was ruled by England by force of arms and in the 16th and 17th centuries it was subjected to a policy of 'plantation'. Land was confiscated from its Catholic owners and settled by English and Scottish Protestant migrants. The Catholic majority, some 85pc of the population, were denied political and economic rights in an island ruled from the 18th century by the Protestant minority. In 1800 under the Act of Union Ireland became part of the United Kingdom. Conflict between the two communities was common and the movement for independence was strong. Ireland gained home rule in 1914, but this was immediately suspended during the First World War. This led to a war of independence and in 1922, the Island of Ireland was divided. The Irish Free State – later to become the Republic of Ireland, in the south and northwest and the predominantly Protestant six counties of Northern Ireland in the northeast.

Tensions remained in Northern Ireland, however. The overwhelmingly Protestant majority unionists in Northern Ireland were adamant that the six counties should remain part of the United Kingdom; the overwhelmingly Catholic minority nationalists sought reunion with the Republic of Ireland. This territorial tension broke out into violence and what was to become known as 'the Troubles', began in October 1968 when a civil rights march was attacked by police. Inter-community violence followed and came to a head in 'Bloody Sunday', January 30 1972, when British Army paratroopers fired on civil rights marchers in the city of Derry/Londonderry, and 13 civilians were killed. During the ensuing 30 years, some 3,600 people were killed by the security forces and nationalist and unionist paramilitaries and up to 50,000 people were wounded, many severely. To offer further perspective of the damage done to those communities, the death toll, as a percentage of the population of Northern Ireland, was twice that which the USA lost in either the Korean or Vietnam wars (Kennedy-Pipe 2014, viii).

Eventually, a political process for peace led to the signing of the Good Friday Agreement on April 10 1998 by the governments of Britain and the Republic of Ireland and the political parties of Northern Ireland. This was accepted in referenda in both the republic and the North, and in December 1998 Northern Ireland's politicians took their seats at the new assembly. However, it was not an easy beginning. The assembly was suspected four times and on the fourth occasion in 2002 direct rule from London was resumed. Inter community violence led by dissenting groups of paramilitaries persisted. Devolved government finally returned five years later when the assembly reconvened in March 2007 with two leaders from the extremes of the political past: First Minister Ian Paisley, head of the hard-line DUP - Democratic Unionist Party - and Deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness of the nationalist Sinn Fein. So Northern Ireland has enjoyed political stability for a relatively short time, certainly in comparison to the centuries of conflict its people have suffered.

The problem the project addressed

The peace process resulted in an end to much of the violence in the region and significant increases took place in private and public sector investment in Northern Ireland, which also saw an influx of tourism and an increase in general prosperity. But much of the success of the process has been attributed to a shift in the broader relationship between the states of Britain and Ireland, in part because of their mutual interest in ending the conflict but also by such factors as their common membership of the European Union and joint participation in EU institutions (Gillespie, 2014). As the benefits of peace increased it became increasingly difficult for communities to countenance a return to violence. But after such a long and conflicted history, tensions and divisions between the two communities remain. Much of the ground is divided into areas which are predominantly or wholly occupied by nationalist or unionist communities. These are demarcated symbolically, often by the flying of flags, and in some cases physically by walls and barriers which transect streets and divide neighbourhoods. Social networks rarely cross sectarian boundaries and markers of community identity, such as celebrations of historic events, are used to highlight difference rather than offer opportunities for contact and collaboration.

Schools within Northern Ireland also face particular problems in addressing these issues. They remain largely segregated and usually serve a community on one side of the sectarian divide or the other, although they might also host children from minority traveller and migrant communities who can also be subject to prejudice and discrimination. Morrow and Wilson, in their exploration of community-focused strategies to escape conflict, noted the difficulty educators faced:

> 'The formal educational systems within the frontier area are identified with the interests of the competing traditions and, primarily, reproduce their cultural values and beliefs. The task of cultural reproduction dominates the task of reconstruction. Reconstructing a society which is marked by trusting relationships and jointly owned and managed structures is desirable for the educator assisting change and growth in pupils, yet it is culturally difficult for them to do.'
>
> (1996; 46)

Morrow and Wilson explored the prospects for informal adult education systems to generate and support processes of reconciliation and found that such an approach offered promise. But participation was necessarily and voluntary, and so unlikely to reach those whose views were most deeply entrenched.

However, much has changed since 1996 when that research was undertaken. The 'transformative' Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, which established the devolved assembly, placed two duties on statutory bodies in carrying out their duties: to ensure equality of opportunity and to regard to the promotion of good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion and racial group (Equality Commission for Northern Ireland 2010, 7). Thus, the Northern Ireland Department of Education introduced 'Personal Development and Mutual Understanding' as a legally required element of the national curriculum (CCEA, 2007). Individual schools – Catholic, Protestant and mixed – have since become key sites of inter-community interaction, and teachers, and facilitators of projects such as the one addressed here, are increasingly taking on the role of 'cultural intermediaries' (Labov & Robins 1967; Bourdieu 1984).

Theoretical perspectives

When placing value on journalistic work, this has usually been sought in its outputs and products, the reports and investigations that journalists produce, the newspapers and magazines, radio, TV and online news reports. However, a number of scholars have also pointed to the manner in which value is emerging in the *processes* of journalism (Deuze 2008; Jarvis, 2009; Picard, 2009; Robinson 2011, 2013). Jeff Jarvis pointed to 'journalism as process' in his Buzzmachine blog in 2009 and cited Robert Picard writing earlier that year of journalism as activity: 'a body of practices by which information and knowledge is gathered, processed, and conveyed' (Picard, 2009). Susan Robinson points out: 'He [Jarvis] positioned the *article* in the center of a series of productive actions—from idea conception to post-publication modification. Neither ownership nor assigned agency could be attached to any of the moving parts' (Robinson 2013; 1 – our emphasis).

This conception, while finding value in processes of collaboration and interaction between journalists and their audiences – or more accurately, co-producers – or between members of a community engaging together in acts of journalism, nevertheless maintains the text, article, the output of those processes of collaboration, as the primary site of value. Baines and Li (2013), however, established that those collaborative processes of journalism could have value irrespective of whether or not they resulted in a text such as a news report.

They were reporting on an experiment in which post-graduate journalism students at Newcastle University in England worked with members of those communities which occupied a city suburb to share with them some of the skills, practices and understandings they were developing. They did so with a view to collaborating on the production of multimedia reports and features for the hyperlocal online community news site Jesmond Local, (http://jesmondlocal.com/) and in the hope that the project would inspire local people to post community news on the site. In the end, and despite good intentions, no new content was produced as a result of the experiment. For the site's editor this represented a failure. But interviews with the community participants discovered that they had found the process valuable from a number of perspectives. One found the journalistic tools and practices very useful in his business; it dispelled another's phobia of social media platforms; a teacher planned to use her new knowledge to engage her pupils in a media project; several said they would apply their new skills and knowledge in social and digital media to other activities through which they participated in community life and the local public sphere. One conceptualised the project as having increased the community's stock of social capital. The students too found that it had extended their networks within the community; enriched their learning through the processes of sharing knowledg, and they had developed new understandings about journalism's roles, and potential roles, in a community.

The professional and experienced journalist who had led the project had done so in anticipation of achieving a number of journalistic *outputs* and was disappointed when these did not emerge. But the other participants were less purposefully invested in achieving these outputs and had recognised and welcomed a diverse range of *outcomes* which they found useful to them and their wider communities. They had found value in the journalistic process with which the journalism students, taking on the broadly pedagogic roles of 'cultural intermediaries' had engaged them (Maguire & Matthews, 2012, 554). These findings offer insights into the way in which value might be found in 'doing journalism' and in which training or education which helps people to 'do journalism' might offer social value, develop social capital, in ways hitherto unrecognised or unexpected.

Mark Deuze, in a chapter in a forthcoming book on global journalism education, addresses the issue of value in doing journalism:

> 'Journalism, in this sense, should be considered to be the heart of what it takes to perform successfully in the information age …… a critical-reflective skillset, toolkit and outlook of a journalist would benefit all in the global economy.'
>
> (Deuze, 2016 in press)

Deuze's focus here is on economic benefit and the utility of an ability to deploy journalistic skills and adopt a journalistic outlook in navigating life in the information age, navigating the entrepreneurial society. But the implied outcomes of doing so are unrelated to what we might consider to be traditional journalistic outputs and, as such, encourage us to reconsider the benefits which engaging in the processes of journalism might offer to the individual citizen, to communities and societies. Indeed, he earlier posed the question of journalism education:

> ‘[D]oes such a program or curriculum prepare journalists for future employment, or does it serve to educate ‘‘super’’ citizens?’
>
> (2006, 24)

Deuze’s focus at the time was on a formal education in journalism (increasingly delivered at degree level) and a curriculum which found much of its justification ‘as the backbone for the journalistic profession’ (ibid). If wider social value can be found in the process of journalism, then journalism education can lay claim to deliver more general benefits, than those sought by prospective employers and the criteria for evaluating such a curriculum will necessarily accommodate factors which extend beyond industry paradigms; the ability to produce good pieces of journalism as. But equally, such a curriculum, or aspects of it, may be delivered primarily in pursuit of those wider social benefits, in circumstances where ‘good pieces of journalism’ are not the primary markers of success, but are essentially incidental. Circumstances in which the purpose of such a programme would not be producing journalists, but something more akin to producing good citizens.

The project: Distinctive Voices Collective Choices

The *Distinctive Voices Collective Choices* project was predicated on just such understandings as are outlined above - of journalism and the value that collaborations in the process of doing journalism can deliver to an individual as citizen, and to his or her community. It sought to develop in children and young people a critical reflexive skillset, toolkit and the outlook of a journalist and to give them the opportunity to do journalism in collaboration with others from across cultural and ethnic divides. A primary objective of youth work is to build the capacity of young people to solve problems for themselves as a crucial part of their personal development and to enable them to make good choices in their lives (Jennings et al 2006; Ginwright and James, 2002). Headliners has found the journalism model – process – effective in this regard because of the value of the critical thinking and problem-solving skills that it gives young people. This project supported the young participants as they used those tools to interrogate the boundaries in place in their communities; to recognise and make visible similarities between them and those from different traditions as well as differences; to come to know each other as individuals, rather than types or tokens; to challenge simplifications by discovering complexities. But Headliners project worker Audrey Martin (A.M.), a former local newspaper journalist, said of the work primarily in primary schools:

> ‘We were really going in there and, I guess, using journalism as a tool. Not even using the word “journalism” to them. They get excited when you hold up a bit of equipment; you know, headphones and a recorder and … just taking them through the process of being comfortable using equipment.’ (personal interview)

The programme set out to work with 220 pupils, but engaged almost twice that number: 398. In 28 schools, it worked with 29 teachers and a number of classroom assistants. The project was delivered through two sets of workshops: those in which the children and young people explored issues around sectarianism (224 workshops), and those which developed journalism skills and proficiency with media tools (112). The first set of workshops provided safe environments for children and young people from both traditions to explore, both separately and together and through group work and real-life challenges concerning the past, present and future. They took part in discussion around formed and misinformed attitudes and opinions and the impact these have and have had on them and others. The children and young people investigated difference and similarity to gain richer understandings of each other's identity, community, culture and concerns and a strong emphasis was placed on sharing space and place. In most cases, facilitators worked with pairs of schools bringing together pupils from a Catholic school, serving a predominantly nationalist community and a Protestant school serving a predominantly unionist community. Each group of young people took part in workshops in their own school first so that they became used to talking about their own communities and issues they might face and through these become more self-aware. The two groups were then brought together to do joint work and collaborate on a media project, sharing in social, educational and personal development sessions. A.M. said:

> 'We worked for three weeks in one school, then three weeks in another school, then brought them together for three weeks and they produced a piece of journalism. Mainly podcasts.'

In media workshops, the participants learned to use digital video and still cameras and record audio and they learned to take a critical, journalistic approach to report together on hard issues.

Negotiating challenges: primary colours

Most schools immediately embraced the project but some were reluctant. They felt the hard issues that would be raised should be left 'in the past'. Some felt that raising them could cause conflict within and beyond their school. Headliners facilitators eventually persuaded these schools to participate by demonstrating how the programme fitted into the 'citizenship' area of the national educational curriculum. Some participant schools were situated in catchment areas which contained communities with a particularly long history of conflict and division and these presented locally-specific hurdles. To maintain anonymity, the following account of one such pairing uses the terms Yellow School and Red School.

The two primary schools were identified as potential beneficiaries of the programme because of their histories and locations within a divided urban centre. Yellow School serves a community with a long history of isolation and division. Red School is within an 'interface area'. This term is used for an area where segregated nationalist and unionist communities meet. This particular area has witnessed sectarian incidents over many years and suffered much during the Troubles. During the programme, 31 pupils from these two schools participated. Many of those from Yellow School held very entrenched views with regard to the other community and the area in which Red School stood.

Soon after the children from these schools started working together, facilitators discovered that those from Red School were being indirectly bullied by some of those from Yellow School and these children said they didn’t feel comfortable in the project. The facilitators addressed this first by undertaking more intense group work on the issues. They challenged the children in a positive way, exploring with them where their opinions came from. Many had parents and other adults in their lives who expressed these views and for them that was all they knew. Facilitators then asked the children to draw a collage of each other’s areas, which depicted the challenges young people faced in these communities. They also paired both sets of children with each other for the remainder of the project while they undertook their media and journalism work. This process saw a remarkable change in attitudes and behaviour from the children from Yellow School towards their counterparts. Both groups successfully produced a series of podcasts and in their evaluation at the end of the project, both said they would now say hello to each other if they met in the street.

Negotiating the challenges: special considerations

Blue college (anonymised) is a controlled special school for children with severe learning difficulties and associated disabilities, providing continuity of pastoral care and education for pupils aged from 3 to 19 years. A ‘controlled school’ in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, is one which is state-funded but in which a foundation or trust (usually a Christian denomination – in this case it is the Church of Ireland, a member of the Anglican, as opposed to the Catholic community) has some formal influence in the running of the school. The voices of young people with special educational needs are rarely if ever heard in their communities. The project set out to capture those silenced voices.

In this instance, 12 young people of mixed religion participated in the programme. The initial intention was to produce a podcast in which they explored themes of peace and reconciliation and the importance of shared space. But because of the pupils’ low level of cognition they used a social story and creative photography approach to have their voice heard. The young people produced 10 powerful images reflecting their thoughts and opinions on inclusion, identity and the need for shared space.

Methodology

The project was evaluated on conclusion by the charity through an innovative multi-modal methodology and the report submitted to the Northern Ireland Department of Education. This involved data collection from a participant survey at entry to establish a baseline and another at exit to identify changes across a range of themes relating to attitude, opinion, ability, understanding, behaviour and social engagement. But data was also captured continuously through participant observation and commentary, and on video and audio, photographically and textually. This provided a body of media content that was also available to participants so they could see their own transformation during the project and reflect critically on those changes. For the purposes of this paper, data is drawn exclusively from the evaluation, however, further data collection has been undertaken through a series of in-depth, semi-structured interviews with facilitators and teachers and headteachers from participant schools. At the time of writing, these interviews are being transcribed and analysed. Preliminary findings from this further data-base, which relate to the legacy of the project and ways in which it might be further developed will be presented at WJEC4 and the new findings will be included in a further published paper.

Outputs, outcomes and impact

Headliners' initial target for this project was to work with 220 children and young people and generate 15 articles to be featured in Headliners websites. In the event, 398 children and young people took part and produced 81 articles and media outputs through a series of print magazines, vox-pops and interviews, films, animation, photography and podcasts. All these journalistic outputs reflected the voice of young people as they explored the past in their present, investigating how their divided communities could together build a future inclusive of all, for all. Each piece of journalism was in itself an example of cross-cultural, cross-community collaboration. Throughout the project, all the work produced was showcased in presentations at the schools to pupils, and in some cases, parents and the schools and all the young participants received copies of the work produced, which they took home to their families, thereby channelling it into the wider communities. Of the 398 young participants, 55 were trained to take on leadership roles within their target group and developed a range of skills in both facilitation and media production. They led presentations within their schools and in their wider communities acted as ambassadors for the project.

Who got what from the project

The young participants gained skills in producing media in a manner which communicated matters of profound importance to them. Project manager Malachy Kyle (M.K.) said:

> 'You have photo journalism, film journalism, radio journalism, all those different aspects. And young people, when they have this piece of work produced, it's quite overwhelming when they see what has been produced. And that sense of empowerment and ownership is fantastic for them where before when they started in the project they didn't feel they had a voice, they didn't feel people listened to them, they didn't feel what they had to say mattered. So it (the journalism outputs) is really about reinforcing that. That it is important, that it is you. And when they get it out there in the public domain, it is fantastic for them.' (personal interview)

The processes and the products of journalism, the outcomes for the young people and the outputs they produced were mutually interdependent. M.K. said:

> ‘They go hand in glove. You can’t just go in working with young people and do personal development because after about three sessions they are saying, “Right, I’ve had enough of this. So what are we doing?” It is about having that mixed bag in presenting to young people. So some buy into aspects of it, others…. So we have had young people who have been fantastic in group work, who will be really opinionated, but won’t stand in front of a camera, won’t be involved in photography, but having that forum to say what is important to them has been empowering to them. Other young people just want to be involved in the photography, in the film-making. So there is a whole range of stuff going on there. And it is about being patient with that.’

The variety of processes involved in doing journalism, what M. K. calls the ‘mixed bag’, offers a range of opportunities for engagement but the collective enterprise of working towards a goal, the production of a piece of journalism, was of critical importance.

M.K said that for many of the young people the project allowed them to explore together the generational impact which the conflict has had on their families and their communities.

> ‘A lot of the older young people have engrained attitudes about the other side but have understood that it has come from family, peers, others, paramilitaries, and the media. An interesting thing is that quite a number of them don’t feel they should be carrying or expected to carry the past. They want jobs and a future that’s positive.’

(The following section of the paper is an edited account of the evaluation carried out by the Northern Ireland Department of Education. Names of schools and those quoted below have been anonymised.)

Young people: Young people found their voice; are better informed; can use multiple media platforms to address difficult issues for them and their communities.

> ***“I now know that just because you’re labelled one thing, it doesn’t mean you don’t have similar opinions and feelings from those labelled something else” Emma, 11***
>
> ***“Before I did this project, I thought that Protestants didn’t want to be mixed with Catholics, but I’ve now seen that they would like to be mixed” Oran, 10***
>
> ***“I don’t think there’s just one best thing about the project, there’s a lot of good things – the other children are really friendly, kind and funny” Nadine, 11***
>
> ***“I think I am more confident now” Whitney, 10***

At the end of the project, 97% of the young people who had participated reported that they felt more comfortable mixing with other communities; 94% found it easier to talk about community issues; 93% said they had a better understanding of ‘shared space’ and 84% were more hopeful about the future.

Teachers: Teachers learned peace-building activities and built their capacity to deliver similar programmes in the future

> ***"I feel this project has been very relevant. Children have developed their skills of self-acceptance and acceptance of others which is very much part of the PDMU PDMU*** (personal development and mutual understanding)***area of the curriculum" (Primary School)***
>
> "***The project has highlighted to me a variety of different approaches I could use within the classroom. Children enjoyed taking the lead, taking on roles and especially interviewing. These are all techniques that can be employed in most areas of the curriculum" (Primary School)***

Schools: Schools have gained new understandings about embedding in the curriculum themes around community relations and peace building. Those which partnered with each other formed relationships that outlived the project, ensuring a legacy of peace-building.

> ***"Great method for allowing students, to think about how they can have an impact within their community and taking an in-depth look at who they are as individuals… it's great to use media in order to promote other aspects of the curriculum like language, literature, communication and" Vice Principal Special School)***
>
> ***"With presentation skills, pupils are given opportunities that may not be available without projects like this. With the media equipment, we had opportunities to use this equipment for the first time. We may even purchase some of our own" (Primary School)***

Parents: Parents who attended presentations gained understandings of the importance of peace building for their children

> ***"I've seen at first-hand how great his programme was, my son came home and raved about it now I understand how important it is for me to make sure I watch what I say in the future… to hear the podcast and see the photography it's just fantastic we need more of these programmes in our schools" Parent***

Local and wider community: The children and young people have a better understanding of shared space and of issues in their community. The programme has also built their capacity to be leaders, which offers potential to build more positive relationships.

> ***"The very good use of technology, such as recording devices and cameras, allowed all learners an appropriate way of presenting their views and opinions about a range of contentious issues such as shared space, sectarianism and the flying of national flags" Education and Training Inspectorate***

This evaluation finds the principal value which this project generated lay in the outcomes for the young people, their schools, communities, the wider society of Northern Ireland.

Conclusions

The project is producing new understandings about the migration of value in journalism from product to the process. Process has hitherto been conceptualised primarily in terms of collaborations and interactions between users and producers in constructing journalistic products. The process was a means to an end and value was seen to reside in that end, the pieces of journalism. But this project made transparent further layers of complexity and revealed a more nuanced relationship between process and product and the manner in which both offer social value.

The 81 pieces of journalism which the children produced certainly hold value. The children were rightly very proud of their reports, newsletters, podcasts, videos, images. They authenticated their achievements; they demonstrated that their authors had gained new skills and new insights; they carried their concerns, and their wisdom, into their wider communities. Independent of their content, they demonstrated by their existence that young people from conflicted traditions could collaborate to make the barriers that divide their communities more porous, less daunting.

But this project also demonstrated that value can emerge from the processes involved in undertaking journalism in terms of *outcomes* for the young people and their communities which would not usually be considered to be journalistic. The journalists and youth workers who worked as facilitators in the schools, can be seen to have performed as 'cultural intermediaries', helping children reshape beliefs, modify understandings of cultural identities, develop critical reflexivity and autonomy. The evaluation of the project demonstrated that the participants had developed deeper understandings of 'shared space'; were better able and prepared to discuss difficult inter-community concerns and issues; were better able to relate to members of other communities and recognise markers of similarity and respect areas of difference. They had developed a greater reflexivity concerning their own attitudes, opinions and behaviour towards others.

It may not sound like a significant achievement, that children from Yellow School and Red School said after the project that they would now say hello to each other if they met in the street. Yet it indicates that they have developed personal agency and chosen to recognise each other as individuals, rather than ciphers of otherness. That they have learned to respect rather than fear each other. M.K.'s observation that the older participants were able critically to objectify their own prejudice, identify the roots of taken-for-granted understandings in family, peer and community perspectives, and recognise that their own deeply-held wishes differed from these ('They want jobs and a future that's positive.') may also appear to be a relatively minor change.

But for these young people, these are steps which demanded courage - courage which grows out of understanding. And in this instance that understanding has grown out of their adoption of ‘a critical-reflective skillset, toolkit and outlook of a journalist’ (Deuze 2016 in press).

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Mapping Journalism Education to the 'Real World':

Rethinking Curricula for a New Media Society

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Abstract

Newsgathering and dissemination in the digital age has required substantial change on behalf of news organizations and universities that specialize in journalism education. Neither educators nor practitioners have been quick to react to the changing consumption of news. This qualitative pilot study examines whether new journalists are prepared by their college courses to handle all that their daily work life entails, including generating story ideas, interviewing, writing, and using various technology. The findings illustrate that new graduates are prepared for their jobs in terms of understanding journalism fundamentals and technology, but may need more instruction in professional presentation via internships/apprenticeships concurrent or combined with academic courses.

Keywords: Journalism education, journalism practice, technology, digital, curricula

Mapping Journalism Education to the 'Real World':

Rethinking Curricula for a New Media Society

Introduction

The field of journalism has changed remarkably over the past decade. Reporters rarely tell stories in one format for one platform. They instead use a variety of methods to tell stories for multiple audiences. As journalism itself has changed, so has journalism education, albeit more slowly. Today's university students must be trained to write well across a variety of genres, tailor the content to various audiences, and use various media and platforms to tell engaging stories. Students must be able to write, edit audio and video, and use social media in order to produce news stories for immediate broadcast and publication. No longer do television reporters have until the 6 p.m. newscast to put together one package, and no longer do they work solely in a broadcast medium. The same is true for reporters who work at daily newspapers or for radio stations. Some news outlets are now online only.

Unfortunately, many journalism programs suffer from insularity and stagnation. For every journalism program filled with faculty who actively engage in multimedia storytelling and promote interactions with practitioners, there are programs filled with faculty who are not familiar with current platforms and do not help students make meaningful connections with industry professionals. Similarly, while many news organizations have embraced digital tools to enhance storytelling for their audiences, others have remained bound to historic methods of delivery – and finding their bottom line suffering in the process.

The literature reveals an industry struggling with how to adapt to the rapid changes in news consumption. Consequently, journalism educators also are struggling to implement corresponding curricular modifications necessitated by these industry changes while continuing to include the foundational instruction in theory and global consciousness seen as crucial to student development as a member of the global community.

This pilot study examines current job duties and practices in newsrooms in a small/medium news market and reviews the expertise necessary for daily newsgathering and production from an industry standpoint. Specifically, qualitative, in-depth interviews, conducted with individual journalists in one city's television stations and daily newspaper, offer insight into the manner in which journalists cover daily news stories and the skills needed to produce the news for different platforms. The study maps daily work to curriculum that prepared the journalists for their careers and/or the skills they learned while on the job. The pilot study also notes areas of lag where university curricula have failed to keep up with trends and industry needs.

In this way, the pilot study attempts to help journalism educators and university administrators better understand what courses help students the most when they enter into the practice of journalism plus what courses are needed to better prepare students for journalism careers. The overarching goal is helping produce, enhance and sustain a symbiotic relationship between theory and practice that will best suit the needs of both education and journalism in general.

Literature Review

Journalism as a profession and journalism programs have been the subject of study for decades. Research into the demands of the profession and preparation for it is more crucial than ever because of the rapid changes brought about by technology and the collapse of the established business model for news organizations.

State of the News Industry

There is no doubt that the news industry has undergone (and continues to undergo) drastic change. Advancing technology has changed the historically top-down relationship between legacy media and the public (Gade, 2012).

These fundamental changes "are producing immense discomfort in the news industry because it must confront the fact that the expansive and profitable news organizations of the second half of the twentieth century are no longer sustainable, and recognize the looming uncertainty and risk for news firms and journalists" (Lowrey & Gade, viii). While legacy media is still turning a profit, the margin is nowhere near as great as pre-2000 levels (Morton, 2009). Newspapers have been hardest hit, as digital ads do not make up for the drop in print revenue (Mitchell, 2015).

One of the keys to success for media outlets is engagement with the audience via technology (Chan-Olmsted, 2006; Picard, 2005). According to the Pew Research Center, 64 percent of all Americans own smartphones – nearly two thirds of the population (Smith, 2015). The Pew Research Center also notes that "mobile visits now outpace desktop visits for the majority of the top 50 [news] sites and associated apps" (p. 12). Around the world, the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers estimated 1.1 billion people accessing news content digitally (WAN-IFRA, 2013).

In the past, daily newspapers provided news only once or twice per day while television stations broadcast news at pre-set, standard times. The advent of the Internet and smartphones required a change in news consumption from a provider-driven output model to a consumer-driven model. This change in consumption has meant that news organizations have been forced to reorganize workflow and add new services (Weiss & Wulfemeyer, 2014; Lowrey & Gade, 2012), as well as update their offerings more frequently (Xu, 2014). According to Lowrey &

Gade (2012), "Journalistic routines have been derailed by the need for continual online updating, and by the increased coordination and the new expertise and flexibility of skills required to produce multiple story versions for multiple products aimed at multiple audiences" (p. 4). Journalists must be multimedia-minded if they and their companies are to succeed in drawing an audience (Northrup, 2004).

State of Journalism Education

According to Newton (2013), "The digital age has turned traditional journalism upside down, we observed, but not made much of a dent in journalism education" (para. 1). Journalism programs are unprepared to respond to these significant structural changes (Mensing, 2010). As Walck, Cruikshank, and Kalyango Jr. (2015) noted, "despite the proliferation of mobile devices, there is still limited awareness of how journalism students are prepared for the changing nature of the workplace in regard to mobile devices" (p. 235). Journalism and mass communication programs face challenges in adopting new technology and teaching approaches (Goh & Kale, 2015) and commonly only do so because of pressure from the news industry seeking graduates with necessary skills (Walck et al., 2015; Lowery, Daniels, & Becker, 2005). According to Newton (2013), just 40 percent of journalism and mass communications graduates felt they were taught enough technology.

Part of the problem is the fractured nature of the discipline. As noted by Steensen & Ahva (2015), journalism studies as a discipline is "not marked by a specific and shared academic culture" (p. 2) but instead, according to Zelizer (2004), "has borrowed unevenly from both the humanities and the social sciences" (p. 19). Journalism programs by and large were shaped by news institutions as professionally oriented programs to help graduates get jobs in the news industry (Becker 2003). Mensing (2010) wrote the following:

> The idealized perception of journalism education still centers on the reporter and the basic functions of information gathering, evaluation, production and distribution. This model of journalism, taught in journalism schools and run as a business by news organizations, has remained unchanged for many decades. Adding multimedia, using new storytelling techniques and delivering the product over the Internet does not change the basic model. (p. 511-512)

The change required in journalism programs is no less drastic than the corresponding change in the news industry necessitating it.

However, just because change is required does not mean it is happening easily or quickly. Lack of time, resources and support as well as institutional culture contribute to stagnation in many journalism programs (Walck et al., 2015; Goh & Kale, 2015; Shumow & Sheerin, 2013). Also, many scholars/professors – and even industry veterans – fear that technological advances weaken rather than enhance the quality of newsgathering and reporting (Tameling & Broersma, 2013; Goh & Kale, 2015). As Jones & Salter (2012) wrote, "The future for journalism is to integrate all that the digital and online worlds have to offer, to improve and renew journalism for generations to come" (p. 173). The future is here, though, and universities must adapt. As Shumow & Sheerin (2013) noted, "Nearly all the recent research reveals the "need to synthesize the emphasis on gaining practical skills with the traditional critical thinking and analytical skills associated with a liberal arts education" (p. 4). Programs must continue to help students develop an understanding of journalism fundamentals while providing them with the ability to work with new technologies within new workflows (Goh & Kale, 2015).

Theoretical Underpinnings

Reporters new to newsgathering are in perhaps the best position to create multimedia work that helps their organizations reach existing and new audiences. As technology natives, they are used to consuming news and other content digitally. Various studies have shown that college students are avid consumers of news (Diddi & LaRose, 2006). In a 2015 study, The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research and the American Press Institute found that 85 percent of Millenials who participated in the survey said that keeping up with the news is important to them, and 69 percent get news daily.

As Chan-Olmstead, Rim & Zerba (2012) noted, "The consumption of news sources is both an active selection and a habitual behavior" (p. 130). This intersection of selection and habit is supported by both the uses and gratification theory (Blumler & Katz, 1974) and media attendance theory (LaRose & Eastin, 2004). In fact, as LaRose and Eastin (2004) noted, "Habit strength is expected to influence ongoing behaviors, independent of current active thinking about expected (gratification) outcomes" (p. 363). A third concept also comes into play when considering reporter use of technology: the technology acceptance model (Davis, 1989). Davis (1989) applied the TAM to work settings to measure acceptance based on the end user's perceived usefulness of technology for a specific purpose. Davis (1989) defined perceived usefulness as "the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance his or her job performance" (p. 320). Studies suggest that intention to adopt a technology depend on strength of perceived usefulness and ease of use (King & He, 2006).

As students are familiar with consumption of news media via digital means as well as various social media platforms, it is natural to expect that they would carry their understanding of and experience with multiplatform delivery into their first jobs as reporters. Habit and ease of use come into play when moving from student to employee. In question is how much of what students learned in college via courses or college-related work translates into usefulness of knowledge in their full-time positions as reporters.

Methodology

This qualitative small-scale study is rooted in the pragmatist tradition of Charles Sanders Pierce and George Herbert Mead wherein inquiries serve to help people better understand their environment. "Truth" is relative, as it is a construct of the person making the inquiries. "The perception of truth depended on how it was investigated and one who was doing the investigating" (Patterson & Wilkins, 2011, p. 24).

In this small-scale preliminary study, the author conducted one-on-one, in-depth interviews with individual journalists at television stations and the daily newspaper in the Savannah, Georgia, news market. This sample size is deliberately small in order to evaluate large-scale project feasibility and study design. Additionally, many of the studies cited in the literature review relied on surveys for information, providing numbers-based results rather than an information-rich picture of the preparation new journalists have and need to have for their careers.

Selection of Research Method

The purpose of this study is to gain insight into what television journalists perceive as college courses that were beneficial to their on-the-job duties and what courses or opportunities they wish they had when in college.

Therefore, three research questions guide this study:

RQ 1: How well are new reporters prepared for their daily newsgathering duties?

RQ 2: Which aspects of the college curriculum helped them the most to prepare for their daily duties?

RQ 3: In what areas did they lack instruction (i.e., what courses could have helped them better prepare for their daily duties)?

The study of reporters' perceptions of educational preparation lends itself well to qualitative research, as real-life situations do not present themselves as predictable relationships in a testable format (Angrosino, 2007). The goal of qualitative research is to discern patterns from the lived experience, discernable from such methods as "detailed interviews with people in the community under study" (Angrosino, 2007, p. 14). As noted by Kvale and Brinkman (2009), conversation is the path to knowledge. Kvale and Brinkman (2009) wrote, "Knowledge is neither inside a person nor outside in the world, but exists in the relationship between persons and the world" (p. 53).

The in-depth interviews provide an outlet for journalists to think critically about their college experience and evaluate how the courses they took prepared or did not prepare them for their daily duties. Additionally, journalists make excellent respondents for a study based on in-depth interviews because they are used to the interview structure and because they are communicators themselves and are thus able to express themselves in a cogent manner (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002).

The "semistandardized" (Berg, 2009, p. 107) interview structure allowed a conversation to take place wherein the respondents felt comfortable answering the researcher's questions regarding their education and career preparation.

Selection of Scope, Participants and Process

This study focuses on whether journalists are prepared by their college courses to handle all that their daily work life entails, including coming up with story ideas, interviewing, writing, using various technology, and posting on numerous social media platforms.

In this pilot study, the author focused on the Savannah, Georgia, media market. Savannah is market 91 as determined by Nielsen Designated Market Area (DMA) rankings, which identify 210 television markets in the United States (Nielsen, 2015). There are three television stations in the market producing news – WJCL (ABC), WTOC (CBS) and WSAV (NBC) – plus one daily newspaper, the Savannah Morning News. The Savannah media outlets employ a mixture of new reporters right out of school and those who have worked in other markets, and thus is a good market to find new reporters managing the challenges of newsgathering in a competitive news environment. The rationale is that a marketplace approach to competition encourages socially beneficial programming such as news (Fowler & Brenner, 1982) and encourages careful consideration in covering news.

The author – a veteran of the Savannah news environment – employed purposeful sampling for the pilot study, contacting colleagues at each of the stations and the daily newspaper who could identify the newest reporters in the newsroom. The author then contacted that reporter via email (Appendix A) and set up a time for a phone interview. Thus, the group of participants appeared homogenous on the surface (same media market and general length of time out of school) but had different perceptions regarding their own experiences within those parameters. For this pilot study, the focus is not on quantity, but quality of information generated by a relatively random selection of participants. From this sampling comes insightful information regarding college preparation.

The response rate for this method – a version of snowball sampling – was 100 percent. The author was able to interview the desired number of reporters (five) in this pilot study to gain insight into their perceptions and modify the protocol for a larger-scale study. Two represented WTOC (CBS), one represented WSAV (NBC), one represented WJCL (ABC) and one represented the Savannah Morning News. Two reporters were interviewed from WTOC because the first person contacted and interviewed revealed she had not officially attended a journalism program, which is the focus of the study. The reporter still had interesting insights to share, so the author kept her information in the study. Four of the participants in the study are female, while one is male. In terms of ethnicity, three participants self-identified as white while two self-identified as black. Participants ranged in age from 23-27 (one age 23, two age 24, one age 25 and one age 27). All of the television reporters are in their first full-time on-air job; this is the newspaper reporter's first full-time writing job. Four participants reported earning a bachelor's degree in journalism (two B.A. degrees and two B.S. degrees). The fifth earned a B.A. degree in a related field (film, television and theater).

The author sent the consent form (Appendix B) attachment to the five reporters contacted by the author. Each reporter who participated in the interview returned the signed consent form.

The author conducted the interviews in May 2016 via telephone and recorded each interview using a digital voice recorder (Olympus VN-3600) connected through a Radio Shack telephone adapter. The author was able to focus solely on the information collection during this period to ensure immersion in the information being collected from the participants. Interviews lasted between 11 and 16 minutes, resulting in 69 minutes of interviews. The average length was 13.8 minutes.

Each participant was contacted at the agreed-upon time, and the interview began by asking if it was still a good time for the interview, reading a section of the interview protocol (Appendix C) to gain verbal consent for audio recording. The author stated the purpose of the study, and gained informed consent via standard protocol, including assurance of anonymity. The author proceeded through a series of open-ended demographic questions regarding the participant, as well as questions regarding the participant's background (Appendix C). These questions were the same and were asked in the same order for each participant.

The author then asked the first question: "What college courses provided the material/training that helps you on the job today?" The author then added questions from the interview protocol as applicable in order to gain information that seemed appropriate considering the participants' responses (Berg, 2009). The author added open-ended questions as applicable to help clarify each participant's answer, and to offer additional opportunities for the participants to reflect further on how well college prepared them for their career.

The author attempted in the brief time allotted to cultivate a relationship with each participant (Angrosino, 2007). Though the interview method is a combination of information-providing and self-presentation (Kenney, 2009; Rapley, 2001), the author interviewed reporters who interview people every day. They are as familiar with the collection method as the researcher, and thus make excellent subjects, as noted by Lindlof & Taylor (2002). The participants themselves essentially dictated the direction of the interview depending on their answers to the prompt question. This manner is in keeping with Kvale & Brinkmann (2009): "Conduct the interviews based on an interview guide and with a reflective approach to the knowledge sought and the interpersonal relation of the interview situation" (p. 102).

Method of Information Analysis

The author employed the Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) method of analyzation, which includes determining themes that emerged in the interviews. The author tied together the essential themes of the interview in a descriptive statement that summed up the overall knowledge gained from the interview. The author noted individual comments under the main themes of the study: technology, preparation and unreadiness.

Issues of Validity and Reliability

The author was very organized, methodical, and structured in her approach to the case and the interview collection. To that end, the author kept detailed notes, transcribed interviews, and systematically analyzed interviews while looking for patterns.

In a process called "bracketing" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009), the author put aside preconceived notions, biases, expectations, etc., in order to be receptive to the participant and what he or she said. To maximize validity, the author asked clarifying questions to ensure understanding of each participant's point of view. To further enhance validity, the author transcribed the interviews, and the author matched the audio files with the transcriptions to ensure the interviews were transcribed accurately.

In terms of reliability, the subjects were offered the opportunity to clarify their responses via open-ended and follow-up questions. To maximize interviewer reliability, the author has included the reporter interview protocol (Appendix C) and excerpts from the transcriptions in the findings section.

Assumptions

While developing the pilot study, the author assumed that there were areas where the participants would feel prepared by their college courses for their eventual careers in daily newsgathering, and areas where they would not feel prepared. The author also assumed that the Savannah, Georgia, news market, as a small to medium market, was a good place to find new reporters who could compare their college experiences with their on-the-job experiences.

Ethical Issues

When choosing in-depth interviews as a data-gathering tool, researchers understand that a number of ethical issues must be considered. The interview construct gives power to the researcher who chooses what topics will be covered and how. The researcher also controls how the interview will be documented, interpreted, and reported with no input from the participant. Additionally, the researcher may – consciously or unconsciously – influence the participant's answers.

In this study, the author protected participants as much as possible by providing information about the research interests and parameters, securing consent on a detailed form, and giving opportunities for the participants to decline to participate in general or respond to a specific question. The author maintained anonymity by coding transcripts and protecting files.

Key Findings and Interpretation

The author interviewed five reporters (four female and one male) in the Savannah, Georgia, news market: Two represented WTOC (CBS), one represented WSAV (NBC), one represented WJCL (ABC) and one represented the Savannah Morning News. Three participants self-identified as white while two self-identified as black. Participants ranged in age from 23-27 (one age 23, two age 24, one age 25 and one age 27). All of the participants are in their first full-time reporting job. Four participants earned a bachelor's degree in journalism (two B.A. degrees and two B.S. degrees). The fifth earned a B.A. degree in a related field (film, television and theater).

The author grouped commentary from the participants thematically and categorized information according to the guiding research questions. Details that support and explain each finding are provided below, along with "thick description" (Denzin, 1989) that documents the experiences of the participants. The author provided extensive quotations to capture the varying perceptions of the participants.

RQ 1: How well are new reporters prepared for their daily newsgathering duties?

In general, reporters in the pilot study said they felt prepared for their jobs by the courses they took in college. Two aspects of preparation emerged in keeping with the work of numerous researchers such as Blom and Davenport (2012) and Deuze (2001): content/theory and practical skills. Content/theory addresses understanding the social/economic/political system in which the media operates, as well as the history of journalism and, by extension, the history of the United States (King, 2008). Practical skills include writing, editing and using various hardware and software to put together a news product as applicable to the particular medium of delivery (broadcast TV, Web, print, radio).

In terms of the content/theory aspect of their education, two reporters noted that they would have liked more instruction in understanding how various governments (city, county, state, local, federal) operate. The reason for this is that they noted that they were confused by the process to secure information under the Freedom of Information Act in general, and Georgia's Sunshine Laws in specific. Reporter 5 noted,

> "The first couple of months on the job, I realized I really needed more training in knowing how local governments work and how it varies from state to state …
> I felt prepared for actually going out and learning how to find a story … but those stories I'm assigned to, you know, the government stories and learning how different bureaucracies work – I'm kind of a little lost with that."

Similarly, Reporter 3 noted that a course in legal rights as a citizen and journalist would have been beneficial, "especially when you are doing an investigation on someone, particularly something that could be considered libel." Granted, Reporter 3 was the one person in the study who did not attend a journalism school (the reporter's degree was in film, television and theater), but the reporter did take an ethics in journalism course. Reporter 2 also noted the need to be "able to talk to police and talk to people and officials ... I talk to police now. I never talked to police before I got out of college … I wish I knew more about that when I graduated."

The reporters in the pilot study also noted that they learned how to exercise critical-thinking skills that they gained through their liberal-arts-based curricula as well as the journalism courses. Reporter 2 noted that these courses help students navigate the interpersonal world of journalism: "You have to know how to think on your feet, you have to know how to deal with editors and you have to know how to deal with people."

In terms of practical skills, all reporters in the pilot study felt supported to slightly different degrees by their college curricula in terms of fundamental journalism skills. These skills include writing, developing story ideas and interviewing people – all skills that are found in most journalism programs (Blom & Davenport, 2012). This observation was consistent across all four participants from the journalism programs as well as the participant with the non-journalism degree. This reporter, Reporter 3, noted, "The bare bones of journalism I learned: how to write a story, how to check sources, how to be thorough and be analytical." Reporter 5 concurred: "How to reach out to sources, how to enterprise different stories … a lot of writing workshops. Writing is … still the most important thing." Reporter 1 said, "If you can't write, you're in trouble." Reporter 1 also said that the fundamentals of the program were helpful when transitioning to a full-time job: "There weren't really any surprises, per se."

The reporters in the pilot study also felt comfortable with technology for the most part, and felt that they had enough technological training to be able to be successful on the job. Reporter 5 said, "I knew how to work a camera and handle simple technical stuff … how to edit, how to shoot, how to set up a proper interview on camera." Reporter 4 worked on newscasts in studio, handled the prompter and different areas of the control room. Reporter 4 noted that a production course was the most helpful: "It was so boring when I was in the class – it was kind of hands-on though – but we learned a lot about gains and white balances and overundering my XLR cord, things like that – things that I didn't know that I would actually use every single day." Reporter 1 noted, "I was prepared to go out and shoot, write a VOSOT, a package, maintain the Web. I was prepared to work in real-life news because of those later [practice-based] courses."

RQ 2: Which aspects of the college curriculum helped them the most to prepare for their daily duties?

As noted above, the reporters in the study said that courses in news writing, newsgathering, ethics and production all were helpful in preparing them for their current jobs. Specific courses identified were Writing for TV (Reporter 4), Ethics for Journalism (Reporter 3), Media Ethics (Reporter 2), History of Journalism (Reporter 1), Visual Communications (Reporter 5), Mass Communications (Reporter 5), Introduction to Production (Reporter 3), Newswriting (Reporter 2), Media Criticism (Reporter 2), Opinion Journalism (Reporter 2).

Reporter 5 identified a particular course that helped the most: The university had a partnership with a broadcasting company wherein the entities set up a model for the journalism program based on the teaching hospital model. Through this partnership, students worked alongside professionals in a convergent newsroom to produce local stories. In this manner, students were able to experience live reporting experiences that reinforced classroom content. This teaching hospital model has recently emerged as an example of a way to train employable journalists. As Newton (2013) noted, "The ultimate teaching hospital can be the engine of change for journalism education and for journalism. No longer would journalism programs be a training caboose driven around by the industry" (para. 2 under "Putting it together").

RQ 3: In what areas did they lack instruction (i.e., what courses could have helped them better prepare for their daily duties)?

As noted above, Reporter 5 had perhaps the best college experience thanks to the unique real-world course. All five reporters cited the importance of the ability to conduct meaningful internships or work in professional newsrooms as something necessary in any program with a journalism focus. Reporter 1 conducted internships in the summer as opposed to the academic year and lamented the fact that the coursework was not immediately applicable: "I think it would be more beneficial if there was a course that allowed you to work in the field while you are in school." Reporter 3 concurred: "The most beneficial thing that a journalism program can do is provide as many internship opportunities as possible – internship opportunities where students are actually doing the work and not watching. Maybe a work-study program." Reporter 4 noted that the internship provided the most preparation for the process of creating reels to get a job: "We didn't do stand-ups, and we also didn't put together a reel. Or they didn't call it a reel; we just put packages together. So when I graduated, I didn't know what a reel was or even stand-ups until my internships."

All five reporters noted holes in their knowledge that could have been filled via these internships or apprenticeships that teach the day-to-day skills. Reporter 1 said, "I don't think we get enough practice [in school] with on-air presentation … you need to learn how to make a strong connection during a live shot." Reporter 5 agreed: "I do wish that I had more live experience. Going into this job, I had never done any live work. You can only learn by getting thrown into it." Reporter 4 would have liked more camera work as the general journalism program attended did not focus on job duties as a multimedia journalist but rather camera work for television shows: "We did cooking shows, but I would have liked more actual shooting for news." Reporter 3 noted a lack of knowing how to operate a live truck, live backpack or "how to truly work a camera."

As a corollary to the above information, the reporters interviewed for this pilot study stated that students should have to enterprise daily stories that are not necessarily school-related stories. Reporter 2 noted, "There's no class that can simulate the day-to-day ins and outs of the news business" wherein people have to "write very well very quickly." Reporter 2 reported doing about 12 stories total for class in college but now writes at least four articles per week. Reporter 2 said there should be "some class where every single day you had to go out and report on some event." Reporter 4 also noted the need to cover more actual news as opposed to school news: "You have all those things you are learning in school, but you need it to be more newsy, more realistic – covering actual things not school things."

In general, the reporters in this study advocated for a course or real-world experience such as an internship, apprenticeship or teaching hospital model that can simulate as closely as possible what graduates will find in their day-to-day experiences. Reporter 1 said, "There wasn't anything I didn't know how to do. I just got better. When you do it every day for real, you get better at it." Reporter 3 noted, "The actual day-to-day grind of the job is learned on the job." Reporter 2 said, "I learned more in two months on the job than in my entire college career." This kind of real-world connection is beneficial for journalism educators as well as educators who often have not worked in the industry for quite some time, if ever (Pardun, McKeever, Pressgrove, & McKeever, 2015). Reporter 2 noted, "In terms of being ready for newspapers in the heyday of newspapers, I was because that's when most of my professors worked in the industry."

Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this pilot study is to gain insight into the manner in which journalists cover daily news stories and the skills needed to produce the news for different platforms. The study maps daily work of new reporters to the courses that prepared them for their careers, as well as identifying the areas of lag where university curricula have failed to keep up with industry needs. The goal is to present a rich picture of the daily newsgathering process and the experiences of five reporters in a small/medium news market – a locus of employment for recent graduates. This study employed naturalistic inquiry (Lincoln & Egon, 1985) to collect qualitative information from the participants in order to develop and explore themes that related to the literature. The goal for this research is twofold: to add to the body of knowledge regarding successful aspects of journalism education and to offer a better understanding of where universities can improve training for future news careers.

Despite the extensive research regarding technology preparedness identified in the literature review, the lack of technology instruction did not emerge as a strong theme in this pilot study. While some noted that they could have used more hands-on instruction with hardware such as camera equipment found on the job, the five reporters interviewed did not note that they felt they were lagging behind in using digital platforms to tell a story. Perhaps this is the case because they were adept at using various digital media platforms while in college and not necessarily solely in the role of a student. As noted in the literature review, theories such as uses and gratifications (Blumler & Katz, 1974), media attendance (LaRose & Eastin, 2004), and the technology acceptance model (Davis, 1989) help explain why students of journalism and similar programs can easily make the transition from consuming the news digitally to creating news products for digital delivery. Journalists learn key skills – both fundamental and technological – to complete new reporting assignments both in college and in their first (and subsequent) full-time jobs. This pilot study confirmed the assessment by Walck et al. (2015) that "this generation of journalists is prepared to report across a wide range of communication platforms" (p. 245). For these technology natives, "the challenge lies in learning how to professionalize their messages" (Walck et al., 2015, p. 245). This professionalization takes the form of needing experience writing non-school-related stories on a daily basis, practicing live shots, and requesting information from sources as allowed by FOIA and sunshine laws.

This study adds to the body of knowledge surrounding journalism programs and how they do or do not prepare students for careers in the news media. This small-scale study shows that new reporters felt prepared in general for their jobs by the content/theory and practical skills courses they took in college. This pilot study also shows that students could use more practice in daily newsgathering and professional presentation via internships/apprenticeships concurrent or combined with academic courses.

Limitations

As this is a pilot study, it succeeds in providing insight into the experiences of a limited population. The findings may not be generalizable to a larger population. In this study, the author noted common themes with this particular group of participants.

Another limitation is that there is significant difference among journalism programs. Experiences with the pilot study participants who attended four different universities may not be the same experiences of graduates from a different cohort of universities. Additionally, college students take courses that interest them at the time they are in college based on what they think they may want to do when they graduate. The job they end up getting may be completely different from the job they prepared for while in college.

Suggestions for Further Research

In this pilot study, the sample size was deliberately small. This study did provide insight into journalism education for career preparation that warrants conducting the study on a larger scale. Further quantitative and qualitative study is necessary to determine if the themes identified in this study emerge on a consistent basis. Continual assessment of journalism education as related to news industry trends and needs is necessary if budding journalists are to be trained appropriately for the career they pursue upon graduation.

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Appendix A
Query Email

Good afternoon!

(Name of colleague) suggested I contact you about a research project I'm conducting. My study focuses on how well journalism programs prepare their graduates for their daily duties as a news reporter. I would like to talk to you for about 10 minutes about your college courses and your experiences. Would you be able to chat with me sometime Tuesday, May 24? We could do it over the phone.

Thank you!
BC

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Appendix B

Consent Form for Telephone Interview

Please read the following material that explains this research study. By typing your name and the date and emailing this form back to me, you indicate that you have been informed about the study and that you want to participate. I want you to understand what you are being asked to do and what risks and benefits, if any, are associated with this study.

Description:
You are being asked to take part in a research project conducted by Beth Concepción, dean of the School of Liberal Arts and chair of the writing program at Savannah College of Art and Design.

This study is designed to determine what aspects of college curricula were most helpful to new reporters and what areas were lacking. You are being asked to participate in this study because you have been identified as someone who fits the criteria of a reporter who is fairly new to the field of news and may have some insight into aspects of college preparation.

Procedures:
If you agree to take part in this study, I will call you on the telephone to talk with you for about 10 minutes. I will record the interview for later transcription and coding. The session will begin with simple demographics (such as "How old are you?") and move into personal perceptions of preparation (such as "What college courses provided the material/training that helps you on the job today?"). I will ask follow-up questions about what might have been lacking in your college curricula (such as "What courses do you wish you had taken?").

Risks/Discomforts and Benefits:
The risk associated with participation is potential discomfort resulting from answers regarding college preparation or lack thereof. I do not foresee any significant personal benefits associated with participation beyond the satisfaction of being part of a study that aims to contribute to the body of knowledge regarding reporter preparation.

Cost/payment to Participant:
There is no cost to you for participating in this study. There is no payment to you for completing the interview.

Study Withdrawal:
You have the right to withdraw your consent or stop participating at any time. You have the right to refuse to answer any question(s) or participate at any time for any reason. Withdrawing from the project will not result in any negative consequences for you.

Confidentiality:
I will make every effort to maintain the privacy of your information. Your interview will be identified only by a code, not your name. Your responses will not be linked to you personally. All written materials and recording devices are stored in locked rooms in locked cabinets. All computer-based materials, such as audio files, will be stored in password protected electronic files. Your full responses linked to your name will not be released to anyone.

Invitation for Questions:
If you have questions about this study, please ask me before you return this consent form. You may also ask questions during or after the session.

Authorization:
I have read the above information about the study. I know the possible risks and benefits. I know that being in this study is voluntary. I choose to participate in this study. I know that I can withdraw at any time.

Name of participant:
Date of agreement:

Appendix C
Interview Protocol

Institution: Savannah College of Art and Design
Interviewee: Four reporters in the Savannah, Georgia, news market
Interviewer: Beth Concepción, Savannah College of Art and Design

INTERVIEWS
Introductory Protocol (SCRIPT FOR PHONE INTERVIEWS)
To facilitate my note-taking, I would like to record our conversation today. Please offer your verbal consent. For your information, only researchers on the project will be privy to the recordings that will be eventually deleted after they are transcribed. In addition, you must sign a form devised to meet our human subject requirements. Essentially, this document states that:

(1) all information will be held confidential,
(2) your participation is voluntary, and you may stop at any time if you feel uncomfortable, and
(3) I do not intend to inflict any harm.

Thank you for your agreeing to participate.

I have planned this interview to last 10 minutes in order to be respectful of your time. I have several questions that I would like to cover. If time begins to run short, it may be necessary to interrupt you in order to push ahead and complete this line of questioning.

Introduction
You have been selected to speak with me today because you have been identified as someone who fits the criteria of a reporter who is new to the field of news. My research project focuses on how journalism programs prepare reporters for their daily newsgathering duties. My study does not aim to evaluate your strengths or weaknesses as a reporter. Rather, I'm trying to learn more about what universities are doing well and ways in which they can enhance the curriculum.

A. Interviewee Background
1. How old are you?
2. What race do you consider yourself?
3. What is your education?
4. What college did you attend?
5. Did that college have a journalism program, and if so, did you get your degree in that program?
6. How long have you worked in news?

B. Situational Perspective
1. What college courses provided the material/training that helps you on the job today?
2. Which courses did you find the most helpful?
3. What skills did you need and have?
4. What courses do you wish you had taken?
5. What skills did you need and not have?

6. What do you wish you had known how to do when you started your job?

Post Interview Comments and/or Observations:
1. Is there anything you would like to add that will help me understand your point of view, or that would help me with my research?

To Lie or Not to Lie: Interrogating Codes of Conduct on Photo Ethics in the Era of Digital Technologies

Bevelyn Dube (University of Venda, South Africa)

ABSTRACT

New digital technologies have radically transformed the face of journalism in general and photo journalism in particular. These new technologies have made it easy for photo journalists and non-professionals to obtain images and to transmit them quickly to newsrooms and consumers across the globe. The result is that new ethical dilemmas, such as limitless opportunities for photo manipulation and dealing with user generated images, whose authenticity is at times questionable, have entered the journalistic landscape. This has led to some scholars calling for the rethinking of media ethics to address these ethical dilemmas. This paper, therefore, examined the Codes of Conduct for journalists in ten southern African states to ascertain whether they have responded to the ethical dilemmas brought in by the new digital technologies. Findings revealed that, besides being outdated, most of the Codes do not make reference to photo manipulation and how to deal with User Generated Content.

Key Words: Camera, Citizen journalists, Consequentialist, Deontology, Image, Manipulation, Photographs, Realist, User generated content, Utilitarian

INTRODUCTION

New digital technologies, such as smart cell phones, Adobe Photoshop and Silicon Beach Software's Digital Darkroom, to mention a few, have radically transformed the face of photo journalism, raising concerns about their impact on the ethics of photo journalism. These digital technologies have not only made it easy for professional photo journalists to capture, process and transmit images within minutes to newsrooms all over the world, but they have also given the same advantages to millions upon millions of citizens who own smart cell phones which enable them to capture images and transmit them to the same newsrooms. Photo journalists now have to compete for recognition with citizen journalists whose images are now being welcomed in many newsrooms (Bersak, 2006). For example, in the 2005 London subway bombings in which 52 people died and about 700 were injured, citizen journalists began to capture and distribute images of the blast within minutes using standalone cameras and cell phone cameras (Bersak, 2005). In what was considered a journalistic first, images that were used by both *The New York Times* and the *Washington Post* on their front pages were taken by citizens who were readily available at the scene of the bomb blasts (Dunleavy, 2005). The result, as noted by Dunleavy (2005), is that the digital camera phone came into prominence as a technology of the future. Film, which was used mostly by professional photographers to capture images, was now considered to be “too slow and too expensive to produce marketable images” especially in situations where the news needed to move fast, for example, in “full-on media frenzies like major sporting events” (Bersak, 2006, p. 43).

New media technologies have also brought new dynamics to the processing and dissemination of images for news outlets. They have made it possible for images to be captured, bought and sold in minutes (Bersak, 2006). Where before photo journalists and editors had the luxury of time to verify the authenticity of images before publication, now they are under pressure to make ethical decisions in minutes or even seconds lest they lose the “scoop” to other news outlets (Bersak, 2006).

Not only have the new media technologies revolutionised the way photo journalists process and disseminate images, but they have also brought with them limitless opportunities for them to manipulate photos, for example by moving objects from or within the frame, adding elements which did not exist before or putting together two frames to make one. This manipulation which has, in some cases, resulted in the distortion of news, promotion of propaganda and also in individuals or organisations being harmed owes its existence, partly, to the mounting pressures on photographers to come up with competitive and marketable images that can stand their own in the newsroom. This is evident in the exponential increase in the number of photo manipulation scandals that continue to rock the world of photo journalism all over the world. The well-publicised *TIME* magazine’s publication of the deliberately darkened face of OJ Simpson on their cover page is a case in point (Hofer & Swan, 2005).

Other notable examples include *Los Angeles Times* photographer, Brian Walski’s splicing of two photographs of a group of British soldiers in Iraq to create one photograph (Bersak, 2006); the University of Wisconsin’s digital insertion of the image of a black student in a crowd of white football fans to give the impression that the university respected diversity in its enrolment (Hofer & Swan, 2005); the Reuters journalist’s manipulation of a photograph to increase smoke billowing from a building in Beirut, in order to create the impression that Israel’s bombing of that city was worse than it really was (The Reuters Photo Scandal, 2006); and Egypt’s state-run newspaper, Al-Ahram’s doctoring of a photo of the Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak walking in front of the Israeli, US, Palestinian and Jordanian leaders, yet in the original he is walking behind the other leaders (BBC, 2010, September 15).

It is, thus, indisputable that these new media technologies have transformed the way journalists in general and photo journalists in particular execute their professional duties. Mabweazara (2013), for example, argues that the Internet and mobile phones have brought lasting changes to the day to day news making routines and practices all over the world. These changes have prompted some scholars to call for the rethinking and the reinvention of media ethics, in order to address the ethical tensions brought by new media technologies.

Internationally, media organisations have reacted to this new dynamic in photojournalism by putting up Codes of Conduct which regulate photo journalists’ practices. According to Horner (2015), Codes of Conduct set up the norms and rules which seek to determine how media practitioners should execute their duties. The online Business Dictionary defines Codes of Conduct as a set of guidelines issued by an organisation or professional body to its workers to help them do their duties in accordance with its primary values and ethical standards. The National Press Photographers Association (NPPA) Code of Conduct, for example, stipulates that “it is wrong to alter the content of a photograph in any way that deceives the public … altering the editorial content of a photograph, in any degree, is a breach of the ethical standards recognised by the NPPA” (Cited by Horner, 2015, p. 147). The *Washington Post* also prohibits any photographic manipulation which could mislead, confuse or misrepresent the accuracy of events, while *The New York Times* also prohibits the alteration of images and states that any image that is published should capture reality. Codes of Conduct of these organisations stipulate that only traditional manipulation technics such as contrast adjustments and those aimed at improving clarity and accuracy can be used. However, these Codes also state that where manipulation of images is done, this should be made clear to the reader.

Southern African countries also have several Codes of Conduct which govern the way journalists should execute their duties. However, studies are yet to be done to examine how these journalism Codes of Conduct of media organisations in southern Africa have addressed the phenomenon of the new media technologies and the resulting consequences. This study examined Codes of ethics from ten southern African countries to ascertain how they have responded to the ethical tensions brought by new media technologies to the journalistic arena. Each Code of Conduct was analysed individually and the following questions guided the analysis:

- How have the Codes of Conduct responded to ethical dilemmas brought by new media technologies to the journalistic arena?
- Do the Codes of Conduct adequately address the ethical problems of photo manipulation and User Generated Content?

To fully understand the influence of new media technologies in southern Africa, a brief history of photo ethics is discussed in the next section.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

An examination of the history of photo journalism shows that perceptions of both professional photo journalists and members of the public on the ethicality of the practice of photo manipulation have evolved since the beginning of photography almost 200 years ago (see Campbell, 2014; Baradell, 2012; Bersak, 2006). Because of technological limitations in the early years of photo journalism, photo manipulation was both desired and expected, in order to improve the quality of the image. In newspapers, photographs did not have the power to tell a story in their own right, but they were used to merely support or illustrate a story (Baradell, 2012). Thus, in the early years, pictures that were put in the newspapers were mostly artist's impressions of the event (Kobré, 2004). It was not unheard of for newspapers, such as the *Daily Graphic,* an evening New York City paper, to ask artists to create publishable drawings based on photographs of events because hand drawn pictures were preferred to those produced by photographic technology (Bersak, 2006). Thus, as noted by Bersak, artists and engravers were valued members of staff in a newspaper organisation.

It was also common practice for early pictures to be staged or to be composed from different elements or for elements to be removed from or added to the frame. According to Campbell (2014, p. 6):

> Politicians had their heads placed on other people's bodies, absent individuals were inserted into portraits, political opponents were scrubbed from images after they fell out of favour, and damaging associations between individuals were made by splicing pictures together.

A good example is the iconic portrait of the US President Abraham Lincoln which is a composite of Lincoln's head and the body of the Southern politician, John Calhoun (Foreman, 2016). Stalin was also known to routinely air brush those members of his party who had fallen out of favour with him (Horner, 2015, p. 142). It was also acceptable for photo journalists to create composographs (photographs created out of several shots). One of the most famous ones was the picture of an almost nude woman which the *Daily Graphics* put on their front page to re-enact a courtroom scene which they had not been able to capture. The woman was asked by her lawyer to strip for the benefit of the jurors to prove to them that her husband, who was suing for divorce on the grounds that she had concealed her ethnicity from him, was lying. The sensationalisation of the courtroom drama earned the newspaper a 500% rise in circulation figures and those who criticised the newspaper did not do so because of the manipulation of the photos, but did so because of the newspaper's placing of the picture of an almost nude woman on the front page (Baradell, 2012; Bersak, 2006).

According to Coyne, "before Photoshop, it was considered OK to change the images in a darkroom – burn, dodge, crop, print excessively dark to give a different mood. Or sandwich two negatives for a double exposure" (cited in Baradell, 2012, p. 14). So welcome was the practice of manipulating photographs that some legendary photographers of the 20th century, such as W. Eugene Smith, earned their fame by using these techniques in processing their photographs (Coyne cited in Baradell, 2012, p. 14).

However, attitudes towards photo manipulation began to change gradually with the introduction of new camera equipment which enabled photographers to capture life's moments surreptitiously, thus giving them the power of prying or being watchdogs for the public (Hoy, 2005). Staged or posed photos lost their appeal as illustrated by the public response to Joe Rosenthal's 1945 photograph of six Americans raising an American flag at Iwo Jima. The photograph was heavily criticised by members of the public who believed that it had been staged, and was therefore not a representation of the truth (Lester, 1988). Twenty years before that incident, this would not have been an ethical issue.

The introduction of new media technologies which made it relatively easy to manipulate images by anyone who had the right technology heightened people's aversion of manipulated images. The manipulation of images which, in the analogue era, was painstaking and done in the darkroom by professionals, was now in the hands of the "most inexpert of photographers" (Horner, 2015). Stern (2012) concurs when he points out that "With an app costing no more than $1.99, everyone is becoming a news photographer – creating dramatic, emotive images…". In addition, photojournalists and the public at large are concerned that these new technologies make it possible for the content of the image to be manipulated in such a way that the change would be undetectable, meaning that no evidence of the alteration is left (Horner, 2015). Added to this problem is the fact that digital images are easy to convert between media, as well as to transmit and reproduce. All this is perceived by many professionals and scholars as threatening the fundamental ethical requirement of journalism that is, telling the truth (Ford, 1998).

Despite the fact that, historically, manipulation of images was rife in the photojournalism industry, publishers endowed images with evidentiary status, in order to "assert the nonpartisan, objective view offered by the fourth estate" (Shcwartz, 2003, p. 28). Sanders (2006) argues that people believe something is true when they see it with their own eyes, and, traditionally, pictures have always provided that kind of authority. Trust in the truth of photography was predicated upon the belief that there is a direct and traceable causal link between the image and the source (Warburton, 1998).

The introduction of digital technologies, which made it relatively easy to manipulate images by anyone who had the right technology, has, however, threatened the authority that images have carried since photography began. According to Farid (2009):

> Prior to the digital revolution, the enhancement and manipulation of images required talented artists and technicians to spend long hours in the dark room. With the advent of digital imaging, such alterations are now only a few computer mouse clicks away.

Of major concern is the fact that image manipulation is no longer in the purview of professionals and experts, but is now open to all and sundry. This is a threat to the fundamental ethical duty of journalists to tell the truth. According to photojournalist Nancy Ford:

> The photojournalist must capture the truth […]. This means the photographer must only photograph what has happened, when it happened and not recreate a situation because they didn't get there on time. They must not move things around on the scene of an event to make pictures look better. They must not alter their photographs on the computer or in the darkroom, like an ugly telephone pole out of a picture. The photojournalist must tell the truth, just like the reporter (Ford, 1998).

Thus, unlike in the early years of photographer, where manipulation of images was not considered an ethical issue, photojournalists in the era of digital technologies are, converging more and more around the deontological principle of telling the truth, no matter what the consequences are. This assumption that photographs can capture the truth has been dismissed as a fallacy by constructivists who argue that every picture is a creation of the photographer. Strauss (2011), for example argues that "every photograph or digital image is manipulated, aesthetically and politically, when it is made and when it is distributed". This, therefore, raises questions about what is meant by telling the truth when, in reality, the photograph's authenticity is open to challenge from the time the picture is captured on camera.

The demand for truth, to which deontologists subscribe to as the only acceptable yardstick for determining the ethicality of an image, has also been criticised by consequentialists, such as John Stuart Mill, for assuming that making ethical decisions is a black and white straightforward process with no grey areas in between. Kant's absolutism in making ethical decisions, for example, raises some pertinent questions such as: Is telling the truth always the right thing to do? Are there instances when lying can be permissible? Is it possible to tell a lie in order to avoid harming someone or to achieve good in society? Consequentialists argue that when making a decision, we should take into account the consequences or outcomes of that decision (Peck, 2013). They will, thus, support a lie if it will lead to good outcomes. For example, if a reporter misrepresents himself/herself in order to get information which will lead to the capture of a child trafficker or corrupt person, consequentialists will view that as an ethical act because it has achieved some good.

The theory of utility which consequentialists adhere to adds that an act should lead to the best consequence, namely happiness and pleasure (Horner, 2015; Peck, 2013). In so far as doctoring of photos is concerned, consequentialists will argue that if this results in good outcomes in society, then it is a positive ethical decision. This means a photo journalist will be within his/her rights to manipulate a photograph if the aim is to achieve good outcomes. A major criticism of decision-making that is based on consequences is that we cannot always know what the consequences are. Unintended consequences might arise from our actions.

Thus, it is clear from this discussion that making morally acceptable decisions is a complex issue. Josephson (cited in Foreman, 2016, p. 16) states that there are two aspects to making ethical decisions: the first which "involves the ability to discern right from wrong, good from evil, propriety and impropriety"; and the second which "involves the commitment to do what is right, good or proper". While this definition might capture what the essence of ethics is, it is critical to guard against reducing right and wrong to the acts of telling the truth or of lying respectively. Josephson is aware of the complexities embraced by this definition when he states that "ethics is about how we meet the challenge of doing the right thing when that will cost more than what we want to pay". Keith Woods the former dean of the Faculty of the Poynter Institute also concurs when he argues that "ethics is the pursuit of right when wrong is a strong possibility" (see Foreman, 2016, p. 16). Implied in this statement is that doing right might actually mean doing what might be considered wrong by many, for example, not telling the truth. This definition resonates with the consequentialist argument.

Given these diametrically opposed views of how to make ethical decisions, it is clear that decisions pertaining to the manipulation of photographs are imbued with a plethora of complexities. This study examined the ethical codes used by media organisations in southern African countries to determine how they deal with photo manipulation, as well as User Generated Content (UGC) in this era of digital technologies. The study which was underpinned by deontological and utilitarian moral theories, interrogated the codes' provisions of how to deal with photo manipulation and UGC, and whether they adequately address the challenges brought by these new technologies.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To gather data, Codes of Conduct of journalists and media personnel in 10 southern African countries were examined. Southern Africa, in this study, was used to refer to countries in the grouping called the Southern African Development Community (SDAC). SADC is a regional block made up of 15 countries, namely Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic (DRC), Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The choice of SADC for this study was influenced by the fact that the researcher is a resident of this region and also that this block of countries has signed several protocols which obligate member states to work together towards achieving common goals. For example, SADC agreed in 2009 that the regional block should work towards completing digital migration by 2013 (Berger, 2010). A Google search for the Codes of Conduct in southern Africa yielded Codes from Angola, Botswana, DRC, Malawi, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. To begin with, a search for ethical codes which are specific to photojournalists, the kind that are in the mould of the NPPA Code of Conduct in the US, was done. Only Tanzania had a Code of Conduct which was specifically meant for photo journalists. The rest had general codes for all journalists in their countries, and, in the absence of specific ones, these codes were selected for the study.

Codes that were selected for study encompassed only those Codes of Conduct which regulated the behaviour of all journalists within the countries selected for the study. However, some countries, such as South Africa and Tanzania had more than one Code of Conduct regulating all journalists in their countries. For example, South Africa had the Code of Conduct of the Press Ombudsman and Appeal Panel, Code of Conduct for the South African Union of Journalists and the Code of Ethics and Conduct for South African Print and Online Media monitored by the Press Council of South Africa. Tanzania also had about eight different codes targeting journalist practice in both print and broadcasting media in that country. To ensure a balanced comparison of the codes, I selected only those Codes of Conduct which are applied and enforced by the Press Councils (or the equivalent) of the selected countries. This means that ten Codes of Conduct, one from each country, were selected for the study. Codes of Conduct for broadcasting and for specific media organisations were not included in the study as focus of the study was on the print media. Table 1 gives a summary of the Codes of Conduct per country, which were analysed in the study.

Table 1: Summary of Codes of Conduct analysed in this study

Country	Nationwide Codes of Conduct
Angola	Code of Ethics
Botswana	Codes of Ethics of the Press Council of Botswana
DRC	Code of Conduct of the Congolese National Press Union
Malawi	Malawi- Media Council of Malawi Code of Ethics and Professional conduct
Namibia	Codes of Ethics for the Namibian Media
South Africa	Press Council Code of Ethics and Conduct for South African Print and Online Media
Swaziland	Codes of Ethics of Swaziland National Association of Journalists (SNAJ)
Tanzania	Code of Ethical Practice for Media Photographers and Video
Zambia	Code of Ethics of the Media Council of Zambia
Zimbabwe	Code of Conduct for Zimbabwean Media Practitioners

Sourced from: Wits Journalism website: http:/www.journalism.co.za/blog; http://accountablejournalism.org/; Codes of Conduct Archive: http://www.mediawise.org.uk/codes-of-conduct/codes/

Content analysis was used to analyse the selected Codes of Conduct. The next section presents and discusses the findings of the study.

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The main aim of the study was to analyse how Codes of Conduct from ten southern African countries have responded to the ethical dilemmas brought to the journalistic landscape by new media technologies. The findings reveal that all the Codes of

Conduct researched in this study, uphold the deontological principle of truth-telling and accuracy when publicising pictures and other texts. This is not surprising as truth seeking and verification of content are fundamental pillars of the journalistic enterprise (Foreman, 2016). Davies, for example, argues that telling the truth is fundamental to the practice of news reporting. In his words, “For journalists, the defining value is honesty – the attempt to tell the truth. That is our primary purpose. All that we do […] must flow from the single source of truth-telling” (Davies, 2009, p. 12). This view is not only reflected by the Codes of Conduct of southern African countries, but it is also echoed in the codes of conduct of most major media organisations such as the NPPA, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post,* Reuters, the Associated Press, to mention but a few. All these institutions adhere to the maxim of truth-telling.

Deontologists, such as Immanuel Kant, are of the view that human beings are bound by a moral duty to tell the truth whatever the outcomes; lying is considered intrinsically wrong (see Horner, 2015:124; Peck, 2013). They subscribe to the realist school of thought which argues that photographs are mere copies of reality and that they convey the sense of “being thereness” to the reader (Barthes, 1984). Realism resonates with the positivist beliefs which argue that the world is observable and that it is a given reality that exists independently from the human being and the human being’s mind (Fourie, 2007). Applied to photo journalism, this argument assumes that there is a reality out there which can be captured on camera and represented in picture form to the world as a reality of the phenomenon which was observed. This means there is *absolutely* no room to manipulate photographs. Any form of manipulation will be considered by deontologists as a violation of one’s moral duty to society, and so would an attempt by a journalist not to publish the photograph. No matter how gruesome a photo is, deontologists would argue that it is the journalist’s moral duty to tell the truth regardless of the consequences (see Reed and Bracaglia, 2013, p. 189).

Constructivists, however, dismiss the argument that a photo can capture reality. They argue that the photograph is a construct of the photographer from the time the picture is taken to the time it is processed (see Horner, 2015; Strauss, 2011). Campbell (2014), for example, argues that at almost every stage in the photographic process, “from capture and production to the publication and circulation” of images, there is potential for images to be manipulated (2014, p. 5). He (2014) complicates the debate on the manipulation of photos when he argues that digital technology, by its very nature, makes the capturing of the truth impossible. According to Connor (2012), traditionally, the camera was a picture-making device, which through the use of chemicals in the darkroom produced an original image which could be used as a yardstick to evaluate copies made from it. However, digital cameras merely collect data which are not fully formed, and only through computational techniques is the full image processed (Campbell, 2014; Connor, 2012). According to Farid (2009), "only one-third of the samples in a colour image are captured by the camera. The other two thirds are computed by the camera software – a process known as colour filter array…". Thus, Farid concludes that "two thirds of your pixels are fake".

What this means is that, whereas in the era of analogue, manipulation was done sorely by the photographer in the darkroom, in the modern age, the digital technology, itself, automatically manipulates images in the process of computing them. According to Campbell (2014, p. 5), the assumption that there is an in-camera image which can function as the authentic, is no longer sustainable in the digital era. He adds that there is no original colour image in computational digital photography. The characteristic of digital technologies to compute images, thus, render mythical the whole argument by realists that a truthful rendition of an event can be captured by a camera. This new view of what manipulation is calls for a revision of the meaning of manipulation in the era of digital technologies. When Codes of Conduct, such as the South African one stipulate that there should be no manipulation of photos, it is imperative that the meaning of the term manipulation is understood, not from an analogue perspective, but from a digital technology one.

Besides, the utilitarian argument that one should take into account the consequences or outcomes of telling the truth (Peck, 2013), should not be dismissed out of hand. It could be argued by some that manipulating a photograph, if it results in good outcomes in society, is a positive ethical decision (Horner, 2015; Peck, 2013). This means a photo journalist will be within his/her rights to manipulate a photograph if the aim is to achieve good outcomes.

One is reminded, here, of the South African newspaper, *Die Beeld* which digitally covered the body of a learner, Richard King, who was knocked down by a taxi, as a sign of respect to the deceased and also so as not to offend the public (see Cass, 1998, p. 91). To publish the original photo, which showed the uncovered body of the learner would have been honest, but the picture might have caused the young boy's family untold pain and offended the reading public's sensibilities. A similar incident happened when the South African newspaper, *The Citizen* doctored a picture which showed a burnt out minibus destroyed by a suicide bomb attack in Kabul, Afghanistan on 18 September 2012 (see *Mail & Guardian,* 2012, September 27). The Press Club took exception to the newspaper's removal of images of two bodies from the frame; the original photograph from *Agence France Press* showed two bodies in the mangled wreck of the minibus.

However, where the two incidents differed is that *Die Beeld* made it clear through its caption that they had doctored the photograph in respect of the relatives of the learner, while *The Citizen* was quiet about its action. This opens up possibilities of how newspapers can present manipulated images, in the event that doing do is in the interests of the reader. Horner (2015:149) argues for example that "a reconstruction (or manipulation" may be legitimate if it is clearly referred to as such". In his view, if the viewer is not deceived into believing that the image they are seeing is authentic, then producer has not told a lie. For example, in 1996, a five-member committee appointed by the New York University's programme on 'Copyright and the New Technologies' recommended a system of labelling for manipulated images (Horner, 2015:149). Wheeler also recommended ethical labelling for different types of images, a strategy adopted by some newspapers to indicate that an image has been manipulated (2002, p. 167; see also Horner, 2015:149).

Thus, it would appear that manipulation of photographs, if this is disclosed to the viewer, may be justified in instances in which the media is trying not to offend viewers or cause them any unnecessary pain (see Horner, 2015). Codes of Conduct for the *Washington Post* and *The New York Times* make it clear that, while they do not approve of photo manipulation, should this be necessary, it must be made clear to the reader through use of captions and credits. Passing a doctored photograph as the real thing is to falsify the picture or to tell a lie.

An analysis of the Codes of Conduct also reveals that, except for two countries, namely South Africa and Tanzania, which make direct reference to photo manipulation, the majority of the countries either imply that photo manipulation is a problem or they completely ignore it and focus on issues pertaining to when, how and under what circumstances photographs should be taken. South Africa, in its Code of Conduct in Section 10.3 states that “Pictures and/or videos or audio content shall not misrepresent or mislead nor be manipulated to do so”, while Tanzania’s Code stipulates that “lenses, filters, polarisers and tricks like angling, superimposition, editing, touch-up, computer (electronic) and mechanical effects should not be used to alter the reality of an image”.

Implied existence of photo manipulation is evident in Codes from Swaziland and Zambia in statements such as “photographs and telecasts should be given an accurate picture of an event not highlight an incident out of context” and “Journalists, photographers and camera-persons shall be sensitive to the dangers of implying or placing a person in a situation that may imply HIV status” (Articles 18 section 2; Article 19.4 section 7, Swaziland Code), while the Zambian Code in section 2 also states, like Swaziland, that photographs should give an accurate picture of the event and not highlight the incident or event out of context. Malawi’s code of conduct also implies photo manipulation when it stipulates that photographers must strive for accuracy and that pictures must relate to the story (Section 3.2) and also that photographs must give an accurate picture of an event and not highlight a minor incident out of context. One could argue too, that Angola’s Code of Conduct also, though it does not make specific reference to photo manipulation implies it in Section 9 which states that journalists must not falsify or alter situations, that is assuming that the term “journalists” in the Code refers to all categories of journalists.

The DRC Code of Conduct, though it makes reference to abstaining from altering documents or distorting and warping people’s opinions, headlines or comments, does not make reference to manipulation of photographs (Articles 5 and 9). Article 4 of the Code appears to affirm the Code’s emphasis on spoken and written texts only when it stipulates that journalists should “accept full responsibility for any text (written and spoken” that is published with his/her byline…”.

Codes of Conduct from other countries such as Botswana, Namibia, and Zimbabwe only make reference to photography to describe when, how and under what conditions photographs should be taken. The processing of photographs after they have been captured does not seem to be an issue to the Code makers. Botswana only makes reference to pictures with regards to when and how pictures involving children should be taken, as well as that pictures for publication should not dehumanise people. Zimbabwe also mentions photographs with reference to when, how and under circumstances children should be photographed, while the Namibian Code states that photos for publication should not depict brutality, sadism violence etc. and that photographers should not use devious means to obtain photographs except in the public interest.

This failure to give prominence to manipulation of photographs by the majority of the Codes raises questions about how those crafting the Codes of Conduct can give so little or no space to a real 21st century ethical dilemma in such an important document. One possible reason for this oversight in the Codes is that, given that photo manipulation has existed since the beginning of photography, it is possible that those drafting the Codes did not see it as a serious ethical issue which warranted attention in the Codes of Conduct. For example, a study carried out by Rhodes University students in 2003, under the tutelage of Guy Berger and Carol Christie, revealed that some photographers and editors in South Africa did not see anything wrong with manipulating photos (Le Kay *et al.,* 2003). Another reason could be that most of these Codes were drafted in the first decade of the 21st century when new media technologies had not yet made their presence felt in most southern African countries. Jensen (2003), for example, argues that Africa had the lowest use of Internet and information technologies in the first 10 years of the 21st century. This is affirmed by the NEPAD Council Department (cited in Esipisu & Kariithi, 2007), which argues that, in the first decade of the 21st century, the penetration of new media technologies in Africa was only 2%. The near absence of ethical guidelines on photo manipulation in most of the selected Codes could, thus be attributed to lack of penetration of the new media technologies at the time when most of these Codes of Conduct were drafted

However, this latter reason loses currency in the 2nd half of the 21st century as new media technologies made significant inroads into media spaces in southern Africa. Balancing Act, in their August 2014 report, show that, because of the new media technologies, Facebook users in sub-Saharan Africa grew from almost no users in 2009 to becoming the most popular and most used social media platform in 2014. South Africa, for example, had an exponential rise of Facebook users from 3.1 million in August 2010 to 10.2 million in 2014 (Balancing Act Report, 2014). The report also shows that, during the same period, Tanzanian users of Facebook rose from 114,580 to 1,34 million; Botswana, 86,000 to 460,000; Angola, 63, 860 to 1,8 million; Zambia, 56, 640 to 700,000; and Namibia, 15,100 to 380,000. This rise in numbers of Facebook users is attributed to a huge increase in the number of Africans in sub-Saharan Africa who own and have access to a new media technology that help them access news and information (Balancing Act Report, 2014. In Zimbabwe, according to Mabweazara (2011), Internet and mobile phones are now so widely used that they have become indispensable every day tools accessed by the wider population. Because of this access to new media technologies, individuals are now able to capture news much faster than professional journalists, making them a valuable source of news for the 21st century newsroom which is under pressure to satisfy the world's craving for more and quicker news (Kasoma, 1996).

So great has this penetration of new media technologies been that UGC has become the norm rather than the exception in many southern African newsrooms. According to Berger and Masala (2012), in South Africa, for example, News24 has an online site "My News24" which publicises text-based articles from citizen journalists, while the SABC also has an online site which is devoted to UGC. In Zimbabwe, both Zimpapers and Alpha Media Holdings hired online editors in 2011 not only to repurpose print content for the web, but also to filter UGC sent to their websites by readers through mobile phones and SMSs (Mabweazara, 2013). Some journalists also find the Internet a valuable source for background information for their stories, and to generate ideas and engage with their sources (Mabweazara, 2013; Berger & Masala, 2012). In 2012, over 400 SA journalists were recorded as using Twitter (Berger & Masala, 2012), while in Zimbabwe, Twitter has become a tool used by some politicians and members of the public to express their dissatisfaction with the socio-economic status of that country. This dependency on the web and other new technologies to gather news has resulted in ethical violations such as plagiarism (Chari, 2009; Mudhai & Nyabuga, 2001); copyright violations and invasion of personal privacy (Mabweazara, 2013); and factual errors and fabrications (Chari, 2009).

These dynamics which are taking place in newsrooms in most southern African countries, therefore, beg the question why Codes of Conduct, in their ethical guidelines, are not taking UGC into consideration. As revealed by the findings, only South Africa's Code of Conduct, which came into effect in January 2016, has responded to the ethical dilemma of UGC by adding a chapter in the Code devoted wholly to the handling of UGC. Zimbabwe's Code of Conduct, which was updated in 2015 is surprisingly silent about how to handle UGC and, yet, evidence abounds that this has become a real problem in Zimbabwe. As Moyo (2009, p. 58) points out, despite the protracted political and economic crisis in Zimbabwe, newsrooms in that country are "part of the global information society dream". The Codes of the rest of the countries examined in this study are silent on the issue of new media technologies and UGC. This is not surprising because, as stated above, the penetration of new digital technologies in sub-Saharan Africa in the first decade of the 21st century when these Codes were drafted, was very low, meaning that these technologies were not an issue then. However, as the Balancing Act report observes, usage of new media technologies has risen dramatically in sub-Saharan Africa since 2010, necessitating a revision of the Codes of Conduct of most countries in southern Africa.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study revealed that photo manipulation is not mentioned in the majority of Codes that were selected for this study. Most of the Codes are outdated as they were drafted in the first decade of the 21st century when new media technologies were just beginning to make their way into the journalistic arena of southern Africa. However, with the huge numbers of people now owning and using these technologies to capture and disseminate news, Codes of Conduct should keep pace with these developments. UGC is now a reality in many newsrooms meaning that Codes of Conduct should come up with clear cut guidelines on how to handle it. South Africa is the only country in southern Africa which has responded to UGC by putting up a whole chapter in its press code to determine how it should be handled.

Besides, it is also important for Codes of Conduct to be much more realistic in their stipulations about photo manipulation. Merely stating that photo manipulation is unacceptable is not enough as it refuses to acknowledge that certain types of manipulation can be necessary in certain contexts. Codes of Conduct should give guidance on the type of manipulations that are acceptable. For example, picture manipulation for soft news items appears to be more acceptable than that which involves hard news. More comprehensive guidelines of how to deal with photo manipulation should be stated in the Code of Conduct.

It is also vital to spell out exactly what is meant by photo manipulation. This is because photo manipulation in the digital era is much more complex to define during the digital era. In the analogue era, photo manipulation took place in the dark room after the image had been processed, but in the digital era, it takes place from the time of capture right through to the processing of the images. This means that, in the digital era, defining photo manipulation as it was during the analogue era is inappropriate and misleading.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Camera: This is a device which is used to capture images.

Citizen journalists: Non-professional members of society who do journalistic work such as capturing images of events and then disseminating them either directly to consumers or to newsrooms.

Consequentialist: someone who believes that decision-making should always lead to best outcomes such as happiness and pleasure. Outcomes which lead to pain are not acceptable to consequentialists.

Deontology: This is the belief that the truth must always be told even if the outcomes of doing so bring pain to people.

Image: This is a depiction of something, for example a picture.

Manipulation: The act of changing the original form of something.

Photographs: An image or picture captured by a device.

Realist: Someone who believes that there is a tangible and observable reality out there in the world.

User generated content: These are texts and images produced and sent to newsrooms by non-professionals or citizen journalists.

Utilitarian: The belief that an action is good if it helps the greatest number of people

Practical Transparency:
How Journalists Should Handle Digital
Shaming and the "Streisand Effect"

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Jeff Jarvis, a City University of New York journalism professor regarded as a media thought leader, has been a prolific critic of a wide variety of institutions and people online, and a vocal opponent of censorship. So when Jarvis sought to censor a long-time critic for writing a parody column in Esquire using the name @ProfJeffJarvis, he must have expected the backlash typical of the Internet.

"I have put up with this for four years now, knowing that if and when I complain – cue Streisand – I'll only bring more s*** upon my head," Jarvis (2016) wrote on his blog. Jarvis was referring to the phenomenon that bears entertainer Barbra Streisand's name, the "Streisand Effect." The effect emerged more than a decade earlier, when aerial photos of Streisand's home that were posted online went viral after she unsuccessfully sued to have them removed. The Streisand Effect is "the notion that the more you try to get something off the Internet, the more you fuel everyone's interest in it, thus defeating the purpose of your original intervention" (Morozov, 2011, p. 120).

The phenomenon has become common when someone attempts to remove items from the Internet, whether through legal threats like Streisand's, through persuasive efforts such as Jarvis' emails to "Hearst executives I happen to know" (2016) to demand a takedown of the parody, or through ill-advised payments by the University of California Davis chancellor to a consultant to have infamous photos of a campus police officer pepper-spraying protesting students scrubbed from online searches (Stanton & Lambert, 2016). The online backlash, often fueled by outraged journalists, can be swift and unrelenting.

In Jarvis' case, the website Gawker re-posted the offending Esquire column and derided Jarvis as a person who "built a career by defending the freedom of speech when it costs him nothing to do so, but immediately denigrates the very same freedom when someone else exercises it to his disliking" (Trotter, 2016). The dustup between Jarvis and his parodist – Rurik Bradbury, a tech company executive – earned the attention of *The Washington Post* (Dewey, 2016), *New York Magazine* (Feldman, 2016), and Politico (Sterne, 2016), among others, turning Jarvis into a

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target of free speech and press advocates. As one commentator noted, "this whole thing has been a rather classic iteration of The Streisand Effect: more people have seen the piece in question than otherwise might have because someone behaved like a censorious prat" (Bunch, 2016).

When journalists join the backlash against censorship, they are defending the core professional freedoms of speech and press from intimidation and threats by powerful interests, such as government, big business and prominent people. Consider the well-deserved backlash against Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who has prosecuted dozens of critics and banned Twitter and YouTube in Turkey, only to see those critics emboldened and supported when their words and videos arise in other countries (Parkinson, Schechner & Peker, 2014; Smale, 2016). At the same time they join the backlash, journalists may contribute to excessive shaming and punishment of censorship efforts by less public people, or help enable and inflame trolls who harass people in the name of free speech in situations such as non-consensual pornography (Citron & Franks, 2014).

The purpose of this paper is to examine the legal concerns and ethical obligations of journalists when dealing with the Streisand Effect and people who seek to minimize online embarrassment and exposure. The paper examines the phenomenon's history and characteristics, reviews the few legal remedies available in Streisand Effect situations, and proposes the ethical concept of practical transparency as a balance test for journalists covering these cases.

BACKGROUND

The Streisand Effect has been identified for more than a decade, but has not been much studied by either communication or legal scholars. A common understanding of the phenomenon exists in practice, but as a concept, some of the ideas that comprise the Streisand Effect require analysis.

History of the Streisand Effect

In 2003, entertainer Barbra Streisand was upset by aerial photos of her Malibu home that had been posted online as part of a project documenting the California coastline. Streisand sued, seeking $50 million in damages (Morozov, 2011). News of her lawsuit drew enormous public attention to the photographs; they had only been viewed online six times before the lawsuit, but after Streisand sued, the photos were viewed 420,000 times (Marton, Wilk & Rogal, 2010). Bloggers who perceived a censorship threat responded by reposting the photos on their blogs. Streisand's effort to protect her privacy backfired, as the lawsuit was dismissed, but she drew continued scorn on the Internet.

Streisand's wasn't the first instance of online censorship attempts to backfire, but it soon became the hallmark of the phenomenon. Mike Masnick, writing for the tech blog Techdirt about a resort's attempt to twist trademark law to have its name removed from a site that posted photos of urinals in various locations, only to find that the photos were seen by more people, commented, "let's call it the Streisand Effect" (Masnick, 2005).

The effect has emerged in several different contexts, most often involving celebrities. In 2015, the tech news site Gizmodo noted these instances: the Church of Scientology trying to remove videos of actor Tom Cruise; conservative pundit Glenn Beck suing to try to take down a site that attempted to parody his hyperbolic style by asking the question, "Did Glenn Beck Rape and Murder a Young Girl in 1990"; singer Beyonce's attempting to remove unflattering photographs of her Super Bowl performance; and the musician Chubby Checker suing a web app developer for using his name on an app that purported to measure penis size (Feinberg, 2015). To further shame censors, the Electronic Frontiers Foundation launched the Takedown Hall of Shame, cataloguing "bogus trademark and copyright takedown threats" by individuals and organizations and inviting the public to submit "honorees" (Esguerra, 2010; Higgins, 2013).

Corporations, activist groups and governments have been vexed by the Streisand Effect as well; Morozov credited the rise of the website Wikileaks, which "was built to ensure that all controversial documents that someone wants to get off the Web have a dedicated and well-protected place to stay online," to efforts by powerful people to stifle criticism online (2011, p. 121).

Acts of Censorship

Jansen and Martin (2015) conceptualized the Streisand Effect as an example of "censorship backfire," when efforts to remove potentially damaging or embarrassing information from public circulation, particularly from the Internet, are exposed and produce ridicule or shaming of the censor. The effect is triggered by an act of censorship, although that censorship act can take many forms, typically but not necessarily involving legal action.

For example, Streisand's act was filing an invasion of privacy lawsuit. The Church of Scientology used copyright takedown notices to try to remove unflattering videos of Tom Cruise. Glenn Beck filed a claim to the World Intellectual Property Organization, under its domain name policy, seeking to remove the website GlennBeckRapedAndMurderedAYoungGirlIn1990.com. The Marco Beach Ocean Resort attempted to remove its name using trademark law. Chubby Checker filed a defamation lawsuit against the app company using his name.

In some cases, people seek injunctions or gag orders under friendly laws to prevent items from being posted or spread online. This is the case in the situation involving what has become known as the "celebrity threesome" in the United Kingdom, as a celebrity convinced a court to order no discussion of the three celebrities' names by U.K. publications, leading publishers to decry the nation's laws, which restrict publication of the names under threat of contempt while the names can be published legally in the United States without sanction (Rozenberg, 2016). Indeed, Jansen and Martin (2015) noted, it is only when the efforts to censor have been sanctioned and successful through gag orders such as these that the Streisand Effect has been avoided. These, however, are at most temporary victories, because once information is published in one place, it is difficult to keep it from spreading even to places where it is illegal to publish.

But not all censorship efforts are legal in nature. Beyonce's effort constituted her publicist's request that Buzzfeed remove her photos, without an explicit legal threat. Scrubbing materials from the Web to enhance online search results has also triggered the Streisand Effect, as when the University of California Davis paid $175,000 to consultants to remove images of campus police pepper spraying protesters, only to have that effort backfire when the payments became public, and the university's chancellor was suspended (McLaughlin, 2016). Jarvis' effort that drew scorn involved using his "well-placed connections in the media industry" to persuade Hearst executives to order Esquire to remove the parody about him (Trotter, 2016).

The Role of Power

After examining several cases, Jansen and Martin found an "ironic, triumphal, David-versus-Goliath quality" about Streisand Effect situations, where a "powerful force mobilizes great resources to silence a weaker individual or group but misjudges the adversary," resulting in further embarrassment (2015, p. 660). One commentator called this the "big bad wolf" approach (Louw, 2012, p. 133).

The Streisand Effect often occurs when celebrities try to protect their reputations, and one important reason the phenomenon persists is that it appears to involve a powerful person bullying the less powerful. Streisand was seen by the tech community as a world-famous entertainer "declaring a war on both the Internet and common sense" (Morozov, 2011, p. 120).

Government officials and agencies also have become victims of the Streisand Effect when they used the power of their offices to try to silence critics. Perhaps most famously, Jim Ardis, the mayor of Peoria, Illinois, sent seven police officers to raid the home of a man who posted from the @Peoriamayor parody account on Twitter, resulting in the man's arrest on drug possession charges (Buedel, 2014). The backlash was almost instant, earning the attention of national media, including Radley Balko of the Washington Post, who commented:

> Ardis is well on his way to a permanent place in the annals of First Amendment infamy. Instead of getting mocked by an obscure Twitter account with fewer than 100 followers over things he (presumably) *hasn't* said or done, Ardis is now getting ridiculed all over America for the things he *has*. Instead of one Jim Ardis parody Twitter account, there are now dozens,

> most with several times as many followers as the original. There are stoner Jim Ardises, Jim Ardises with Hitler mustaches and Jim Ardis "guest posts" at popular blogs (Balko, 2014).

Corporate entities have been victims of the phenomenon as well. For instance, Honda tried to force the website Jalopnik to remove unfriendly comments from someone who appeared to be a former employee, and to help identify the person. The move backfired when Jalopnik publicized Honda's request, noting that "it's pretty egregious for a corporation to try to bully a news organization into deep-sixing comments from its own readers" (George, 2016). Small businesses and professionals, overreacting to negative reviews on sites such as Yelp and Glassdoor, invite internet shaming when their efforts to censor go viral as well (Lee, 2013; White, 2014; Rubino, 2016).

Sometimes, however, people involved in Streisand Effect situations are not powerful. A New York watchmaker, for example, triggered online shaming for responding with a legal threat to a bad review on Yelp (Geigner, 2014). Similarly, a pet boarding business in Plano, Texas, earned international attention after filing a lawsuit claiming $6,766 in damages against a customer for a bad Yelp review (Miranda, 2016).

Because even parties lacking power have become victims of the Streisand Effect, it may be that any person, government, or business using heavy-handed threats to silence speech – even against a more powerful adversary, such as large news media outlets – will earn the antipathy of the Internet community, which is "steeped in West Coast cyber-libertarianism" (Economist, 2013) and appears to enjoy a good "Internet pile-on" (Feigner, 2015).

Backlash and the Media

The "pile-on" is a critical aspect of the Streisand Effect. The backlash is triggered by censorship attempts and perceived bullying. Zhao (2013), writing about how the Internet has altered management of personal reputation, referred to the effect as, "The more one tries to correct negative information online, the more people will know about it" (p. 43).

Media exposure also is a critical element of the Streisand Effect, and media values and orientations "generally predispose journalists, bloggers, and technology activists to oppose censorship, making them important potential allies in anticensorship struggles" (Jansen and Martin, 2015, p. 663). Indeed, journalists seem to relish the power to wield the Streisand Effect. After being sued by Honda, Jalopnik responded:

> To Honda, or any other automaker: If you would like us to delete the comments of our readers or expose their identities (which again, we can't do anyway) again, please, let me know! I am more than happy to drag your

> intimidation tactics into the public eye for all your customers and prospective buyers to see. Govern yourselves accordingly (George, 2016).

As a result of backlash, and the often willing participation by journalists, would-be censors may opt for other routes to control information. Morozov urged discussion rather than legal threats, suggesting that it is more effective to "(c)ounter the blog post with effective propaganda rather than a blanket ban" (2011, p. 122).

LEGAL REMEDIES

Gag orders and Injunctions

People who trigger the Streisand Effect, unwittingly or otherwise, likely will find little relief from the backlash in United States courts. Decades of jurisprudence have firmly established that censorship is largely incompatible with First Amendment free speech and press protections. As the Supreme Court noted in its foundational *Near v. Minnesota* (1931) ruling, "prior restraints on speech and publication are the most serious and least tolerable infringement on First Amendment rights" (p. 559). The same legal framework that deflected Streisand's efforts to remove photos of her home from the Internet also prevented her from minimizing the backlash through gag orders or injunctions. In the United States, preventing publication of news stories is permitted only under "exceptional circumstances," such as "a grave threat to a critical public interest or to a constitutional right"(*Procter & Gamble v. Bankers Trust*, 1996, p. 225). The hurt feelings of celebrities, government officials and businesses feeling the sting after making censorship threats hardly rise to that level.

As noted above, one trigger for the Streisand Effect is the threat of a lawsuit seeking to censor materials, and the backlash often is exacerbated once the case is filed. U.S. courts are reluctant to interfere with publicity litigants receive as a result of their actions. One U.S. court has cited the Streisand Effect in a decision involving one party's effort to seal or redact portions of the record in a case of accused breach of a non-disparagement clause, fearing even wider distribution of the disparaging statements. The federal District Court for the District of Columbia refused to hide portions of the case, saying "that is precisely the dilemma faced by all plaintiffs seeking to enforce non-disparagement provisions, and it is similar to the dilemma faced by plaintiffs in defamation cases, who often end up publicizing defamatory statements much more than if they had not filed a lawsuit" (2014, p. 95).

Similarly, what have become known as "super-injunctions" – that is, court orders that restrain publication of the existence of another injunction – have not been permitted by U.S. courts. Although they are "the seeming antithesis to open processes and procedures" in the justice system, super-injunctions have been issued by other courts around the world, including in the United Kingdom, which has restrained coverage of judicial proceedings about a company accused of killing people through dumping toxic waste, as well as coverage of several famed English football players and other celebrities involved in extramarital affairs (Hall, 2013, p. 320-6). U.K. courts also approved a super-injunction in the "celebrity threesome" case, even though identification of the celebrities was occurring in the United States, prompting the Daily Mail to publish a front page headline, "Why the law is an ass! Countless Americans can read about a married celebrity dad having a threesome with another couple. So why are our judges banning YOU from knowing his name?" (Doughty, 2016).

These super-injunctions have been justified by U.K. courts under Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights, which allows restrictions on free expression "for the protection of the reputation or rights of others," including "maintaining the authority and impartiality of the judiciary" (Hall, 2013). Super-injunctions have also been allowed in Australia, where Wikileaks uncovered a super-injunction that prevented both reporting on bribery allegations against public officials and reporting on the existence of a gag order about the case (Booth, 2014).

In these jurisdictions that are more permissive toward injunctions against coverage of ongoing litigation involving private and embarrassing matters, people suffering backlash under the Streisand Effect may have a resource to mitigate their harm. Of course, in the United States, that is not currently an option.

Privacy Approaches

Privacy law in the United States hampers government officials, celebrities and other famous people in seeking legal remedies. The classic privacy torts identified by Prosser (1960) that would be relevant in creating a remedy for widespread distribution of materials people hoped to keep private – intrusion upon seclusion and public disclosure of embarrassing private facts – are typically defeated when publishers offer the defense that the materials were newsworthy (Smolla, 2002; Barbas, 2013). That appears to be the case in most Streisand Effect situations, even when more private individuals or small businesses feel the sting of the backlash because their acts to censor items or punish critics seem to invite publicity. Consider the non-disparagement lawsuit filed by the Texas pet boarding business against customers who posted a negative Yelp review, which attracted attention from Buzzfeed (Miranda, 2016), CBS News (2016), *The New York Daily News* (Brennan, 2016), and *USA Today* (Dier, 2016). The increased negative attention led the business to ask for additional damages as the lawsuit progressed, increasing from $6,766 to up to $1 million on grounds of defamation and business disparagement (Severance, 2016). The lawsuit itself triggered the news media scrutiny, thus effectively waiving any privacy claims the business owners may have sought as an alternative.

However, the failure of privacy torts to permit a remedy has created challenges in areas where society, and even free speech advocates, may recognize the need to remove items to protect against privacy intrusions. For example, in situations of “revenge porn” or “nonconsensual pornography” (Citron & Franks, 2014) – in which intimate photos of a person are posted against that person’s wishes, typically in an effort to “damage reputations and ruin lives” – takedown efforts sometimes embolden internet trolls, inadvertently drawing more attention to the photos while encouraging “users to re-post victims’ images on to other websites” (Levendowski, 2014, p. 444). Thirty-one states have passed laws to criminally punish revenge porn and other forms of what is being called “sextortion,” although these laws may provide little remedy to victims suffering from continual posting of images they want to keep from spreading (Smith, 2016; Wittes, Poplin, Jurecic & Spera, 2016).

Another possible civil remedy for Streisand Effect victims would be the tort of intentional infliction of emotional distress. After the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in *Snyder v. Phelps*, the tort is largely unavailable when the speech is about “matters of public interest” (2011, p. 1215), so a key issue for potential plaintiffs seeking remedy for censorship backlash would be overcoming the notion that their disputes became either matters of concern to the community or otherwise had a legitimate news interest. Again, the role of news media in exacerbating the Streisand Effect presents a challenge to plaintiffs because news coverage may bootstrap items into matters of public concern under the pliable test outlined by Chief Justice Roberts in *Snyder v. Phelps*. “Under the test for public concern, the news media now face, not only an ethical dilemma in deciding whether to report on (hate speech) groups, but also a legal one to the extent their coverage shores up public concern claims” (Calvert, 2012, p. 70). Rather than reporting on hate speech groups, though, in this case, the dilemma would be covering efforts to censor.

Although these torts provide little remedy for people seeking remedies for censorship backlash in the United States, emerging notions of practical obscurity may offer some avenues for minimizing harm, especially when the cases arise in countries following the jurisprudence of the European Union.

Obscurity and The Right to Be Forgotten

In the United States, the First Amendment and newsworthiness defenses have largely rendered privacy torts useless against any but the most brazen intrusions upon solitude, creating challenges in preserving one’s reputation online (Solove, 2007). However, the emerging notion of preserving practical obscurity in one’s online existence – not an absolute right to remove items from the Web, but some remedies to make those things harder to find so as to preserve one’s reputation – offers some potential for people exposed to online backlash. In U.S. law, “practical obscurity” emerged in a Supreme Court ruling that found that a convicted felon maintained a personal privacy interest in his FBI rap sheet, a compilation of a person's state and federal arrests and convictions. The court ruled that the Department of Justice did not have to release the rap sheet (*Department of Justice v. Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press*, 1989), finding that "the privacy interest maintaining the practical obscurity of rap-sheet information will always be high" (p. 770) because of the personal information contained. The court was satisfied that public interest would be served because the information contained in rap sheets was already a matter of public record. The harm was that the increased accessibility of these records through the spread of the information beyond expected boundaries might allow the information to "readily be exploited for purposes other than those for which it was originally made publicly accessible" (Solove, 2008, p. 150).

Although obscurity is a normal expectation for Internet users, as one "should not expect fame or notoriety simply because she or he uses the Internet" (Hartzog and Stutzman, 2013, p. 9), the online world does not mimic the off-line world. Information online spreads rapidly, becomes searchable and remains easily findable. The need for some level of practical obscurity is evident in the "right to be forgotten" established by the European Court of Human Rights in its decision in *Google Spain SL v. Agencia Espanola de Proteccion de Datos* (2014). There, Mario Costeja González asked courts to order Google to remove links to a 36-word article in his local newspaper about foreclosure of his home because a dispute over debts had been resolved. The court recognized the potential for ongoing harm to González under Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights and ordered Google to take down the links. While the right to be forgotten may help private citizens scrub a shaming effort from the web, González became one of the most highly visible Streisand Effect victims, as the world found out exactly what he was trying to bury; on the day the "right to be forgotten" ruling was issued, some 840 articles in major news outlets referred to him. "Costeja González won his fight for a right to be forgotten, or at least to disappear. Unfortunately for him, the fight was pretty damn memorable" (Ball, 2014).

Journalists worldwide immediately bristled at the court's decision and responded with a full understanding of the Streisand Effect. Google published the links it was ordered to take down, and the BBC, the *New York Times* and *The Guardian* also reposted links to stories that European courts ordered be removed, thus bringing new publicity to information people were deliberately trying to de-publicize (LoCascio, 2015). Subsequently, courts in France fined Google 100,000 euros for refusing to remove links to items on all its platforms, not just those in France, and Google is appealing that ruling to the country's highest court (Schechner, 2016).

The challenge for people like González – private citizens, not celebrities or public officials – is that the Streisand Effect may harm them more because the censorship backlash is likelier to comprise a majority of their online presence through search engine results. Indeed, Hartzog and Stutzman noted that obscurity protections serve private people better than celebrities or public officials, for whom "online obscurity as a protective measure is hardly suitable" because it would be so likely to be shared and linked widely (2013, p. 45).

With only limited relief available through the aforementioned avenues, it may be that the law provides inadequate protection for modern norms of privacy and obscurity, particularly regarding people who typically would not have the same level of public scrutiny as government officials, celebrities and corporate entities. But the law is just one way to approach protecting people's privacy; cultural norms and expectations are also crucial in shaping behavior and policy (Nissenbaum, 2010). These cultural norms, as well as the industry-specific expectations for journalism enshrined in codes of ethics, may provide a more useful framework for understanding the role of journalists in Streisand Effect situations.

THE NEED FOR AN ETHICAL APPROACH

Emerging through legislation or litigation, law cannot keep pace with the invention and adoption of new digital platforms. In González's case, for instance, several years elapsed from the time he sought to erase links about his debt history until the "right to be forgotten" ruling was issued. Most legislation and litigation is restricted by national boundaries, while digital information blithely skips worldwide, gaining attention, as typified in the UK's "celebrity threesome" case. In dire cases, savvy digital users deliberately seek expression-friendly countries for the platforms that broadcast their views. German laws against denying the Holocaust, for instance, have not kept people from attempting to promulgate their Holocaust denials worldwide from internet safe havens (Kirschbaum, 2015).

Morally speaking, the sometimes significant harms of the Streisand Effect demand ethical analysis. The fundamental principle of human dignity suggests all people are moral agents possessing the right to help decide how they will be known by the world. Human dignity implies respect for personal autonomy, which can be compromised when the choice of how and when to acknowledge one's behavior or characteristics is ripped from one and made by third parties, including journalists. Dignity requires moral discretion, which Bok importantly defined as "the intuitive ability to discern what is and is not intrusive and injurious, and to use to this discernment in responding to the conflicts everyone experiences as insider and outsider" (1983, p. 41). The harm faced by private citizens caught up in Streisand Effect situations seems particularly egregious because private people are often relatively powerless to advocate for themselves as compared to journalists and news outlets that command audiences of thousands almost any time they declare a topic newsworthy. In light of this power differential, journalists, then, bear a moral responsibility to allow private citizens some discretion when they find themselves named, shamed and blamed in the sometimes vitriolic culture of the internet.

Poynter Institute for Media Studies ethicist Kelly McBride calls public shaming on the internet "openly humiliating someone as punishment for a certain behavior" that "is inherently a form of intimidation" (2015). When journalists engage in shaming "for the purpose of holding the powerful accountable," McBride rightly terms that "noble" or "good" shaming. Journalists who engage in shaming, however, take on the risk of making debate about public matters more toxic, in ways that may be aimed more to publicly humiliate the target of the shaming rather than encouraging accountability and improved outcomes. This moves beyond mere blaming to “blame taken to the extreme,” which as Wyatt noted is “far more difficult than blame to justify ethically” (2012, p. 159).

McBride (2015) points out that too often online shaming is based on few facts – perhaps a single tweet, as in the infamous thought about AIDS posted by Justine Sacco shortly before she boarded an 11-hour flight to Africa, only to find that because her tweet was rapidly shared worldwide, she had been ridiculed and fired from her job by the time she reached her destination. Raicu (2016) noted that Internet shaming can be seen as “inherently unethical because the shamer has no real control over the proportionality of the response.” Certainly, this was the case for Sacco, who had just 200 twitter followers but found that after one person picked up her message and found it offensive, it was quickly re-tweeted as many as 20,000 times to hundreds of thousands of people (Ronson, 2015). “In many cases of online shaming, the effects seem to be disproportionate to the offense that set them off” and “marks the person, both online and off, potentially forever” (Raicu). Furthermore, news coverage of situations that journalists think are newsworthy can have the effect of “exacerbating the shame and humiliation” a person feels for poor behavior at one moment in time (McBride, 2015).

As explained above, the emerging standard of practical obscurity has, in the law, allowed some protection for more private people online, though it is questionable how far the practical obscurity standard should extend. An ethical standard of *practical transparency* might provide a solution. Practical transparency would accommodate the need of watchdog journalists to provide scrutiny of people of public concern when they seek to disappear from criticism of their actions – be they elected government officials such as the Peoria mayor, corporate leaders such as those at Honda, or even celebrities such as Streisand seeking extreme privacy from activists concerned with environmental matters – while also accommodating the moral need for privacy and dignity of people who do not seek the public spotlight and who do not get to determine what is newsworthy.

The concept of practical transparency can be positioned on a spectrum of access to information that extends from the philosophical extreme of radical and absolute transparency to the extreme of radical and absolute privacy. Practical transparency can be seen as an ethical decision-making principle that balances the public value of embarrassing or damaging information for citizens whom journalists believe need to know it against the private harm that disclosing that information poses to the person who is being shamed or blamed online for trying to remove it.

In effect, McBride uses the concept of practical transparency when she suggests journalists seeking to discern whether news coverage creates or furthers good or bad shaming must ask themselves such questions as whether the target is an individual or organization, whether the target is a powerful individual, what are the motives of others seeking to shame the individual or organization, and whether the incident that triggers the shaming is a one-time occurrence or suggests a pattern of behavior. Balancing the answers to these questions would suggest that more public, powerful people and organizations are subject to more radical transparency when they attempt to scrub the internet in their favor, but that would move down the transparency-privacy spectrum toward practical obscurity in a way that would limit news coverage or perhaps shorten the length of exposure of their poor behavior online.

Thus, practical transparency would suggest that Jeff Jarvis, with his 158,000 twitter followers, has to bear the magazine parody and the ongoing fake Twitter account as long as he continues to seek a high-profile role as a media thought leader. He cannot continually champion free expression and rail against censorship without tolerating free expression directed toward him. But the Texas pet-boarding business that sued to punish a Yelp reviewer for the damage to its reputation may have the moral right to some obscurity, or at least to an online presence that is of the same magnitude as the poor behavior in a Streisand Effect situation deserves. However ill-conceived its lawsuit, perhaps the business should be allowed to fade from the news.

As much as journalists and other free-expression advocates may resist the idea that people deserve the right to be forgotten online, Raicu suggests an ethical obligation to ask whether the benefits of online shaming outweigh the "corrosive" harm shaming poses to our common good: "The need for some kind of Internet forgetting is clear" (2016). Perhaps an application of practical transparency would help.

CONCLUSION

The Streisand Effect presents a dilemma for journalists when covering situations involving censorship because the news media immediately become an important factor in the backlash, with the ability to hasten the spread of shaming. On the one hand, journalists play an extremely important role in covering censorship; as Jansen and Martin found, the only effective means to thwart the Streisand Effect by powerful interests is "(c)overing up the action, namely censoring the censorship" (2015, p. 666). Standing up to powerful censors is an important calling journalists serve in their roles as "independent monitors of power" (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007, p. 140).

On the other hand, as Kovach and Rosenstiel (2007) noted, it is also journalists' duty to provide comprehensive and proportional coverage. Journalists are ethically obliged to wield the power of shaming and blaming carefully, knowing that publicity can foment significant harm on the lives of relatively powerless private people. Journalists must be aware of the power of the internet to engage in endless "feedback loops" leading to a spiral of shaming that can destroy reputations and that is disproportionate to the bad acts journalists call attention to as part of their jobs. Thus, journalists must be aware when they are, as Ronson put it, "defining the boundaries of normality by tearing apart the people outside it" (2015, p. 282).

The Streisand Effect puts journalists in the difficult position of determining what kinds of censorship are bad and deserve attention and shaming, and what kinds of censorship are more morally acceptable. This may be clearer in the practical transparency framework devised in this paper, ranging on a spectrum from people who are more private and less powerful to those who are more public and have more power. But how should journalists treat the famous wrestler Hulk Hogan, a very public and wealthy person who claimed grievous privacy harm? Hogan, whose real name is Terry Bollea, successfully sought relief from courts to take down a video depicting him having sex with a friend's spouse. He obtained an injunction against the video (Cook, 2013) and ultimately won a $140 million jury verdict against Gawker Media (Rutenberg, 2016). Journalists have both criticized Gawker in publishing a sex tape as unethical and criticized the courts and Gawker's opponents as censors creating a hostile environment for online publishers (Kirtley, 2016).

As journalists' awareness of the Streisand Effect and their role in it continues to develop, it is also important for journalists to understand how people in power are responding. Morozov noted that as an alternative to attempting censorship that is almost certain to backfire, savvy opponents counter with effective propaganda, cultivating "extremely agile rapid-response blogging teams to fight fire with fire" (2011, p. 122). Pro-Putin forces in Russia, for example, respond to critics online with a "vicious retaliatory campaign of harassment and insults," through what have become known as "troll factories" (Higgins, 2016).

The Streisand Effect, and the responses to it, requires journalists to make difficult ethical choices to hold people and institutions in power accountable while minimizing undue harm against those with less power. The practical transparency approach offered in this paper is one way for journalists to cover efforts to censor responsibly.

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ONLINE TROLLS : JOURNALISM STUDENT SURVIVAL GUIDE

Summary: This paper explores the challenges faced by seasoned journalists in retaining open channels of discourse online and probes the coping strategies of newer graduate entrants in the media sector. Undergraduate journalism students are asked for their views on the need for support while developing their online profiles. Guidelines are produced to help journalism undergraduates understand how to handle negativity online and how to ensure they get the support required to be able to operate safely, effectively and without feeling that their freedom to express themselves is curtailed.

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Title: Online trolls and the freedom of speech: Devising a survival guide for journalism undergraduates and new entrants to the media industry.

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Abstract

Quantitative and qualitative research involving twenty journalists, twenty graduates and forty undergraduates working in the media industry was undertaken to assess the extent to which Internet trolls impacted on their work. It found that while journalists and media students are required to have an online presence and to interact with their audiences they felt they had little guidance in knowing how to deal with abuse and threats. Some felt hostile experiences had affected their ability to express themselves freely. Social media, rather than comments sections, was identified as the media owners' preferred way of engaging more 'eyeballs' and potentially driving up profits. This follows the decision of many to close down comment sections or to restrict the number of posts. Being visible on line for those working in the media, and particularly for those entering the sector, has become critical for career development. This guide aims to help them navigate their way through the pitfalls of engaging with hostile commentators online. An attempt is then made to produce some guidelines to help journalism undergraduates understand how to handle negativity online and how to ensure they get the support required to be able to operate safely, effectively and without feeling that their freedom to express themselves is curtailed. This in turn ensures that a journalist's essential role, as a guardian of free speech, in a democratic society is not curtailed. Questionnaires and interviews were undertaken.
Keywords: Internet trolls; press freedoms; social media; journalism students; online guidelines

Introduction

Trollology has becoming part of the debate around the power shift of the media and public online, with potentially damaging implications when it comes to journalists making comments on the web. Increasingly journalists are being required to have an online presence and to interact with their audiences. This is identified by media owners as a way of engaging more ‘eyeballs’ and potentially driving up profits. Being visible on line for those working in the media, and particularly for those entering the sector, has become critical for career development. Yet there is little guidance for graduates entering the media professions to help them navigate their way through the pitfalls of engaging with hostile commentators online. This paper explores the challenges faced by seasoned journalists in retaining open channels of discourse online and probes the coping strategies of newer graduate entrants in the media sector. Undergraduate journalism students are asked for their views on the need for support while developing their online profiles.

An attempt is then made to produce some guidelines to help journalism undergraduates understand how to handle negativity online and how to ensure they get the support required to be able to operate safely, effectively and without feeling that their freedom to express themselves is curtailed.

Methodology

Quantitative and Qualitative research was undertaken with 20 journalists using questionnaires and interviews. Twenty journalism graduates working in journalism or Public Relations and Communications Officer roles were contacted with a questionnaire and follow up qualitative interviews were undertaken with 5 of them. This group had developed their online profiles and blogged and or tweeted either as a promotional tool or as part of a media company requirement. They were asked if they engaged with their audiences as part of their jobs and were asked to provide details of their experiences. This included a reflection on whether they felt hostility online had affected the topics they write about and the way they express themselves. They were also asked if an online presence was a requirement of the job and whether they were provided with guidelines to help them undertake this task. The issue of whether or not they felt they had sufficient support for this role was also explored.

Quantitative and qualitative data was extracted from a questionnaire completed by 40 journalism undergraduates, about five per cent of them already working online as part of their career development. They were asked about their experiences and asked about the sort of guidance they used and what they felt would be beneficial to help them in this task.

Literature Review

The Internet, in its original conception, was seen as a forum for freedom of expression. " The kind of communication that thrives on the Internet is that related to free expression in all its forms. (Castells 2001 p. 200 in McQuail 2009).Journalism in its purest sense is seen as a profession that helps to bring important issues to the public's attention and to engage in discussion and debate. (McQuail, 2009, p. 283) These are seen as central tenets of a democratic society in the tradition of the press acting as the 'fourth estate.' The development of web 2.0 enabled interaction with the public in new and dynamic ways, opening up multiple channels of discourse. This has "altered the interaction between politics, the media and the public, beyond recognition" (Sambrook, 2006 in Allan, 2006, p.169) Democratisation became feasible via comment (Tryyg 2012) bringing freedom online and for the media. "As uploading material becomes technically easier, "ordinary "citizens can outnumber those who, lacking social skills or with little regard for social norms, originally made the Internet their natural habitat, "Tryyg states.

"Trolling and other negative behaviour on magazine websites is widespread, ranging from subtly provocative behaviour to outright abuse. Publishers have sought to develop lively online communities, with high levels of user generated content. Methods of building sites have developed quickly, but methods of managing them have lagged behind."Tryyg felt some publishers had become 'overwhelmed' by the size and behaviours of the communities they had created. The research identified "walled gardens" where publishers could encourage constructive posting, and take a more active part in site management.

Media publishers were quick to identify that engagement online was a way to drive up revenue (Binns, 2012,Tryyg, 2012, MacKinnon and Zuckerman, 2012). In all corners of the world, media outlets seeking to boost audiences through titillation and controversy have effectively built troll-baiting and troll-feeding into their business models. TV stations like al Nas profit from them. Commentators like Sheikh Khaled Abdullah gain power by inciting their followers to react emotionally and even violently to trolls. (MacKinnon and Zuckerman, 2012)

Although online interaction was found to attract some hateful comments there was a natural reluctance to censor material no matter how bad. Singer, 2009, notes that censorship issue make journalists' 'skin crawl' but became necessary with moderation (Singer, 2009).

Cunningham in Gillmor, 2004 define trolls as those who deliberately set out to waste people's time and energy. "A troll is a time thief. To troll is to steal from people. That is what makes trolling heinous," (Cunningham in Gillmor, 2004). Hardaker, 2010, says they can cause disruption for their own amusement pretending they want to be part of the group. Hardaker (2010: p237 and Donath 1999) defined a troll as one who constructs the identity of sincerely wishing to be part of the group, while really aiming to cause disruption for their own amusement.

Additionally, it also involves the use of false or incorrect utterances to generate negative or aggressive responses from the users in social media (Morrissey, 2010). According to Morrissey (2010), one of the motives of trolling is to embarrass the recipient by making them seem foolish. They intend to hurt their victims for pleasure. King (1996) proposes that trolling allows users' identities to be kept anonymous and this anonymity allows user to converse about issues that would be too sensitive for face-to-face interaction. In addition, some Internet users engage in trolling for attention seeking. This is supported by Bishop (2013) that trolling is an effect of de-individuation where inner restraints are lost when individuals are not seen or paid attention to as individuals. As a result, trolls will target their victims, consciously and purposefully as a way to get discomfort from trying to dash confidence to achieve satisfaction.

University of Manitoba research (in Buckels, Trapnell, & Paulhus, 2013) demonstrated that trolls have serious personality issues such as Machiavellianism. Online commenters display traits that are narcissistic, psychopathic, and sadistic and the worse the problems, the longer the person spent online. The most common trait was to exhibit sadistic behaviour. (Buckels, Trapnell, & Paulhus, 2013)

MacKinnon and Zuckerman, 2012 coined the phrase ‘Don’t feed the trolls.’

“The troll ‘wins’ when discussions descend into virtual shouting matches.” If someone is trying to incite you, don’t bother responding, as your angry attention is exactly what the troll wants. Censoring trolls rarely succeeds – they tend to return, even more disruptive than before, using new monikers. Instead**,** the best way to silence trolls is to ignore them. (MacKinnon and Zuckerman, 2012).

Troll tactics for disrupting online debate include digressing from the topic, excessively criticising someone by focusing on something like their grammar rather than the content, manipulating egos and sensitivities within the group to trigger emotional responses, pretending to counsel while being hurtful, shocking people by poking fun at sensitive or taboo topics and just being aggressive for the sake of it. (Hardaker, 2013) They can be “deliberately aggressing” other people,without any clear justification and with the aim of antagonizing others into retaliating. Taboo and sensitive topics, which attract vitriolic comment include religion, death, politics, human rights and animal welfare, Hardaker says.

There have been a number of high profile cases involving people in the media. In February 2014 the Australian model turned television presenter Charlotte Dawson committed suicide (Webb 2014). She had survived one suicide attempt and waged a public war against trolls. “However, her appearance on TV prompted even more abuse on Twitter, with some social media users writing comments such as: 'please hang yourself promptly' and 'neck yourself you filthy s***.’”(Webb, 2014) Dawson, who had a history of depression, was told to "stick her head in a toaster" and "kill yourself" and finally responded with the message: "you win x", with a picture of a hand holding tablets and a "Hope this ends the misery" tweet (O’Brien and Ralston 2014).

In the UK, Chloe Madeley, the daughter of well know TV presenter Judy Finnigan faced rape threats after her mother commented on a prominent rape conviction during a TV discussion programme. She said it wasn’t a “violent” rape and the victim was drunk. She later apologised unreservedly for the comments (Dent 2014).

Well-known British journalist Julie Burchill is well documented for her hard-hitting stance following a number of high profile spats. She epitomises the type of journalist able to dual with trolls and put up with attacks while continuing to publish her opinions. Responding to a Tweet suggesting she was “too busy drinking yourself stupid down the Groucho, you selfish old boot,” she retorted: “I’ve been there three times in the past two decades, you shrivelled old ass-hat.”(Burchill 2014)

Burchill 2014 states: “I am tough as old boots. I honestly find it hard to care what my loved ones think of me; the idea that I would care what one-handed, half-witted strangers think of me is even more of a stretch. And though it’s awful when it happens to young girls, whose hormones are all over the show, I can’t help thinking that grown women shouldn’t react with such hoop-skirted uproar” when threatening with a fate worse than death. She said she found attacks “rather bracing, like a swim in an icy pool on a sleepy morning.”

This sparked a reaction from another well -known British journalist, Liz Jones, who said she had been affected and “wake every day, now, fearful of the next attack. Of course I don’t care what ‘half-witted strangers’ think of me, but online abuse goes much deeper than name-calling.” (Jones 2014) “…I don’t find an online bitch fight ‘bracing’. It destroys livelihoods. It drives people to commit suicide. And, ultimately, it demeans women.”

Investigative journalist Willard Foxton said: “I've known plenty of people who've quit newspapers rather than put up with the constant stream of bile directed at them, but he vigorously defends peoples’ rights to comment online (Foxton 2012)

Feminist campaigner Caroline Criado-Perez was targeted after campaigning to have a woman as the new face on a £10 note, which resulted in Jane Austen being selected.(BBC 2014) “This Perez one just needs a good smashing up the arse and she’ll be fine” was one; “Everyone jump on the rape train > @CCriadoPerez is conductor” and so on. Her attackers thought they had found her address, and began to tweet it out.”(Owen 2014)Two people, Isabel Sorley and John Nimmo admitted sending "menacing" tweets including "Die you worthless piece of crap.” and "go kill yourself” (Cockerell 2014) In a separate set of abusive messages Nimmo told Ms Criado-Perez to "shut up" and made references to rape followed by "I will find you (smiley face)". The two admitted they were among the users of 86 separate Twitter accounts from which Ms Criado-Perez had received abusive messages and were jailed. (Cockerell 2014)

Troll victim columnist Owen Jones (2013) said: “I’ve had tweets suggesting that I be shot, creative ways of injuring me, those wondering why my mother didn’t abort me, and so on. A low point was EDL members sharing my picture on Twitter and Facebook, suggesting sympathisers keep their eyes peeled, when I attend a counter-demonstration.” He believes its important to continue putting out comment regardless, but argues “those with power and influence must still be held to account and not insulated from disagreement.” (Jones 2013). He said the campaign against Criado-Perez had prompted a backlash from the men who “still cannot bear to accept a woman as their equal.” Abusers who try to hound, degrade and intimidate women must be defeated, he said. He also called for Twitter to have a button enabling instant action over rape and death threats. His advice is to block trolls or re-tweet their abuse to your followers so they can mock them.

Journalist Moosa (2014) said: “..if you want almost *guaranteed* hate, be a woman” She said the Internet had become “an amoral wasteland where only the “fittest” survive – and by “fittest” we usually mean individuals who rarely face prejudice or hostility premised on their gender, race, etc”.

Shaw (2013) explored the practices that feminist bloggers engage in, finding that tactics include banning comment, disemvowelling (removing vowels from offensive comments), refusing anonymous posts, changing the spelling on abusive posts and publishing comments to let them humiliate themselves. This strategy of ‘speaking of the unspeakable’ through ‘heaping’ and accumulation (Tomlinson 2010 in Shaw 2013) is commonly used in feminist blogging networks, for example through the use of the Twitter hashtag #mencallmethings.

Shaw (2013) found feminist bloggers have used backchannels such as Twitter to provide support for one another and warn each other to watch out for particular people and to moderate them if they are encountered. In this way, many feminist bloggers see moderation as a responsibility that is shared within the network. Such practices promote a sense of safety and community enabling feminist discourse to flourish. Another strategy is the ‘feminist carnival’ (Gaden 2007 in Shaw 2013) whereby women link up to curate lists of links and posts, creating networks and safe havens.

CreepyPMs within Reddit was set up by Professor Milner as a safe space and support network for women discussing feminist issues. “Comments that are not conducive to a supportive and positive environment may be removed, even if they don’t violate the rules,” with 30 moderators involved (Moosa 2014). A Women in Media survey of 1054 Australian journalists found 41 per cent of staff journalists and 18 per cent of freelancers are likely to be attacked by trolls. (iSentia in O’Brien 2016) According to a Demos report, around five per cent of the tweets a female journalist receives are derogatory or abusive, compared to under two per cent for male journalists (Edge, 2014).

Furthermore a survey by the National Union of Journalists and University of Strathclyde showed reporters had received death threats and ‘feared for their safety’ with more than 80 per cent saying cyber-bullying extended beyond working hours. More than 80 per cent had not reported the abuse to the police, more than half said it had affected how they worked and more than 40 per cent did not tell their employer (Addicot 2016). In January 2014, the NUJ won a landmark case when football supporter, David Limond, was convicted for threatening reporter, Angela Haggerty, in Glasgow. The International Federation of Journalists warned that such online abuse could inhibit the freedom of speech and poses “a serious threat” to society (IFJ, 2015).

In the US, researchers have developed a tool called Trollbusters, which identifies ‘troll nests’ and sends positive messages to the victim (Addicot 2016). Channel 4 News producer Mike Deri Smith has unmasked a number of trolls, leading to their prosecution, starting with those who targeted Criado-Perez (BBC 2015).

Nicholas White, editor, The Daily Dot said if trolls clearly haven’t read the article they troll them back pointing out the relevant paragraphs and points.

But he said those who are absolutely vicious, were ignored and blocked. (BBC 2015)

A landmark decision was made to shut off comments by PopularScience.com in 2013. LeBarre posted: “Comments can be bad for science. That’s why, here at PopularScience.com, we’re shutting them off.” (2013)

They said they were committed to fostering lively, intellectual debate as they were to spreading the word of science far and wide. “The problem is when trolls and spambots overwhelm the former, they diminish their ability to do the latter.” This was followed by The Chicago Sun-Times suspending its comment feature, CNN disabling comments on most stories and Reuters dropping comments, saying that social media is a better place for discussion”(Finley 2015). Recode, followed, stating that social media was a better forum, and The Week relaunched with no comments in 2015 (Finley 2015).

Bloomberg digital editor Joshua Topolsky (2015) said they were more comfortable engaging with readers on external social platforms, where they’re likely to reach a more representative percentage of the audience (O’Donovan 2015). Also in 2015 Tech news site The Verge suspended comments for most articles, WIRED launched a new “short post” format, which doesn’t include a comments section and The Daily Dot switched off comments stating “a mob can shout down all the other people on your site” if you aren’t actively monitoring it and “it becomes about silencing voices and not about opening up voices.”(BBC 2015)The Daily Beast followed, saying most

debate had now shifted to social media sites. Vice Motherboard replaced its comments feature with a weekly "letters to the editor" feature in 2015, stating "What's the point of writing out a detailed thought when it's sandwiched by cursory garbage?" (Mead 2015) Resources switched from moderation to actual reporting, though the editor admitted "social media can be just as abrasive an alternative." In the same year Reddit launched its news site Upvoted, which excludes a comments section and prevents being able to "upvote" things directly on the site. (Finley 2015)
The British Guardian shut down comments on some contentious topics as trolls were "disruptive to the conversation and very, very difficult to mitigate" and prevented opposing views being properly aired (Hamilton, 2016)."Writers who touch on tricky subjects – race, gender, Israel, migration – or whose work reaches an unexpectedly broad audience can often find themselves on the receiving end of abuse and agenda trolling as well as reasoned debate and criticism."
The BBC (2015), which cut down on comment, cited shouting, swearing, incivility, racism and sexism as causing problems, with evidence of issues with the live streaming app Periscope.
There are plans to tighten up the laws on Internet Trolls in the UK by prosecuting those who use fake online profiles to distribute "grossly offensive" material (BBC 2016).

Research Findings

A number of freelance writers found that the volume of hate comments had affected what they were prepared to write about. One stated she was: "horribly aware that if you don't get comments, the editor or boss may think no-one read it."A Women's Magazine freelancer said nasty online comments had affected her ability to find case studies because they are often put off by the prospects of a "barrage of abuse they can get from online trolls in the comments section."Another said she had stopped submitting material to a national newspaper after receiving offensive comments. She also felt copy had been interfered with making it more controversial and "just to drive up traffic. Then the value of journalism is lost."
One freelance experienced hate speech directed at people with disabilities which meant she spent a lot of time –for free- handling comments on Facebook. "There were more than 2,000 comments there and I stopped reading after the first 200 or so because it was unbelievably awful."
One freelance journalist said: "I've just pitched something to the Guardian motoring section and am now semi-cowering as I realise that I'm actually a bit worried about my idea being accepted having to face the Readers' Comments issue… and it's not as if I'm pitching anything even vaguely controversial/ political." She said she was surprised by the venom inspired by mundane topics. "There's just something about the weird vindictive types who you can just sense spend unnerving amounts of time at their computer spewing bile that generally rattles me," she said.
Another freelancer felt his story on the parallel nature of Islamophobia and anti-Semitism was "ratcheted up slightly" to make it more sensational.
A national Sunday newspaper reporter said he was targeted and his Facebook page completed destroyed after he infiltrated and exposed a Fascist party, National Action. Although angered, he said: "That type of reaction is expected when exposing wrongdoing. If we gave in to threats and intimidation from people like that, they would continue to advance their cause unchecked which wouldn't do at all!"He said: "We're asked to make a story as good as we can and as controversial as possible and

to drive the agenda for the next day. …..I'm sure that's a lot to do with driving traffic to online and social media."

Another journalist said he had been affected by abusive and threatening feedback after writing a piece about the political astuteness of Pussy Riot on his radio station's blog. He said he was "attacked by a columnist in the women's online supplement of trying to "erase feminism", because I had dared to suggested that their political aims went a lot further than challenging macho politics, which was apparently tantamount to a man's instrumentalisation of women's issues... (it wasn't, I'd taken my information from the conversation between Nadezhda Tolokonnikova and Slavoj Zizek). I got a lot of abuse (though have to say she did too), reacted with a clarifying counter blog, and it was fine in the end."

He felt there was a need for more guidance, stating: "There's so much hypocrisy going on the part of online newspapers. Of course the abuse is part of their business model because it creates clicks ,which create advertising revenue. I'm not going to take any lessons or advice on online abuse knowing that is the case. This will only change if the advertising model changes when advertisers realise that having their ad next to a lot of bile doesn't do them any good and stop measuring attention in terms of mere clicks. But I'm not holding my breath."

A BBC News Editor said: they had restricted their below the line comments due to the high cost of moderating sites after stories were being 'hijacked' by extremists, including fascists, homophobes and people with sexist views. He said they began restricting them to two or three comments. "When you spend too much of the license fee money on external moderators weeding out extremist views then the ends don't justify the means, "he said.

Most of the journalists, graduates and undergraduates wanted more information on how to handle negative comments online.

Only three of the 20 graduates knew where to get information to help them.The few who did, referred to F.A.Q's on blogging and social media sites. Only one said they had received training from an employer.

A recurring theme was that they felt lucky not to have been targeted, with only three of them saying they had been abused online, but they wanted the ammunition to handle themselves effectively in the event of an incident occurring. The three who had experienced attacks had then sought information on how to deal with it during and after the event. They also said the experience had affected what they wrote and their ability to freely express themselves online.

One of these incidents involved what they called a 'troll-fest', a coordinated attack from a group troll Facebook account. This involved "hundreds and hundreds of IMs and comments" with replies generating insults.

Another incident involved a reader being upset about a comment. "The blog editor decided to remove the section that had outraged the reader. Afterwards, I decided to dial (sic dilute) my opinions and observations down so as to avoid such moments in the future."

Another said: "On a number of occasions my paper has been slagged off by a reporter on a competing newspaper publically on Twitter. His aim was to embarrass his competitors. Sometimes the comments were verging on being defamatory. I always find it best not to get involved in that type of thing unless it is a genuine complaint where a correction, clarification or apology is necessary. I think it is best to stay away and avoid confrontation as everyone is entitled to their opinion and it says more about the commenter than you. "

One said they now " have to think very carefully about wording."
Thirteen of the 20 in the sample said they would like more guidance. One said this was especially needed when starting out: "..more guidance would have been great with learning how to develop a thick skin and deal with difficult people."(Journalist)
Another said: "Not everyone has the confidence to know how to deal with negativity- especially online. People seem a lot more harsh/ aggressive when hiding behind a computer screen…. People need to know how to react in a positive way and how to deal with situations." (PR)
A journalist, who didn't feel he had much knowledge of support available said: "I think there should be guidelines to protect people….it can come with the territory for people to vent their feels, however unfairly at you. To know where to go if things go to far can only be a good thing." (Journalist)
"More guidance would give users more confidence to stand up to those who they feel unfairly comment and/or give negative feedback to their writing. More guidance will mean people who have been abusive towards others online have a better chance of being reprimanded/dealt with appropriately for their actions. (Journalist)
While 'generally skeptical of online guidance' a "set of guidelines grounded in empirical research would be of use to social media managers and it would have been useful to me, especially in the crisis I have described," one graduate explained. (Troll-fest victim)
Three graduates in the sample felt existing guidelines were adequate. One journalist championed people's right to say what they want online in the cause of free speech.
Fourteen of the 16 graduates were comfortable at having an online profile for work purposes, whether required or not. The benefits were listed and summed up as:
"Social networking sites are fantastic tools which allow you to engage your audience. Sometimes it can be a pain with people's comments not being very nice but the benefits of being able to use them as a tool to find stories get comments and engage your audience far outweighs the negatives.

Another said: "I think it is a good way of connecting with your readers. I do not always tweet content from work from my account but often have been tagged in items for work reasons. My employer does have a basic web policy that we follow, but I think as a journalist you should have a presence online.

A freelance graduate journalist stated:" Having a profile representing your work is a way you can personally build a following. It makes the quality of your work better and when you move onto another career that following stays with you. People follow people, not brands in today's digital age."

A graduate working at the BBC said: "Social media is becoming such a massive part of what we do." He said managing social media sites had become a full time shift "so graduates need to know how to manage a large page on Facebook and the same on Twitter!"

Some seem happy about the blurring of work and personal time. A graduate working in PR stated: "I also used Twitter in my first job as an SEO linkbuilder to reach out to 'Mummy bloggers' to pitch to them to write articles on their website on behalf of AO.com where I worked. I found it was easier to do this through my personal account than from a brand account."(PR)

Only two raised concerns.One felt it blurred the lines between their work and free time.Two graduates raised concerns about LinkedIn. One said she disliked having so much personal information on her page, which was needed for work and another said she had suffered sexist abuse.

Thirty-six of the 40 undergraduates in the research sample had an online profile and five were also generating income through journalism work.
Seventeen were uploading comment on a daily basis, nine weekly and the others less frequently. Six abusive incidents were recorded and four threatening comments. In nine cases the students had responded, stating that in one case it made it worse, in one case it made things better but interacting made no difference in the other cases. Seven students said the incident had affected what they wrote. Eight said they felt it had affected their ability to express themselves freely online. One female stated: I'm very opinionated when it comes to feminism and civil rights and I'm aware that this can cause backlash. One male said: "I felt less comfortable expressing my views for fear of rude comments." Another stated: "(you) lose self confidence. Feel opinion is invalid. Felt less comfortable posting in social media."
"You just wonder if it is really worth dealing with narrow-minded/ negative comments you'll receive and if you even have the energy to respond and explain to someone who wants to argue for the sake of arguing," another student said. One male student admitted that it made him more aggressive: "It causes debate in the comment thread, but does not affect what I will post in the future. Though likely causes me to post aggressive post to trigger more comment debates."
Another male student who 'earns as he learns' through sports freelance writing, attracted negative comment but didn't let it affect him.
Tweets had caused problems for one who said: "Think twice about how statements like tweets can be misinterpreted."

Only three of the students had complained about comments and in each case these had been made on Facebook and they contacted the social media complaints section. One case involved 'racially insensitive material/comment.'
Twenty-eight of the sample said they didn't know where to seek guidance, 26 of them stating that they had never actually looked for any advice. The ten who said they did know where to get information mainly stated social media and website safety sections. They said they had found out through talks at school and university, 'common sense', from famous celebrities/journalists who have spoken out about it and through Google.

Thirty of the sample (45%) said they wanted more information on how to deal with issues online. Some said:
"It would be good to know a balanced non-aggressive way to deal with it."
"I am unsure of where I can look for guidance. It would be helpful to know how to defuse situations." (Male student who felt his freedom to express himself online has been curtailed after an online attack)
"Many will feel silenced by online abuse."
"Because the online presence in journalism is changing all the time so the guidance will need to be increased."
"The last time I was told about where to find guidance online it was at secondary school so they mostly talked about children. Now I'm not a child I don't know where to go."

"It is better getting an experienced answer from someone instead of dealing with it myself."
"We should all feel confident at dealing with negativity and feel comfortable using social media."
Knowing how to deal with them (negative comments) can lessen the distress."

Graduates offered advice:

"Always remain professional/walk away from the desk if you feel like you are going to rant back at someone."

"In all- the best advice I could give is not to argue with people objecting to what you're posting, thank them for their contribution and leave it- a number of local papers I have seen do actually enter into justifying content when someone comments "is this news" or "what a crap article"
And it is literally pouring petrol on the fire."

"Try and rise above, unless it's in anyway abusive of course."

"When writing about football, always expect there to be unpopular opinion. The best way to deal with it is by explaining your argument."

"Some people have an idea and they will stick to it no matter what. If after one or two replies to a more sensitive comment they keep on keeping on, just disengage. Some people want to argue, not listen to reason."

Conclusion

There is clearly a desire from both undergraduates and graduates fairly new to the industry to have clearer guidelines about how to deal with negative comments online. Furthermore it is appear to be the case that employers feel they are dealing with the issue by shutting down some comment sections. Insufficient consideration seems to be given to their employees, whose profiles and comments are widespread across social media, over how they can handle Internet trolls. The employees appear to be largely learning through experience and on a need to know basis as and when they are subject to abuse. This learning process is starting while undertaking their university studies and starting to build their online profiles and get material published. It is clear that the guidelines need to be supplied at that point as some students become distraught after being subjected to negativity and then feel unwilling to express themselves freely online. It would seem critical that for new generations of journalists to maintain the principles of freedom of the press, they need to feel confident about expressing themselves online and feel safe and secure in knowing how to handle criticism.

Undergraduate Survival Guide

This by no means a complete manual, but is intended to open up discussion and to be a tool for subsequent development.

- Make sure you identify what support material/guidance there is before embarking on developing your career online. You wouldn't start driving without reading the Highway Code so why hurtle into a potentially dangerous space online without taking precautions and finding out what to do if something goes wrong.
- Keep up-to-date with your knowledge of the laws around harassment online.
- Ensure all non-essential work profiles- apart from LinkedIn- are private. This will help you to develop- and be able to distinguish- a private and public profile online.
- Set up a small network with a few fellow students to discuss good practice online. Share any negative comments/ incidents that may involve you- before responding/taking action if possible. This can also help to identify any trolls targeting particular groups and identifying if they need to be blocked. In some cases it may help if they are visibly supporting your comments. There can be strength in numbers.
- However, ensure anyone responding in your network, and also any friends, avoid becoming abusive themselves or this will undermine your case should it be necessary to make a formal complaint.
- Never reply to a comment instantly and in anger. Allow time to cool down, discuss things with your support network and or tutor before deciding whether to respond and, if so, how.
- Consider work carefully before publication. Try to avoid statements that may be taken the wrong way or interpreted incorrectly.
- Be confident in your views and opinions – they are as valid as anyone else's- do not stop writing after being targeted by a troll as that is what they want.
- Remember whatever you write is out there and cannot be removed-even if deleted.
- Ask for tutor guidance when you are unsure if feedback is passionate disagreement (even if painful) or an abusive attack. Seek help in handling the comment where necessary. Try not to be embarrassed by what might have been said. Staff will have seen much material like this before and can offer some good advice. All material will be treated sensitively and confidentially.
- Remember that when you respond to comments you are replying to 'the world' not just that person commenting online.
- Ignore some comments. This can at times be the solution to avoid getting into more of an argument or unhealthy debate. You can just thank them for their contribution and leave it. Turn notifications off.
- Try not to take it personally. This can be hard, but where you are blogging as a journalist, think of yourself as a professional doing your job (even if you aren't yet being paid). You are continuing the important role as guardians of freedom of the press and freedom of expression.

- Don’t let it show that you have been riled/upset. Try to rise above it and be upbeat and personable to everyone, even if it's tempting not to be! Remember that for every negative comment there are many positive ones.
- With persistent and offensive comments keep reporting the abuse to the ISP until it stops.
- If you have been abused/threatened take a print screen so you've got copies as evidence if needed. This is particularly important if you are being physically threatened as the police will likely need contacting with a view to a prosecution.
- Certain topics are likely to attract unpopular opinion. These include issues involving feminism, politics, race and religion and sports, especially when you have made your preference known. Do not be put off writing about them, but responses should aim to explain your argument clearly with supporting facts.
- Hide any outrageously rude or offensive comments such as extreme racist, sexist and homophobic views.

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Important, But Not Essential:

Consumers' Awareness and Use of Professionally Produced News on Social Media

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Abstract

This study examines the intersection between social media and professionally produced news in terms of user awareness. It asks respondents about their passive and active news exposure. It compares the amount of time respondents report spending on social media with their reported news exposure. It explores motivations for news consumption and their connection to incidental news exposure and information overload. Results indicate respondents underestimate their potential contact with news. Their motivations for finding information on professionally produced news versus social media are discussed.

Introduction

In the past century the importance of news in a person's life could reasonably be estimated to correlate with how much news they took the time to read, watch, or hear. New media, however, have introduced a new way of interacting with news so that the once mostly solitary activity of consuming news has become a social experience (Hermida, Fletcher, Korell, & Logan, 2012). Use of Facebook and its companies Instagram and Facebook Messenger accounts for 50 minutes of the average user's day (Stewart, 2016). In 2014, 71% of Internet users were on Facebook (Duggan et al., 2014), and among Facebook users, 63% reported getting news there (Barthel, Shearer, Gottfried, & Mitchell, 2015). That number reflects an increase of more than 15% in one year. Between 2013 and 2014 the percentage of Facebook users who reported getting news from Facebook rose from 47% to 63%. Among Twitter users, the percentage who reported getting news from Twitter rose from 52% to 63% in the same period (Barthel et al., 2015). Both forms of social media became increasingly important as news sources for multiple demographic groups, and the increase wasn't limited to millennials. News usage on both Twitter and Facebook grew at the same rate among those 34 and younger as it did among those 35 and older (Barthel et al., 2015). More than six of 10 people now report getting news from some form of social media (Gottfried & Shearer, 2016).

Both Facebook and Twitter have taken steps since 2014 to emphasize news content and encourage its publication. These new programs include Twitter Moments, Facebook Instant Articles, and Facebook Live. In addition, every Facebook user sees "trending" topics in a rail at the top right of his or her page.. The list of headline-style summaries was intended to mimic Twitter "trends." In both examples, the lists contain links to more information about each topic. Users therefore have the opportunity to pursue news through Facebook. They may become aware of a topic by simply seeing it listed as trending. In addition, many people see endless news stories shared by friends.. It is therefore reasonable to assume that Facebook and Twitter users encounter a significant amount of news, whether or not they pay attention to it. As a result, even people who have no interest in news are likely to stumble across it.

Twitter is traditionally not only a news-heavy social medium, but also a source of breaking news. Nearly two-third of Twitter users (63%) reported getting news from the site, and 59% of Twitter users reported following a breaking news event on the social media platform . When Twitter added its Moments feature in 2015, it allowed users to follow accounts based on news events. A Twitter feed typically only lists tweets from accounts the user follows. Using Moments, however, a user can follow a news event, such as a natural disaster. Editor-curated tweets about that news event will appear in the user's feed regardless of whether or not they are from account the user follows. When that news story is no longer featured, the user no longer sees tweets from these non-followed accounts. Although following a breaking news event still requires a certain amount of interaction, simply scrolling through one's Twitter feed creates opportunities for incidental news consumption.

Both Twitter and Facebook are examples of how social media is being used as a distribution point for news media. The widespread use of Twitter and Facebook therefore could influence the way people perceive news as a concept. Where once consumers sought out news, increasingly they are letting news find them through social media. This shift, we argue, facilitates the perception that news simply exists and is not something a user pays for. This study examined the extent to which people are aware of how much news they encounter on social media and how people actively make the decision to consume professionally produced news content by asking about its importance and function.

Literature Review

The complexities of news consumption are reflected in the literature. There is no standard theoretical basis for understanding changing patterns in news consumption. Two areas of study applicable to this research are incidental news exposure and information overload. Incidental news exposure creates the expectation that people will be exposed to more news content than they seek. Information overload is key to understanding the current online news climate with its massive amounts of content.

Incidental News Exposure

Incidental information exposure has been defined as “memorable experiences of accidental discovery of useful and interesting information” (Erdelez, 1999, p. 25). One of the first studies to tie awareness of news events to exposure suggested that a distinction does not need to be made between passive and active learning (Tewksbury, Weaver, & Maddex, 2001). Those researchers suggested that only a “minimal level” of attention is required to achieve incidental exposure; repetition influences retention (p. 534). The structure of social media, with reposts, comments and replies, easily contributes to repetition. Even in 2001, when the study was published, enough websites featured reoccurring news to think it probable that users would encounter that information repetitively with or without seeking it. They observed, “If a similar level of news saturation was present in one’s offline activities, it would be akin to coming across news headlines posted on the front of a telephone book, on the front door of a bookstore, or at the beginning of telephone conversations” (p. 537). The fact that these three comparisons can no longer be as effectively drawn only illustrates the pervasiveness of the Internet in everyday life. Rather than the unlikely scenario of running into headlines on a phonebook, users today are quite likely to come in contact with news content while searching for a friend on Facebook. The front door of a bookstore has been replaced with the homepage of the world's largest bookseller, Amazon, and while users are much more likely to see products than headlines on that homepage, the company has begun to cover political events by offering live streaming. The 2016 State of the Union, for example, was promoted on the Amazon home page. Amazon users could stream it live or watch it free after the event.

Telephone conversations are still not likely to begin with a news headline, but telephone conversations themselves are much less common 15 years later. Instead, people communicate through social media. Twitter and Snapchat, two favorites for real-time communication, are likely to offer opportunities for incidental news exposure.

Being exposed to greater amounts information and having access to the almost unlimited resources online has created a climate in which convenience is key. The Internet made news content more accessible. As technology has progressed, so has accessibility. Research indicates that incidental exposure to news online is a major factor in how people learn about news events.

A Pew Research Center study revealed that 92% of Americans use more than one platform each day to get news (Purcell, Rainie, Mitchell, Rosenstiel, & Olmstead, 2010). Respondents in the study described social networks as "alert systems" for news. More than half (59%) said that they experience incidental news exposure every day or almost every day. Yadamsuren and Erdelez (2010) found that incidental news exposure online is becoming a habitual means of consuming news. However, they noted that few respondents perceived incidental news exposure as the "typical" way in which they would access news content.

If news content exposure is not intentional, the user might not recognize it as exposure to news. Rather than sitting down for the nightly news or picking up the local paper, incidental news exposure takes place in less identifiable ways. One term that illustrates the ephemerality of news online is ambient journalism. Hermida (2010) created the term to describe “broad, asynchronous, lightweight, and always-on communication systems such as Twitter.” Using Twitter as an example, Hermida points out that, unlike email communication, tweets often do not command a person’s full attention. Each tweet is part of something larger, existing as “ambient” information. These small pieces of news content may be useful to the individual, but having made no special effort to discover them, the individual may not perceive these bits of information as news. Surveys about news exposure often measure how much news a respondent thinks he or she is exposed to. This study seeks to assess the extent to which perception matches reality given the nature of incidental news exposure.

R_1 To what extent are people aware of their contact with news through social media?

Information Overload

While incidental news exposure can have positive repercussions in terms of disseminating news content, the amount of information associated with this type of exposure may be more problematic. As the limited capacity model of motivated mediated messages suggests, humans have a limited amount of resources to devote to cognitive processing of incoming information (Lang, 2006). The feeling of being overloaded by news content has been studied in connection with the number of news platforms consumers use. Holton and Chyi (2012) surveyed 767 adults and found that while only a few platforms were positively linked to users’ level of perceived information overload, Facebook was among the top three. The authors observed that the ability to access news through Facebook might be overloading its users. Using a content analysis of 112 interviews about information overload and sense making, Pentina and Tarafdar (2014) identified specific ways in which social media contribute to information overload. These included social media increasing the amount of news content, making it impossible to avoid exposure to news, causing concerns about reliability and objectivity, and offering irrelevant content (p. 219). These factors contribute to a better understanding of the perceived value of news.

The surplus introduced in information overload applies to the perceptions people have of news in general. If there is more news content than anyone could possibly consume, what is its worth? Particularly in the context of media organizations fighting to remain relevant, the influence of a "surplus" is worth calling into question (Holton & Chyi, 2012). The value of news can be addressed at least in part with perceptions of information overload. These perceptions are influenced to some extent by demographics such as income, gender, and age (Ji, Ha, & Sypher, 2014). Considering the demographic differences associated with perceived information overload Ji, et al. (2014), this study puts forth the following research question:

R_2 What effect will demographic differences of age and gender have on people's awareness of their contact with news through social media?

News Consumption

When incidental exposure to news is the norm, and there is so much information that it's described as an overload, an atmosphere of apathy may develop. An illustration of this phenomenon appeared in a 2008 *New York Times* article, in which Jane Buckingham described a college student participating in a focus group stating, "If the news is that important, it will find me" (Stelter, 2008). That quotation has been referred to in multiple news articles, blog posts, and keynote conference speeches. It illustrates a new reality in people's attitudes toward news. Not only is there an amazing volume of information, but also, that information need not be sought out. This new reality calls into question previous assumptions about why people choose to consume news.

American news consumers divide themselves almost equally between those who identify themselves as news “avoiders” and news “seekers” (Ksiazek, Malthouse, & Webster, 2010). However, even those who identify as news “avoiders” nonetheless are consuming news. In 2010, the Pew Research Center reported that American news consumption was at its highest point since the mid-1990s (“Americans Spending More Time Following the News,” 2010).

A number of approaches have been used to explain why people consume news. Motivations like the “fear of missing out” are based in the existing saturation of information online (Alt, 2015; Przybylski, Murayama, DeHaan, & Gladwell, 2013). This study seeks to use basic gratifications as a foundation for analyzing the functions of news (Diddi & LaRose, 2006). It draws on research conducted following the 1962-1963 New York newspaper strike. During the week in which the printer’s union was on strike, the major New York newspapers, including the *New York Times* and the *New York Post*, were forced to shut down. Research on readers during the strike revealed several specific function of newspaper that they missed (Berelson, 1948). This study uses those functions as a basis for examining the role of news.

RQ$_3$ To what extent do social media fulfill the same functions as news media for consumers?

Method

A survey was developed and administered using the online platform Qualtrics. Respondents were recruited through Mechanical Turk and compensated $0.25 for their time. The survey began with demographic information including age, gender, and household income. Respondents were asked about their social media habits. The survey focused first on the amount of time spent using various social media platforms. Next, respondents completed a series of questions about how often they encounter news. The final section asked respondents to identify their primary sources of news. They were instructed to “consider a hypothetical situation in which media (tv, internet, print, radio) no longer contain news content. Essentially we are asking you to assume news companies have gone out of business.” Respondents then answered a series of 15 questions about how not having professionally produced news would affect them. For example, respondents were asked how much worse off they would be in terms their “understanding of national politics” or their “knowledge of sports?” Respondents were then asked which social media site they used most. They answered the same 15 questions in the context of no longer being able to access that social media site.

A seven-point Likert scale was used on each of the 15 questions where 1 represented “much worse” and 7 represented “much better.” The 15 questions were presented in randomized order within medium (news vs. social media).. The measurements assessing functions of news were adapted from prior research (Berelson, 1948; LaRose & Eastin, 2004; Vincent & Basil, 1997). The list of possible social media was based on data from the leading social media websites in the United States in October 2015, based on share of visits (“U.S. top social media sites visit share 2015,” 2015). Yahoo Answers and Pinterest were taken off the list for their lack of news content and another leading social media site, Snapchat, was added.

Results

All respondents were from the United States and were similar to the general population in terms of gender and race, although the respondents were somewhat younger than average. A plurality of respondents, 49%, reported being between the ages of 24 and 35. People in that general age range, 25 and 34 years old, represent the second largest age group (13.5%) in the United States, according to the United States Census Bureau (American Community Survey Office, 2014). In this study, women were 58.5% of respondents. Women in the United States are

50.8% of the population. The majority of survey respondents were white, 75%, making the survey sample very similar to the U.S. population, which is 73.8% white.

The survey sample was somewhat more highly educated and had higher incomes than the general population. The annual household income range of $25,000 to $49,999 represented the largest group of respondents at 33.5%, while census data show that 23.7% of the overall population earns between $25,000 and $49,999. The largest income group in the Census data (17.8%) earns $50,000 to $74,999, compared to 23.7% of the survey's respondents. A plurality of respondents (39.7%) had earned a 4-year degree beyond high school, while Census data show that, among adults over the age of 25, only 18.3% hold a bachelor's degree.

RQ_1: To what extent are people aware of their contact with news through social media?

To answer this question, we compared the amount of time respondents reported either actively using or in passive contact with news content with the amount of time they reported using the social media platforms most likely to include news content: Facebook, Twitter, and Reddit. On average, respondents reported that they spent 2.1 hours consciously or actively engaging with news content and another 2.1 hours in passive contact with news (seeing but not reading news stories on social media, having TV news on in the background but not paying attention to it, etc.), for a total of 4.2 hours a day in contact with news. They also reported spending 2.4 hours per day on Facebook and 1.15 hours per day on Reddit. Because some individuals who had Twitter accounts reported that none of the sources they follow were journalists or news organizations, we assessed hours spent on Twitter only for those who followed news sources; those in this group reported, on average, spending 1.7 hours per day on Twitter. The total for time spent with the social media most likely to include news content, then, was 5.25 hours – more than twice as much time as the individuals reported for passive contact with news and more than an hour greater than the total time reported for active and passive news content. Although individuals certainly could use Twitter, Facebook, or Reddit without ever reading or viewing a news story posted to the site, the findings suggest that the respondents may underestimate their exposure to news content.

RQ$_2$: Does age or gender impact awareness of one's contact with news via social media?

There were no age or gender differences in daily time spent actively engaging with news. Gender also was not significantly related to reported time spent in passive contact with news. There was a trend toward the youngest group (18- to 35-year-olds) reporting more time spent in passive contact with news than either the middle-age group (36-59) or the older group (60+). A one-way ANOVA showed that this trend was significant [F(df=2,335) = 3.038, p. = .045)], although a Least Significant Difference (LSD) comparison of the pairs' means showed that differences between the youngest vs. middle age group and the youngest vs. oldest group only approached statistical significance. (See Table 1).

Table 1: Age differences in time spent in active and passive news contact and use of social media most likely to contain news content and links

Hours spent daily	18-35 years	36-59 years	60+ years	F	p.
Active news engagement	2.26	1.83	2.25	1.417	ns
Passive news contact	2.33	1.85	1.15	3.038	.049
Use of Facebook, Reddit & Twitter	5.24	3.46	2.18	6.047	.003

We also assessed gender and age differences in a composite variable combining reported hours spent with Facebook, Twitter and Reddit.[1] The analysis revealed no gender differences. However, there was a significant relationship between age and the average number of hours spent with news-containing social media [F (df=2,383) = 6.047, p. <.01]. LSD analyses revealed that the youngest respondents (18-35 years old) spent significantly more time (5.24 hours per day) with the three social media most likely to contain news content, compared to the middle-age group (36-59 years old), who spent 3.46 hours per day with these media, and the older group (60+), who spent 2.18 hours per day with Facebook, Twitter, and Reddit. As noted earlier, the younger group reported more time spent in passive contact with news content than did older respondents. Even so, for this youngest group, time spent with the most likely social media news sources was more than twice the number of hours they reported spending in passive contact with news content (5.24 hours vs. 2.33 hours per day). The middle age group reported 3.46 hours daily with Twitter, Reddit, and Facebook, but estimated only 1.9 hours per day in passive contact with news content, while the oldest group reported 2.18 hours per day with the three social media, but only 1.15 hours per day in passive contact with news. The data suggest, then, that individuals in all three groups spend more time than they recognized each day using social media likely to include news content or links to news content, with the greatest discrepancy occurring among the 18- to 35-year-old respondents.

RQ3: To what extent do social media fulfill the same functions as news media for consumers?

To answer RQ3, we compared respondents’ answers to two sets of questions, asking, in essence, what the respondent would lose (or how he/she would be affected), if (1) professional news organizations ceased to exist or (2) he/she no longer had access to the social media source most likely to be used for news content. As Table 2 shows, more than half of all respondents said the loss of access to professional news sources would leave them at least somewhat worse off regarding information about major news events, local events, politics at all levels, weather, crime, health and medicine developments, science news, and economic issues. Respondents generally believed their knowledge of various topics would suffer more if professional news sources ceased to exist than if they lost access to the social media platform they most often use for news. Specifically, respondents predicted that loss of access to professional news sources would have a greater impact on their ability to plan for weather, their awareness of crime news, health and medical developments, understanding of economic issues, knowledge of international, national and local politics, knowledge of sports, science news, local events and major news events. However, the loss of access to the social media they most often access for news, they predicted, would have a greater impact on their ability to entertain themselves and to have enough down-time or distractions.

Table 2: Percentage of respondents reporting negative impacts from loss of news media versus primary social media used for news

Information function	**% reporting understanding would be worse without news**	**% reporting understanding would be worse without primary social media**	**Difference in %**	**Chi-squared**	**p. <**
Ability to plan for weather	64.3%	29.9%	34.4	89.948	.0001
Being entertained	*32.3%*	*61.9%*	29.6*	66.656	.0001
Awareness of crime news	65.5%	41.8%	23.7	42.815	.0001
Awareness of health/medicine developments	66.8%	44.7%	22.1	37.730	.0001
Local politics	60.3%	39.3%	21.0	33.470	.0001
Understanding of economic issues	50.9%	34.7%	16.2	20.411	.0001
International politics	66.8%	51.5%	15.3	18.290	.0001
Having enough down-time or distractions	*24.5%*	*38.4%*	13.9*	17.005	.0001
National politics	64.0%	50.7%	13.3	13.726	.001
Knowledge of	45.2%	32.4%	12.8	13.067	.001

sports					
Ability to deal with traffic	32.6%	20.7%	11.9	13.709	.001
Exposure to science news	59.0%	47.1%	11.9	10.775	.001
Awareness of local events	62.1%	51.3%	10.8	9.052	.01
Awareness of major news events	69.5%	62.1%	7.4	4.619	.05
Having information I need	61.2%	55.7%	5.5	2.361	ns

Note: We used the MedCalc comparison of proportions calculator (Schoonjans, 2016) to analyze differences in percentages.

Perhaps the most important comparison, however, is the one for which there was no statistically significant difference. More than six in 10 respondents said having no access to professional news sources would have a negative effect on their ability to get the information they need; however, the percentage was not significantly different from the 56% who predicted the same negative outcome from losing access to their preferred social media platform, which, for the vast majority, was Facebook.

Discussion

The findings of this study suggest that in spite of spending a considerable amount of time on social media, respondents did not consistently factor that time into their news exposure. The 4.2 hours respondents reported both passively and actively coming in contact with news content was about an hour less than the time respondents reported spending on the thee social media sites most likely to include news content or links (5.25 hours). This finding suggests a lack of awareness of potential exposure to news on social media. This lack of awareness may have multiple repercussions. This study suggested that the combination of incidental news exposure and information overload could lead to the perception that news is something that exists in surplus. The perceived value of news would ultimately be reduced by lack of awareness of its presence.

In addition to news exposure, this study sought to identify the functions of news and the functions of social media. Respondents answered questions predicting how their knowledge or awareness of important topics would be different without professional news media or without their preferred social media site. Perhaps not surprisingly, the respondents' assessments of how their lives would change differed depending on which type of media was being taken away. The loss of one's preferred social media was predicted to have a greater impact on respondents' entertainment, while the loss of professionally produced news content was expected to have a more significant impact on all traditional news topics, from weather and sports to international politics. These differences increase our understanding of the functions of news and social media.

One limitation of this study was that the questions did not ask how valuable each function was to the respondents. For example, 65.5% of respondents said they would have less "awareness of crime news" without professionally produced news, but we do not know how problematic the respondents believe this loss would be. For some, "ability to deal with traffic" might be more important that "awareness of crime news." Future research could more thoroughly address not only the impact of news on knowledge, but also what people want from news.

The overarching question related to information provided the most surprising finding. The results show that 60% of respondents thought having no access to professional news would negatively affect their ability to get the information they need. This number appears to illustrate a greater appreciation for the news media than recently reported (Fingerhut, 2016). On the other hand, 56% of respondents thought having no access to the social media site most often used for news would negatively affect their ability to get the information they need, a non-significant difference. So while respondents identified differences between social media and news media in terms of which is a better source for political, health, science, sports, and weather information and which is a better source of entertainment and distraction, they viewed the two types of media as being almost equally important overall for obtaining information they need. This finding has implications for the role of news in social media.

If social media are viewed as being equally valuable as news media for the information people need, offering the two together makes sense. Not only are consumers already spending more time on social media, but they also already perceive social media sites as important and valuable news content sources.

A more negative interpretation also is possible, in that when people assess their need for professionally produced news versus social media to obtain the information they most need, they see little difference. That apparent equivalence implies that people may perceive professionally produced news as a replaceable resource, at least in terms of daily information needs.

The results of this study reflect an observed trend toward significant social media use. They also reflect the widespread use of social media as a news source (Lichterman, 2016). Respondents in this study reported that they used Facebook for 2.4 hours per day. Combined with Reddit and Twitter, the reported 5.25 hours spent daily on social media illustrates a high likelihood for incidental news exposure. For an average individual who sleeps six to eight hours a day, that number indicates that nearly one-third of the individual’s waking hours are spent on social media.

Conclusions

This study is a starting point for examining the role of professionally produced news on social media. Its findings confirm a relatively symbiotic relationship in which social media users consume news both actively and passively, while at the same time their perception of the importance of social media grows. The means by which news content is distributed is changing. As an increasingly important source of news content, social media will play a role in the news media industry's future. The gulf that exists between news consumers' awareness of their incidental news exposure and the reality of how much news they come in contact with creates a culture in which professionally produced news loses its value.

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[1] For this analysis, we used data from all respondents, including those who reported following no news organizations' or journalists' Twitter accounts. We did not limit the analysis to those who followed journalists or news organizations on Twitter because this limitation also would affect the averages for time spent on Facebook and Reddit. Individuals who did not follow journalists or news organizations on Twitter spent less time on the site than did followers of news organizations or journalists; thus, including all Twitter users reduces the overall average of time spent with social media likely to contain news content.

Model curricula for Mongolian journalism education: its vision and reforms in the new, democratic period

Abstract

Mongolia has a population of only 3 million, who attain information and entertainment from 555 media organisations in the media market. The journalists who work for those media organisations have been trained by 19 universities and institutions. Journalism education has a 64 year history in the country's 100 year history of journalism. State and private journalism training institutions delivering academic journalism education have largely followed the traditional forms of the Soviet Union. Despite attempts at implementing American and Western style curriculum design for journalism education in Mongolia, many have claimed that this has not been implemented adequately so far. There is a demand for redesigning the journalism curricula to incorporate technological developments and changes in the society in addition to public attitudes towards the media. The article is aiming at analyse the curricula of the journalism training institutions of Mongolia in order to clarify whether they meet the needs of students, employers and labor market.

INTRODUCTION

After declaring independence in 1921 with the People's Revolution, Mongolia became a socialist satellite state that followed the model of the Soviet Union in terms of political and economic orientation. At that time, the Mongolian media played an important role in promoting the ideology of the one ruling party. In 1990, Mongolia became a democratic country as a result of movements for democracy in the Soviet Union and southern Europe in 1989-1990. Since then, state control of the activities and content of the media collapsed, and the number of media organizations increased to 1 television channel, 37 newspapers and 32 journals in the late 1980s (Lombo, 2003, p. 216). Furthermore, there was a rapid increase in the number of media organisations, which grew to 663 in a short period of time (Maulet, 1997, p. 15). Moreover, the process of obtaining higher education expanded as a result of private sector involvement regulated by laws and there was a high demand for educated human resources in the labor market. State universities transferred to the self-funding system whereby students pay their tuition fees and the number of private universities increased as well.

A recent study (The World Bank, 2010, p. 2) highlighted that in 1991 there were 14 state universities with 20,000 students, but by 2009 this number reached 151 (42 of these were state universities) with a total number of 150,326 students. Until the 1960s, journalists who were working in the Mongolian journalism sector, established in 1913, were not professionals; instead they were naturally talented, self-taught individuals or those who only completed short-term courses. In other words, Mongolian journalism initially developed based on our cultural heritage, traditional script and "Mongol intelligence". From the middle of the 1950s, Mongolian journalists were educated in Moscow and Leningrad, Bulgaria and East Germany. Thus, from the middle of

1950s and 1960s, newly graduated and highly educated journalists returned to work in their home country, which became the impetus for implementing scientific methods in Mongolian journalism practice. Those returning journalists also contributed greatly to preparing future journalists locally (Lombo, 2001, p. 210).

The National University of Mongolia (NUM) commenced its journalism courses in the 1960-1961 academic year and one year later the department of journalism was set up and invited I.I. Demiyanchuk, who was an associate professor in the Kiev University journalism department, in order to enrich the journalism curriculum and improve the teaching methodology and professional knowledge of the local teachers. Later, the journalism department moved to the Institute of Marxism-Leninism which was under the central committee of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP) and 6 cohorts graduated between 1967 and 1977. In addition to this, the Marxism and Leninism evening course of the central committee of the MPRP in Ulaanbaatar prepared about 370 journalists. Once Mongolia transferred to the new system, more opportunities to study abroad opened, and a few people began studying at postgraduate level in the United Kingdom, Germany and the United States of America and a number of students studied in Russia at the undergraduate level. Compared to the 1990s, when only one university offered a journalism course, in 2006, 22 state and private universities were teaching journalism at the undergraduate level. Some state and private universities also offered postgraduate journalism education beginning in 1996. According to the report prepared by the Press Institute (2013, p. 66), 555 media organizations were operating in Mongolia in 2012, with 4903 full-time employees, 2341 of whom were creative employees such as journalists, reporters, editors and producers. In terms of academic majors, 867 of them were professional journalists. However, a total of 4609 journalists were prepared from 1965 to 2012 and it is clear that 400 professional journalists are annually sent to the media sector. Approximately 20% of them specialised as international journalists, journalists-interpreters, journalists-literary authors, radio and television journalists, television journalists-cameramen, television journalists-producers, and sports journalists through single or dual major programs.

The information showed that 440 journalism students completed the bachelor's program last year, 33 students went through the master's degree program and 2 students earned a Ph.D. in journalism. As of 2014, in all, 1749 students were studying for bachelor's degrees in journalism at the 5 state universities and 12 private universities, 1315 of whom were women. 78 students were in master's degree courses and 26 were studying for a Ph.D. Nowadays, 19 universities are offering journalism courses and 428 students were expected to finish their courses by 2014.

TABLE 1

Mongolian journalism training institutions /March, 2014/

№	Journalism training institutions	Current students	Graduates for 2014
1	National University of Mongolia, Department of Journalism	215	48
2	National University of Mongolia, Ulaanbaatar University	44	44
3	University of the Humanities	116	33
4	University of the Humanities, Darkhan University	30	-
5	Mongolian State University of Education	87	11
6	Mongolian State University of Education, School of Mongolian Language and Culture	143	27
7	Mongolian State University of Culture and Arts, School of Radio and Television	323	71
8	Otgontenger University	105	20
9	Ider Institute	55	10
10	Zohiomj Institute	188	61
11	Ulaanbaatar-Erdem University	48	15
12	Ih Zasag University	61	-
13	Journalist College	82	21
14	Orkhon University	17	8
15	Institute of International Studies	24	7

16	Soyol-Erdem Institute	40	7
17	Institute of Literature and Social Workers	30	7
18	Mongolian University of Culture and Arts, School of Film and Art	82	23
19	Ih Mongol Institute	59	15
	Total	**1749**	**428**

There is a demand for preparing qualified journalists in the labor market of Mongolia. This is unlikely to change in the coming years. The number of media organizations is expected to increase because of the current situations where the laws are not implemented properly and media are influenced by power. This hypothesis, which was made two years ago, has been proven (Author citation, 2011, p. 158). This crisis in the whole system of journalism might change when politicians and businessmen no longer use the media to protect themselves.

Currently, there are a number of newly established television stations and internet sites being set up. It is expected that the number of internet sites will increase in the future. Newly graduated journalists are criticized in terms of their professional qualifications and ethics by both mass media users and media owners. Therefore, it is important to clarify and analyse the reasons in order to improve the situation in the future. Particularly, the curriculum of higher education becomes a basis for preparing journalists who are able to analyse and synthesize issues, consider their professional duties, gain the required qualifications for the journalistic style of writing and follow the principles and teachings of free media. Therefore, research on the journalism curriculum at Mongolian universities has been conducted.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This article focuses on several projects and research which have been initiated by the state and universities in order to redesign and improve journalism curricula since 1990. Until 1990, the content of journalism curricula was based on the experiences of Soviet universities and reflected their national features. However, new principles and strategies started being implemented in the practice and theory of journalism in the 1990s when Mongolia introduced a new policy for their foreign relations. However, there were still several issues at many journalism training institutions regarding the curriculum, insufficient training resources and materials, lack of both professional teachers and subjects. Therefore, the research project “The current situation and future perspectives of journalism training in Mongolia” was conducted by the Open Society Institute /Soros Foundation/ and NUM Journalism Department in 1998.

As a result of this, the importance of redesigning the content of journalism training was investigated. Based on the findings of this project, another 3-year research project “Improving the journalism curriculum at Mongolian universities” was implemented by the NUM Journalism Department and Missouri University in the USA in 1999. As a result of this research project, the main documentation including the curriculum at the NUM was redesigned, made it closer to the global standards and offered to all institutions preparing journalists. Afterwards, the Mongolian National Council of Standards and Measurement approved the bachelor’s degree program standard for ‘Journalism’ in 2003. The Law of Education (2006) requires all higher education institutions to adhere to the higher education standards that are set down in this Law. It is the document which determines the main principles in the content of higher education, its evaluation, and the professional level of teachers and institutions. The journalism training standard is based on the sample rule of the Mongolian Ministry of Education, Culture and Sciences (MECS), and some aspects of the education standards of developed countries (USA, Russia, Germany) are considered in it (Maulet, 2013). As a result of this standard, the percentage of new trends and practical subjects was increased in the curriculum and for the first time the standard combining both theory and practice was approved. Therefore, journalism students complete about 60 different courses in which they earm 124-128 credit hours for their 4-year bachelor's degree course. Professional subjects account for 55% of the curriculum and practical subjects, 44%. The MECS of Mongolia demands that journalism training institutions follow this standard so the curricula and their content at different institutions are similar. However, those institutions may enrich the curricula in terms of their features. Therefore, the universities redesign the content of the curriculum every 2-3 years and they are approved by the Department of Professional Education of the MECS. This is one of the biggest improvements which were made in journalism training since 1990. Due to the research project and standards, the quality of journalism training has been improving (Author citation, 2013). However, the implementation process of this research project was completed in 2009 and the pace of improving the standards is slow at the moment. Therefore, this standard cannot meet the modern needs of the journalism training.

In 2010, the Journalism College of the Press Institute decided to translate "Model curricula for journalism education in developing and democratic countries", which is one of the journalism education series by UNESCO (2006), and deliver it to the universities in order to prepare to design a model curriculum for Mongolian journalism education. Within the scope of this initiative, 7 curricula for basic journalism and practical journalism were improved and one new curriculum for development journalism was designed. This was done through the cooperation of ten state and private universities and their professors, who worked on this in groups in order to compare the curricula. As a result, the model curriculum for Mongolian journalism has been completed. Although some universities have been using those 8 curricula, it has been criticised by the other professors' teams, who consider this curriculum model to be out of date and useful only for developing countries. In general, these steps played a major role in Mongolian journalism, although journalists who can compete in the international labor market have not yet been prepared.

There is a lack of research on the journalism curriculum in Mongolia. Therefore, the conference on "Improving the content of Journalism curriculum" was held and funded by the Soros Foundation in order to seek possible ways to solve issues facing journalism training. However, it could not focus on the journalism curriculum, instead it discussed the changes in higher education, the methodology of teaching specific subjects and effective ways of organizing practice. In this conference, the difficulties of journalism training were explained in terms of the qualifications of professional teachers, resources, materials and qualities of students (Lhagvasuren, 2001, p. 28). Additionally, some researchers wrote an article for the NUM's prestigious scientific journal "Journalism" on the quality of Mongolian journalism training after comparing training in Mongolia and India (Norovsuren, 2012). However, they still considered the reasons regarding the training environment, teachers and resources and could not recommend how to improve the quality of journalism training in Mongolia (Dorjgotov, 2011). Other articles published in the journal suggested some ways to improve the standards for Mongolian journalism training curriculum. These proved that researchers do not consider the curriculum as an important aspect of journalism training when they approach the issues investigating difficulties and possible ways to improve the journalism training. However, it should be pointed out that the curriculum is the key documentation which describes required knowledge and skills of graduates.

METHOD

This article analyses the journalism curricula of 19 universities in Mongolia and includes a focus group interview to collect the data from the heads of the journalism departments. The article compared the two main surveys; “Current circumstances of Mongolian journalism training” from the journalism teachers and administration of those 19 universities in February 2013 and “Satisfaction survey among journalism students” which involved students majoring in journalism in April 2011.

SAMPLE

A journalism curriculum is designed based on the laws of Mongolian education, international trends of journalism higher education and comparison of foreign universities that offer similar programs. The curriculum in Mongolian higher education consists of 4 main components; general basics /A/, professional basics /B/, specializations/C/ and internship /D/. The structure is drawn, as follows: A:B:C:D=40-42: 50-52: 28-32: 5 credit hours. The general basics include subjects which students must study in order to obtain higher education in Mongolia such as philosophy, politics and culture studies that contain the required knowledge of democracy and development that are included by UNESCO in the evaluation criteria of academic training programs. Professional basics contain the necessary subjects which journalism students must study and include the theory of journalism, theory of pubic communication, journalistic style of writing and editing methodology. Specializations focus on the subjects providing specific knowledge and skills such as ecology journalism, investigative journalism, studies and criticism of journalism and advertisement of public media. In addition to those subjects, students can choose subjects related to media such as the radio, television and newspapers, depending on their future working fields.

Table 2 shows the comparative structure of the NUM journalism curriculum in order to illustrate the general structure of journalism curriculum in the democratic period. The NUM is the oldest university and has been offering journalism courses for the longest time in Mongolia.

TABLE 2

Comparison of the NUM journalism education curricula in the democratic period

Journalism curricula (1996)	Journalism curricula (2003)	Journalism curricula (2014)
	Professional basics	
1. Theoretical foundation of journalism	1. Theory of journalism	1. Theory of journalism
2. Communication of majority	2. Newspaper photographs	2. Practical journalism- I
3. Newspaper photographs	3. Public communication	3. Practical journalism-II
4. Theory and Practice of the press	4. Journalist's skills	4. Practical journalism-III
5. News editing	5. History of Mongolian journalism	5. Journalist's ethics
6. Newspaper design	6. News editing	6. Journalist's skills
7. Journalist's skills	7. Foundation and organization of public media	7. Foundation and organization of public media
8. History of Mongolian journalism	8. Theory of social communication	8. Photojournalism
9. Foreign journalism	9. Newspaper design	9. Stylistics of an article and broadcast
10. Sociology of journalism	10. Studies of journalism	10. News editing methodology
11. Advertising	11. Practical journalism-I	11. Information and communication design
12. Journalist's ethics	12. Practical journalism-II	12. History of Mongolian journalism- I
13. Theory and methodology of journalism	13. Practical journalism-III	13. History of Mongolian journalism -II
	14. Television journalism	14. Radio journalism-I
	15. Radio television	15. Television journalism-I
	16. Foreign journalism	16. Public relations and communication
	17. Law of public media	17. Foreign journalism
		18. Law of public media
	Core specializations	
B. Elective units	A.Core units	Core units
1. Newspaper journalism	1. Management of public media	19. Advertising of public media
2. Radio journalism	2. Sociology of journalism	20. Management of public media
3. Television journalism	3. Journalism of ecology	21. Journalism of ecology
4. International journalism	4. Investigative journalism	22. Investigative journalism
		23. Journalism study and critique

	5. Advertising of public media B. Elective units 1. Newspaper journalism 2. Radio journalism II 3. Television journalism II 4. Advertising of public media II	24. Marketing of public media 25. Sociology of journalism 26. Theory of public relations \PR\ 27. Electronic press B. Elective units 1. Newspaper journalism 2. Radio journalism-II 3. Television journalism-II 4. Advertising of public media-II

According to the data in 1983, graduates of journalism courses studied 37 different courses for 4200 academic hours including “The history of Russian journalism”, “Press history of the party and state of the Soviet Union”, “Press history of Communist labor parties” and “Press history of the Mongolian People’s Republic”. In addition to this, 11 different courses were offered for about 1300 academic hours such as “Theory and practice in the Mongolian press”, “Technical formatting and design of newspaper”, “Photography”, “Elective courses” (Maulet & Lombo, 2010, p.17). It is seen that history subjects dominated in this period. In accordance with the tasks set by the Central Committee of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party, some professional subjects were taught in Russian.

Since 1990, the redesigned curriculum has been used according to the education systems of democratic societies and there has been a huge change in teaching methods, structure of subjects and terminologies. By 1996, history subjects, in particular the theory of the Communist Party, were taken out of the curriculum. However, only 14 of all 42 subjects were professional subjects and others were general basics including the study of economics and politics in order to provide basic knowledge of social science for journalists. In addition to this, there was a concern that journalists must be familiar with all areas of knowledge. Therefore, foundation courses in agriculture, history of arts, and the foundation of religion were introduced. There were 18 weeks for preparatory and final internships.

7 years later, the curriculum was changed dramatically as a result of the 3-year project "Improving the journalism curriculum" with professors of Missouri University and standards of journalism education. Due to this, the number of professional subjects increased, and now 23 of all 48 subjects are related to their profession. It should be emphasised that there are 3 levels of courses for practical journalism, including investigative journalism, environmental journalism, management and law of mass media. Currently, the NUM offers a 128-credit-hour journalism course in which professional, specialization and elective courses were increased up to 28 credit hours. They tried to include all issues related to journalism in this curriculum, such as public relations (PR), internet press, marketing of mass media, and stylistics of journalistic writing. There are 20-week internships in this curriculum. Lately, students are increasingly interested in public relations in addition to journalism. Therefore, the universities included public relations and advertising in their curriculum. It will help to expand students' flexibility in the labor market and also influence several issues such as journalists' salaries, changes in media technology and unclear market situations.

Table 3 presents the comparison of three of the 19 universities that offer journalism courses based on the results of the students' satisfaction survey which included 246 students of 18 universities and colleges. According to the survey, these 3 universities are ranked 2nd, 3rd and 5th on the list. The NUM ranks highest.

TABLE 3

Journalism curricula of the top universities delivering journalism education in Mongolia

Enrollment in local colleges, 2005

Mongolian State University of Education	Mongolian University of Culture and Arts – Institute of Radio and Television	University of the Humanities
	Professional basics	
1. Theory of social communication 2. Public relations 3. Law regulations of public media 4. History of foreign journalism 5. History of Mongolian journalism 6. Fundamental journalism –I 7. Fundamental journalism–II 8. Fundamental journalism- III 9. Fundamental journalism- IV 10. Practical journalism -1 11. Practical journalism -2 12. Practical journalism -3 13. Journalist's skills 14. Advertising of mass media 15. Press management-I 16. Press management –II 17. Journalist's ethics-I 18. Journalist's ethics-II 19. Research methodology and sociology of journalism 20. Internet journalism 21. Press design	1. Foundation of mass media 2. Rhetoric-I 3. Rhetoric -II 4. Foundation of journalism theory 5. History of Mongolian journalism 6. News editing 7. Journalist' ethics 8. Sociology of journalism 9. Theory of mass communication 10. Law regulation of mass media 11. Theory of Mongolian journalism 12. Research methodology 13. Investigative journalism 14. Management of mass media 15. Modern Mongolian language 16. Techniques, technology of radio and television 17. Digital journalism	1. Introduction of journalism theory 2. Theory of social information communication 3. Mass communication and society 4. Foundation and organization of mass media 5. Genre of writing 6. History of Mongolian journalism 7. History of the world journalism 8. Journalist's skills-I 9. Journalist's skills-II 10. Practical journalism-I 11. Practical journalism-II 12. Practical journalism-III 13. Radio journalism 14. Photo for newspaper 15. News editing 16. Journalist's ethics 17. Law and regulation of mass media 18. Investigative journalism
	Core specialization	
1. Modern Mongolian language-I 2. Modern Mongolian language-II 3. Development journalism 4. Stylistics-I 5. Stylistics-II 6. Mongolian literature -I 7. Mongolian literature-II	1. Basics of presenter's skills 2. Montage 3. Culture of presenter and sanitation 4. Radio production 5. Foreign journalism 6. Practical journalism-radio journalist's skill-I	1. Journalism critique and study 2. International journalism 3. Environmental journalism 4. Newspaper design 5. Data journalism 6. Public relations /PR/ 7. Management of mass media

8. Foreign literature-I 9. Foreign literature –II 10. Audio and video production 11. Radio and television journalism -I 12. Radio and television journalism –II	7. Practical journalism-radio journalist's skill-II 8. Practical journalism-television journalist's skill-I 9. Practical journalism-television journalist's skill-II 10. TV production 11. Public relations	8. Sociology of journalism 9. Citizen journalism 10. Journalism of politics 11. Journalism of economics 12. Online journalism
Journalist and photo journalist • Aesthetics • Foundation of investigative journalism • Journalism of politics • Culture and civilization • Photo journalism • News editing methodology • Modern issues of journalism **Journalist** • Journalism of economics and business • News editing methodology • Journalism studies and critique • Journalism of culture and arts • Methodology of investigative journalism • Citizen journalism • Theoretical and practical issues of journalism	*Elective units* 1. Journalist's skills 2. Stylistics 3. Foundation of camera processor 4. Foundation of drama	• Foundation of advertising • Interactive multimedia • Tele journalism **Tele-journalist** • Theory and practice of tele-journalism • Professional skills of tele-journalist • Technical activities of television **Multimedia journalist** • Digital media • Writing for web • Development of multimedia **Advertising copywriter** • Theory and practice of advertising • Artistic creation of advertising • Methodology of advertising organization
1. Introductory internship 2. Workplace internship 3. Final internship before graduation	*Internship* 1. Introductory internship 2. Workplace internship 3. Final internship before graduation	1. Introductory internship 2. Workplace internship 3. Final internship before graduation
Total	**998**	**908**

This comparison shows that the structures of the curricula are fairly similar (Table 3). These curricula are also similar to the structure of the NUM curriculum. The reason is that the MECS demands that universities follow the old journalism standards and most universities use the NUM journalism curriculum as a model.

From the research findings, although the curricula are fairly similar, every university has its own features and advantages. For instance, the University of the Humanities prepares journalists with knowledge of information technology and included these types of subjects in the curriculum. The Mongolian State University of Education focuses on journalistic writing skills and preparing newspaper journalists. Therefore, there is great emphasis on modern Mongolian language, stylistics and literature in the curriculum. The Institute of Radio and Television of the University of Culture and Arts is recognized for training radio and television journalists, thus its main focus is on hosting skills, the culture of hosts, montage and skills of radio and television journalists.

The comparison of the 19 curricula reveals that 16 subjects, including the theory of journalism, skills of journalists, practical journalism, journalist's ethics, foundation of mass media, history of Mongolian journalism, history of foreign journalism, editing methodology, sociology of journalism, advertising of mass media, law of mass media, newspaper design, photo journalism, investigative journalism, radio journalism and tele-journalism are included in all curricula. However, journalism of politics, journalism of business and economics, citizen journalism are in only 12 curricula (63%). Online journalism study and critiques are in 8 curricula (42%), international journalism is in 6 curricula (32%), theory of social communication and public relations are in 5 curricula (26%). Furthermore, development journalism, data journalism, interactive multimedia, digital media, writing for web, development of multimedia, mass information communication and society, mass information communication, marketing of mass media, journalism of culture and arts, production of audio and video, and culture of hosting are included in only one curriculum.

According to the findings from the professors' surveys, although the current standard of journalism does not meet the current needs adequately, professors use them as a model and some of UNESCO's sample curriculum is included as well. The answers given by professors are very similar. One of the survey participants, a professor at the Ulaanbaatar Erdem Oyu University said, "My university designs our curriculum based on the curriculum of the journalism department at Moscow University". The head of the Otgontenger University journalism department answered that they use the curriculum of the Uralian University, Russia as a model and Ming Chuan University, Taiwan, as well because they have a student exchange program with Ming Chuan University.

Those universities follow the Russian style curriculum because their professors who graduated from Russian universities and have used this for many years. The head of the Journalism Department of the Mongolian State University of Education completed a masters' degree in England so its curriculum follows liberal journalism standards, while the head, who graduated from the Uralian University, uses the Russian standards. Therefore, it is evident that curriculum design depends on the department head's educational background and the language they use for research and study. The universities in this comparison determine their features through practice-dominated courses. However, the research shows that they are theory-dominated courses. Generally, it is not easy to organize practice-dominated training in the current Mongolian situation because of a lack of modern materials and techniques in which the training is held in order to bring their theory and practice closer together.

Although most universities have their own studios, computer laboratories, and other equipment for reporting, many of the facilities are not sufficient for all students and can be used properly only for a few tasks. In other words, there is limited press production at universities. According to the research, 5 universities who offer journalism courses do not have a professional studio or a single camera.

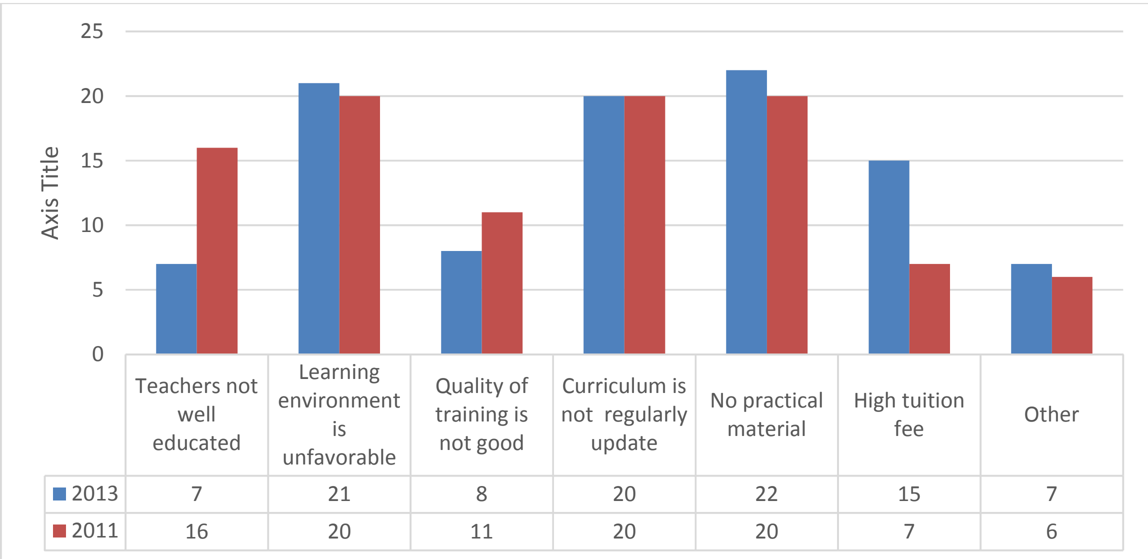
The Press Institute's Journalist College could establish its image as a practice-dominated training institution. They design the journalism curriculum based on Arhus University, Denmark, and Missouri University. However, their training does not yet meet western standards, because the training returned to the Mongolian model after the Danish professors left the country. The research which aimed at determining the current situations and problems facing Mongolian journalism involved the professors and head of the department. They think that the journalism training is criticized by both the Press Institute and the public because the the students' low level of knowledge and insufficient equipment. Only 10% of the professors think that the curriculum should be developed or redesigned.

The survey which was conducted in 2014 revealed that 67% of the universities redesigned the curriculum in 2013 and the rest of them were thinking of changing their curricula in 2014 but they didn't know what kinds of changes had to be made. In other words, these universities argued that they had always improved their curricula so they considered that the curricula that they were using met the desired standards. Although universities redevelop their curricula once every 3-4 years, it has not brought any decisive advantages yet. In most cases, basic subjects which are approved by the MECS are changed and then the curricula has to be changed. The main changes in the curricula include several subjects such as citizen journalism, journalism of economics, journalism of politics, online journalist and development journalism.

The findings of the satisfaction survey of journalism students which was conducted in 2011 and 2013 illustrated that 65% of the students answered that they were satisfied with their journalism course. This is better than the finding in 2011 which revealed 56% satisfaction. Additionally, the students who were not satisfied with their course explained their reasons in terms of the lack of resources, inappropriate learning environment and curricula.

Figure 1

The reasons for dissatisfaction



	Teachers not well educated	Learning environment is unfavorable	Quality of training is not good	Curriculum is not regularly update	No practical material	High tuition fee	Other
2013	7	21	8	20	22	15	7
2011	16	20	11	20	20	7	6

Although the majority of students (65%) were planning to work in the television sector in 2011, the number of those students decreased by 2% in 2013. In addition to this, 16% of students want to work in the department of public relations, 13% in newspapers, 6% in radios, and 2% in internet sites.

According to the research results, the modern students wanted to study more courses such as skills of radio and television hosts (44%), computer and graphic design (21%), online journalism (14%), skills of journalists (14%) and other important subjects (7%). Judging from this research, students are mostly interested in the television sector because of the television "flood" which occurred in Mongolia in recent years. In 2014, there were 138 regular television channels and 24 cable channels in Mongolia. It seems that Mongolian students prefer the television sector while American students are keener on digital journalism (Becker et all., 2012, p. 345).

CONCLUSION

To sum up, journalism education at Mongolian state and private universities is still following the traditional Soviet-style curricula. The journalism curricula are out of date regarding societal and technological developments as well as people's attitudes towards information. However, researchers have focused on curricula less and the state requires the universities to follow the old standards. In this case, the curricula which were designed based on the old standards that were approved 10 years later cannot be changed. Furthermore, there are several issues which influence the quality of journalism training, such as restrictions in curricula choice, and the lack of a general idea in the content and quality. The universities do not consider the needs and wishes of employers, civil society, and research organizations when they design the curricula.

Although some changes have been made at universities depending on their features, it is time to change the journalism curricula entirely. The role of journalism has been increasing in our rapidly developing society in terms of its power to influence the society's psychology. On the other hand, journalism as a unique element of the social and political structure has to be changed. As a result, the role, goals, statutes and new information technology should be considered at a different level. It is necessary to change the curricula for all those reasons.

Curricula require ongoing development and improvement so that students are able to learn every single change in of the media sector and professors need to improve themselves professionally. Two main curricula changes in Mongolian journalism training are required:

- It is necessary to increase the number of curricula which develop students' basic knowledge and professional value. As a result, a journalist who is aware of a valuable component of civil democratic principle illustrates the history of his/her country and other nationalities through pluralism, respect for others' views in a conflicted situation and is able to analyse events and issues objectively, is good at making decisions and able to take responsibility for both him/herself and others. Therefore, the curricula must emphasize critical thinking, curiosity and knowledge about the world and humanitarian journalism and intercultural journalism according to the UNESCO model curricula (2013) as well.
- Moreover, students should gain required qualifications for modern journalism and be able to make changes, taking into consideration the advantages of modern science and technology. It is expected that digital journalism will continue to develop rapidly because of the various information channels. In this case, it is impossible to use the traditional, old-fashioned curricula. Therefore, writing for the web, using the web reporting, using social media, animation for the web, digital storytelling, creating and using blogs, creating content for mobile devices, mapping and geo-tagging should be included in the new curricula.

DISCUSSION

All in all, the outcomes of the Mongolian journalism training have already created its space and offer all levels of academic courses from undergraduate to postgraduate levels to prepare the human resources for Mongolian media locally. Journalism training has enough highly qualified professors and its own curricula as well. However, there are a number of issues facing Mongolian universities that are offering journalism courses such as renewing the standards and curricula, organizing practice-dominated training, enriching technical and personnel resources, providing professional development programs for professors, improving the quality of the training, improving the quality of the textbooks and materials that have been used and improve the new students' basic knowledge. All universities and institutions agree on these issues. It is necessary to increase the number of students because the universities are funded by the students' tuition fees. In this case, there are limited opportunities for improving the learning environment and professional development of the professors. As a result, there is low-priced and low-quality education in the society and in turn, this increases the demand for qualified journalists. Maulet (2013), who is a professor in the NUM journalism department, presents his point on this issue, "Although having many universities brings advantages to the competition and improvement of pluralism in the society, it is too much for Mongolia to have 18 universities preparing journalists. In our case, 5 universities would be enough to prepare local journalists". Therefore, the Mongolian government should consider this issue seriously in order to raise the journalism training to the world standards through the appropriate policy on the organization of Mongolian journalism education in the higher education system.

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HELP WANTED:
Realigning journalism education to meet the needs of top U.S. news companies

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HELP WANTED:
Realigning journalism education to meet the needs of top U.S. news companies

Introduction

Journalism continues to find itself in an extended period of transformation and journalism educators face a number of obstacles in trying to keep up. According to a Knight Foundation report, U.S. journalism education faces three major hurdles: lack of currency and innovation in the curriculum, lack of faculty expertise in new media and accreditation standards that protect the status quo (Lynch, 2015). Complicating all of this is the fact that journalism itself has never been clearly defined. Ivor Shapiro (2014) puts it well, “Scholarly definitions of the notion of “journalism” have been rare and often unsatisfactory.” Part of the challenge is likely that, while the core principles of relevance, accuracy and timeliness have remained, when it comes to the presentation of news, journalism has been completely deconstructed. Ultimately, it’s hard to know what to teach and how to teach it when those goals are a moving target.

However, achieving currency gets easier when educators have a firm understanding of today’s newsroom practices. In a content analysis involving more than 1,100 job openings posted in 2015 by the top ten newspaper companies and top ten broadcast journalism companies in the United States, the researchers reached a number of conclusions, including findings that journalists now need to know as much about social media as they do about writing, and that audience engagement is emerging as a critical skill in newsrooms.

The authors suggest that this analysis be used to re-examine existing curricula in journalism programs to create a more dynamic and relevant educational experience for students.

Literature Review

In his work on the societal functions of journalism, Donsbach (2014) concluded that practitioners are part of the "new knowledge profession." He determined that there are five areas of competence that need to be taught in academic programs to appropriately educate potential journalists, including mastery of current journalistic skills.

Other researchers have found that those working in journalism today have recognized the need to adapt their practices to newer technological capabilities and are doing so with little resistance at this point (Ekdale et. al., 2015). To get a good sense of changes in current skills and practices, the authors believe that analyzing journalism employment listings offers unique and valuable insight. Employers of journalists obviously play a significant role in determining the nature of journalism, its practice and therefore journalism education as a whole. Journalism employers do this primarily through the people they hire. If a candidate has the skills and attributes the news organization needs, he or she gets a job. Therefore, the authors believe employment listings are of particular value to educators trying to determine how best to prepare students for work in today's newsrooms and to anticipate emerging skill sets.

Ross (2016), too, suggests that this type of industry analysis has more value when the results are linked back to curriculum.

"While a growing body of academic research explores the evolution of production practices within formal news organizations, much less attention is paid to how journalism schools are addressing the demands of the profession in the twenty-first century. Strains on the traditional routines, practices and unwritten rules of news production challenge those involved in professional development to rethink the standards and skills they prioritize as they transmit knowledge to the next generation of news workers."

However, this "rethink" of journalism education is coming too slowly for some. A 2013 Poynter Institute study of journalism education found that just "39 percent of educators say journalism education keeps up with industry changes a little or not at all. News editors and staffers are even harsher, with 48 percent saying J-schools are not keeping up with changes in the field" (Lynch, 2015). Part of the issue may be that some faculty still fear that a focus on teaching technological skills turns journalism programs into job training centers versus institutes of higher learning. Auger et al. (2016) acknowledges that the goal of a multimedia curriculum should be one in which students are prepared both conceptually and practically. They studied the experience of students working with new and traditional technologies to develop and produce news stories and found that the students' technological and traditional skills were both stronger when practiced in tandem.

Journalism today does require a mix of old and new skills. Cleary and Cochie (2011) discovered a core skill set of writing, print design and editing copy in their content analysis of newspaper job advertisements over a 27-year period. In an examination of more than 200 print and broadcast reporter job advertisements, Massey (2010) found in addition to traditional journalism requirements, nearly 40 percent of print and 30 percent of broadcast listings required web-posting skills.

This study's authors have also found core skills such as writing, working under tight deadlines, and enterprising remain among journalism employers' most desired traits

(Wenger et al. 2010; 2012). However, the demand for multiplatform skills continues to steadily rise, as job postings are increasingly listing skills involving online content production, use of mobile apps and social media experience among job requirements (Wenger et al., 2014).

Whether educators are interested in the nearly complete overhaul recommended by the Knight Foundation and others or simply focused on adding currency to existing courses, this paper offers a unique methodology and data set with an authentic view of the needs of the profession.

Research Questions

RQ1: What newsroom positions are companies seeking to fill?

RQ2: What employee job skills and attributes do journalism employers find most desirable overall, and for multiplatform positions specifically?

RQ2: Which skills and attributes are emerging as important job requirements in a majority of job posts?

Methodology

A quantitative content analysis was performed on job postings from 15 media companies: Lee, New York Times, Media News Group, McClatchy, Advance, Berkshire-Hathaway, Gannett, News Corp, CBS, Tribune, Univision, Comcast, Hearst, Disney and Sinclair. The companies were the largest news media companies in the United States, according to a Pew Research Center report (2015), which ranked companies by revenue.

The authors collected job postings from the news divisions of the companies' publically accessible websites, for a three-month period, January 15, 2015 to March 15, 2015. Only job postings for newsroom positions were taken for analysis. Jobs in departments such as sales, promotions, advertising and engineering were not collected. On the first visit to the websites, all existing job postings listed as "current" that met the criteria were collected, not just the postings dated January 15, 2015. On the daily subsequent visits, only new postings were collected. In total, 1108 job postings were collected.

The job postings were coded by one of the study's authors for job title, job type (multiple platform, broadcast, print or online), attributes and skills required. The coding sheet was based on previous studies done by the authors (Wenger et al., 2010; 2012; 2014). Those coding sheets were developed after analyzing hundreds of job postings and noting the most common skills and attributes requested.

Results

The study yielded 1108 job postings. Analyzing the postings by job title, the ten most sought after positions were reporter (n=330), producer (n=134), web writer (n=88), photographer (n=72), internships/non-paid positions (n=71), web producer (n=68), anchor (n=66), editor (n=61), executive producer (n=43), and assignment editor (n=40).

Coding for "job type" involved creating broad categories based on the job duties described in the postings. "Multiple platform" positions, defined as those that reference as many as 20 cross-platform skills and attributes in a single advertisement, was the largest job type in the study, with 48.4% (n=537) postings falling into the category. More traditional broadcast and print positions (which did not specifically detail a large number of duties on multiple platforms) accounted for 39.7% (n=440) and 8.6% (n=95) of positions respectively. Job postings that detailed duties limited to the web were categorized as online-only positions (3.2%, n=36).

Top jobs within category

The job titles that most often required multiple platform skills were reporters (37.6%), web writers (14.3%), web producers (7.8%), editors (6.7%) and producers (6.3%).

In the broadcast category, 20.7% of job listings were for producers, 20.2% for reporters, 11.9% for anchors, 10.5% for photographers and 7.7% for executive producers.

In the print category, the most postings were for the job titles reporter (35.8%), copyeditor (17.9%), editor (12.6%), entry level/assistants (10.5%) and internships (8.4%).

Finally, the top positions in the online-only jobs category were web producer (44.4%), web writer (16.7%), reporter (13.9%), social media producer (8.3%), and internship (5.6%).

Top skills and attributes required for multiplatform jobs.

For the purposes of this paper, the authors have chosen to focus primarily on job postings coded as requiring prospective employees to work across multiple platforms. This group of employment listings made up the largest job category with more than 500 jobs coded. This significant sample size gives the researchers confidence in the relevance of the findings.

Within this job category, ten skills and attributes were specified most often: web/multimedia skills (appeared in 79.5% of postings), previous experience (76.5%), strong writing skills (71.1%), social networking skills (70%), team player (65%), news judgment (63.1%), ability to work under tight deadlines/pressure (60.7%), mobile skills (59.8%), aggressive (54.6%) and shooting/photography skills (53.4%).

Top skills and attributes required overall

Compare the multiple platform results to the findings for all 1108 job postings coded. The ten attributes specified most often for all the jobs analyzed included: previous experience (appeared in 72.3% of job postings), web/multimedia skills (59.8%), team player (55.3%), strong writing (54.3%), ability to work under tight deadlines/pressure (52.9%), news judgment (47.7%), communication skills (43.9%), leadership (37.6%), ability to multitask (33.9%) and non-linear editing (32.4%). Table 1 further breaks down the results, detailing skills and attributes by job title.

Discussion & Conclusion

One reason why multiple platform positions emphasize social media and mobile skills, as well as an aggressive nature and visual journalism capabilities is that the bulk of the reporter positions in the study were coded as multiple platform jobs. Producers, editors and other behind the scenes personnel were more likely to list communication skills, leadership, and ability to multitask as key skills and attributes. But nearly all journalism jobs are changing as the nature of the work journalists do is fundamentally shifting.

Evolving Job Duties

Overall, 2015 job postings were more detailed and lengthy than in years past. There were still, of course, those postings that were very short and had fewer than 5 required skills and attributes (11%), but those were in the minority. In fact, 9 percent of positions referenced at least 20 attributes and skills as requirements. Employers clearly seem to be demanding more from prospective hires.

For job listings categorized as "multiple platform" positions, the researchers found that the posts invariably used the phrase "across all platforms," when describing the work job candidates must do. For example, if a reporting job for a television station listed as many or more multimedia skills as it did traditional broadcast skills, it was coded as multiple platform. Here's an excerpt including a partial list of skills and attributes from one entry level, multiple platform employment post:

> "This reporter must be able to break news quickly as well as produce enterprise and watchdog stories by parsing public records and documents, using data and cultivating sources.
>
> You should be a self-starter comfortable working in multiple types of media: reporting and writing stories; shooting photos and videos with an iPhone; and immersed in the networks of social media to help spread the word about your great work.
>
> You should be nimble and able to tailor your approach to stories to satisfy audiences viewing your work in print or on a desktop browser, mobile device or tablet.
>
> But we also want you to cover the news, efficiently and concisely, and break important stories before anyone else."

For those in the industry, this is not news; however, this is an important finding for journalism educators to consider fully. The employment listing above is for an entry-level newspaper reporter job. How many of the reporting classes in your journalism program are incorporating the breadth of skills listed above into the coursework required? Yet, this type of skill set and attribute list is what the industry demands of our journalism graduates from the very start of their careers.

Social Focus For Jobs

Nearly two-thirds of U.S. adults (62%) get some of their news from social media and almost one-fifth (18%) do so regularly, according to a new survey by Pew Research Center. In 2012, based on a slightly different question, 49% of U.S. adults reported seeing news on social media (Pew Research, 2016).

The authors, too, have been tracking social media mentions in job postings since 2012. It is not surprising that references to the need for social media skills grew over time for all journalism positions analyzed and were of particular importance for jobs coded as multiple platform. In 2012, 30 percent of all posts referenced social networking (Wenger & Owens, 2013) and that percentage increased to 48.5 percent in 2015. Focusing solely on multiple platform positions, 70 percent of job postings reference a need for those skills.

The Pew Research found that after Reddit, Facebook was the social network with the largest percentage of users who get their news there. In terms of social networks used by journalists on the job, the authors did not code for Reddit, but did find Facebook to be the most important social network for journalists with 13 percent of all employment listings referencing it specifically. Twitter received mentions in 11 percent of posts and

Instagram in 5.3 percent. Snapchat, Vine and Pinterest were referenced in less than 1 percent of posts, though the Snapchat percentage will be one to monitor over time.

For educators, the big takeaway is that, although strong writing skills were referenced in 71.1 percent of multiplatform posts, social networking skills were mentioned in 70 percent. Yet, how many journalism programs spend as much time on social media instruction as they do on writing?

A scan of the academic literature on the topic of best practices for teaching about social media in journalism education unearths just a few publications. Studies conducted as late as 2011 found that students were sometimes reluctant to share publically via social media, having previously used social tools with friends only. Instructors sometimes reacted by using closed groups, which limited the students' ability to establish professional networks and to interact with the public (Cochrane et. al., 2013). Other challenges to making social media instruction more fully integrated into journalism courses include the need for journalism educators to "up-skill" in both technical and theoretical competency with social media tools, etiquette and techniques (Hirst, 2011).

However, Bor (2014) found that in response to the growing demand for digitally competent employees in the news media industry, journalism schools are cautiously integrating social media reporting into their curriculum. Findings from Bor's study "suggest that curriculum should include emphasis on ethics, technical skills, and the potential for career development. In addition, differentiation between personal and professional social media use should be recognized."

More recently, schools like the University of Southern California's Annenberg School of Communication and Journalism have created a class to produce stories directly for social media platforms. This type of course acknowledges the importance of social media as news distribution channel in its own right (NiemanLab, 2015). Yet, even the schools that are trying to increase the emphasis on social media instruction are most often creating these courses as electives that serve just a small number of students. And though there are many required journalism courses that include a healthy dose of writing, this research suggests that social media is as important and essential to the job of a journalist as broad-based writing skills and should be fully integrated into journalism curricula at this point, as social media are de rigueur in employment listings, as exemplified by these excerpts describing an opening for a breaking news producer:

> "From editing to taking reports from the field and doing rewrite to posting to social media and sending push alerts, this digital producer will exercise and develop skills in many areas.
>
> Posts, packages and creates digital-specific breaking-news content, including photo galleries, graphics, links, videos and interactives. Sends push/text and email alerts with urgency and accuracy.
>
> Writes platform-appropriate headlines and social-media posts that are engaging, enticing, tone-appropriate and maximizes SEO."

For this producer job, the requirements included a bachelor's degree with an "internship or previous professional experience preferred." This is not a position targeting a professional with years of experience; rather it's an entry-level job to which any recent journalism school graduate should feel qualified to apply. This is the skill set the industry demands from journalism degree holders.

Addressing Emerging Challenges

One of the advantages to the longitudinal nature of this research is to track the emergence of skills and attributes that are beginning to resonate within the profession. In 2012, the authors found that knowledge of audience analytics was referenced in just 5 percent of the postings. In 2015, that percentage had increased to 16 percent. Focusing on multiple platform jobs specifically, we see analytics referenced in 30 percent of the positions. Common phrases used to describe desirable traits for many of the jobs were "building, maintaining and engaging the audience," "using metrics to re-evaluate tactics," and "must build community engagement." Here’s an example from an entry-level job with a local newspaper:

> “As a local reporter, you will leverage your strong reporting background, story-telling skills and news judgment to break news and deliver penetrating beat coverage and enterprise work. We are building a team of top talent in a truly collaborative, performance-based environment that values high-quality reporting and audience engagement across our leading print and digital platforms.”

Research on the practice of monitoring audience to help make journalistic decisions reveals why it’s becoming more important for individual journalists, not just editors and other news managers, to be well aware of audience response to their work. Shoemaker and Vos (2009) propose audiences are acting as secondary gatekeepers, telling journalists via web analytics what stories are popular and in turn shaping journalistic decisions. According to Örnebring (2010) this influence can lead to a change in values within newsrooms.

All of which frightens some journalism educators who quickly raise concerns about pandering and invoke the journalist’s responsibility to inform the public about issues that matter. However, the surest way to promote the misuse of audience analytics is to fail to develop an understanding of how the data can be used to improve quality journalism. Certainly understanding what formats and subjects resonate with audience can be helpful in determining how to frame important stories.

Rather than creating standalone courses that offer a deep dive into analytics, though that may be appropriate in some instances, educators can introduce students to key concepts by publicly publishing content produced in classes and then using Twitter Analytics, Facebook Insights or Google Analytics – all free tools that require nothing more than those social media accounts or a website to start collecting and interpreting data. This practical application of the tools allows instructors the opportunity to discuss how and when audience preferences should primary factors considered when making news judgments and prepares graduates who want to apply for jobs like this:

> "Digital producers manage the delivery of content across multiple platforms. They work on deadline and understand the need for posting and pushing content as quickly as possible.
>
> Engage with readers by posting links, questions or promotions of Star content to social media and interact with commenters in a professional manner.
>
> Use provided online analytics tools to track page views, comments and social media engagement - and uses that information to make content more or less prominent."

The job indicated 2-3 years of work experience is ideal, but indicated the employers would consider candidates with work on a college newspaper. Educators are encouraged to think about the doors we could open for students by incorporating instruction related to analytics and audience engagement into our classrooms.

Traditional skills matter, but morph

Adding a layer of complexity to the discussion is the fact that the ability to write well is the first or second most commonly referenced skill, regardless of job category. For multiple platform positions, writing was mentioned in 71.1% of posts, for online jobs 66.7%, print (55.8%) and broadcast (51.4%). However, in the multiple platform world this research illuminates, it’s imperative that writing instruction be comprehensive enough that graduates can move seamlessly among various writing styles.

The research also indicates that the ability to work as a team player is an essential attribute whether the position involves online (80.6%), multiple platform work (65%), print (48.4%) or broadcast (34.5%). In fact, more than half of all jobs demand this attribute in employment listings. Developing curricula that promote collaborative learning opportunities for students as a critical outcome of core courses could do much to prepare them for industry expectations. Other top skills and attributes include the ability to work on tight deadlines and a broad set of web/multimedia skills. Yet, too many instructors give their students days to complete projects and resist designing assignments that mimic real-world reporting and publishing situations.

The Knight Foundation’s look at the future of journalism finds journalism curricula lacking in currency and suggests that the “capacity to identify and master emerging market trends and media technologies and to integrate them quickly into journalistic work—is as critical to credible journalism education as command of Associated Press style and the inverted pyramid used to be” (Lynch, 2015).

For educators who are not yet ready to give up on some of the traditions within journalism instruction, our hope is that they will at least consider how they can foster as many of these news skills and attributes as possible, if they are to help their students succeed. With limited instructional time, those tasked with preparing future journalists need to be willing to reconsider whether current approaches are creating the types of journalists sought by the profession.

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TABLE 1: Top 5 Skills and Attributes Requested in Job Postings by Job Title

	1	2	3	4	5
Reporter (n=330)	Previous Experience (77.9%)	Writing (72.7%)	Web/Multimedia (69.4%)	Social Networking (64.8%)	Enterprising (57.9%)
Producer (n=136)	Writing (78.6%)	Previous Experience (71.4%)	Tight Deadlines (57.1%)	Web/Multimedia (55.6%)	News Judgment (54%)
Editor (n=61)	Previous Experience (70.5%)	Web/Multimedia (57.4%)	Leadership (55.7%)	Tight Deadlines (55.7%)	Proofreading (49.2%)
Director (n=5)	Prev. Exp. (100%)	Communication Skills (80%)	Leadership (80%)	Multitasking (80%)	Tight Deadlines (80%)
Assign. Editor (n=40)	Web/Multimedia (67.5%)	Prev. Experience (65%)	Tight Deadlines (60%)	Storytelling (56%)	Enterprising (45%)
Photographer (n=72)	Shooting/Photography (84.7%)	Editing (83.3%)	Previous Experience (72.2%)	Storytelling (55.6%)	Team Player (52.8%)
Anchor (n=66)	Previous Experience (83.3%)	Writing (72.7%)	Web/Multimedia (71.2%)	Team Player (60.6%)	Enterprising (50%)
Executive Producer (n=43)	Previous Experience (95.3%)	Leadership (81.4%)	Creativity (53.5%)	News Judgment (51.2%)	Team Player (44.2%)
Writer (n=25)	Writing (80%)	Previous Experience (68%)	Tight Deadlines (56%)	Web/Multimedia (52%)	Team Player (48%)
Copyeditor (n=32)	Previous Experience (81.3%)	Tight Deadlines (75%)	Proofreading (62.5%)	Communication Skills (59.4%)	News Judgment (59.4%)
Web Producer (n=68)	Web/Multimedia (67.6%)	Previous Experience (80.9%)	Team Player (69.1%)	News Judgment (67.6%)	Posting to web (62.5%)
Web Writer (n=88)	Web/Multimedia (83%)	Shooting/Photography (83%)	Previous Experience (81.8%)	Writing (80.7%)	Posting to web (73.9%)
Entry Level/Assistants (n=21)	Tight Deadlines (76.2%)	Writing (76.2%)	Multitasking (71.4%)	Long Hours (57.1%)	Communication Skills (42.9%)
News Director/Management (n=32)	Leadership (87.5%)	Previous Experience (78.1%)	Team Player (65.6%)	Web/Multimedia (62.5%)	Tight Deadlines (46.9%)
Internship/Non-paid (n=71)	Tight Deadlines (52.1%)	Team Player (46.5%)	Communication Skills (40.8%)	Web/Multimedia (36.6%)	Writing (35.2%)
Social Media Producer (n=18)	Communication Skills (66.7%)	News Judgment (66.7%)	Team Player (66.7%)	Web/Multimedia (66.7%)	Multitasking (61.1%)

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Innovation Pedagogy in Journalism Teaching

Purpose, objectives and research questions:

The aim of this study was to show how to integrate Innovation Pedagogy into journalism and ICT teaching while creating a new product for a local media company. The objectives of the study were to create a new course model in which students from different degree prorgammes learn and create products and services together in three different stages: networked and collaborative learning, group-based learning and individual learning.

The research questions were:

1) How does innovation pedagogy support the achievement of learning outcomes?
2) What type of collaborative learning, group-based learning and individual learning is found in the context of the two different degree programmes?
3) What are the roles of the commissioning company and the teachers in the innovation and learning process and what are their opinions about the whole process?

The data were collected during the autumn semester 2015 by interviewing the students and the commissioning company, assessing the innovation process and documents produced collaboratively, assessing the individual and group assignments as well as the final outcome of the new product by using the learning pyramid (see Kettunen, Kairisto-Mertanen & Penttilä 2013).

Background:

The world of media is changing at an accelerating pace as are the teaching methods for journalism. Making news, reports, magazines, newspapers, online journalism and participating in social media is not enough. Journalists nowadays work as producers, social media architects, bloggers or vloggers, curators, co-creators, data analysts and entrepreneurs – all the while adapting to and adopting innovative new media products (Dyer 2015; Blanding 2015; LeComte 2015; Seitz 2015; Watson 2015). New skills are thus needed for work (Bedwell, Fiore & Salas 2014; Robles 2012; Wardrope 2002), at the same time schools and universities need to promote high quality teaching. The current discussions about educational policy often seek innovations that may help educational systems prepare students for a changing world (Vieluf, Kaplan, Klieme, & Bayer 2012).

Integrating innovation into journalism teaching is a demanding task and raises at least these questions: Why does our society need new innovations? What is innovation? What is pedagogy? Society needs a new approach to innovation that aligns the needs of human beings and the natural world because technological innovations are unable to do that alone (Brown 2009). Many countries like Singapore, China, Korea and India are investing in educational systems by embedding innovative thinking throughout their curricula (Beckman & Barry 2007). Innovation is a new product, idea or the further development of an existing product, service, process or method and it creates added values for its users (Kirkland & Sutch 2009). "*Good pedagogy requires a broad repertoire of strategies and sustained attention to what produces student learning in a specific content domain*" (Chapuis 2003). Pedagogy can be seen as enhancing student learning and the way teachers facilitate learning. Innovation Pedagogy and Innovative Pedagogy are new learning approaches that are similar. Innovation Pedagogy prepares citizens for the digital knowledge society and educates people who are creative, and able to manage and analyse information and work with knowledge.

Miles and Louis (1990) claim that universities can offer support conditions for innovation as well as for being innovative. Universities can also excite change and encourage improvements in universities. (Darling-Hammond, 1996; Little, 2002; McLaughlin & Talbert, 1993).

The background theory is based on Design Thinking and Innovation Pedagogy.
Design thinking can be described as a conversation process that starts with a description of the project's goal and ends with the representation of the goal (Nagai & Nouguchi, 2003). Charles Owen (1998) stresses that design is a creation process through which we employ tools and language to invent artifacts and institutions. As society has evolved, so has our ability to design. A design thinking process has recognisable phases, and these, while not always in the same order, they nearly always begin with the analytical phases of searching for and understanding information and data, and end with synthetic phases of experimentation and invention.

Tim Brown (2009) says that Design Thinking contains three general phases to get the product from the project room to the market: inspiration to find out the opportunity; an ideation phase, which means generating and testing the ideas; and during the implementation phase the innovation, product or service is made ready for the market. While moving through these three phases one must keep in mind the intersection of three constraints: feasibility, viability and desirability. Design thinkers must find solutions to all these constraints and also go through four mental stages. The first stage is divergent thinking, which generates alternatives to the current reality, for example, by using ethnographic observation and finding practical solutions to the customer's proposed journey. In the convergent thinking stage individuals must discover and study all options and then choose the best one. The analysis stage breaks patterns down. Finally, the synthesis stage identifies meaningful patterns (Brown 2009).

But using only Design Thinking is inadequate. When involving students in the innovation process we need a pedagogical approach as well. That is when Innovation Pedagogy enters the picture. Innovation Pedagogy is a practically oriented method and can be used for doing applied research. This new learning approach defines how knowledge is assimilated, produced and used while innovating. The research focus is on applied research and one vital aim is to enhance students' ability to participate in research and development activities with businesses and other organisations in society. Innovation competences are based on knowledge, skills and attitudes that can be developed by implementing new teaching and learning methods.

The learning outcomes are achieved in three different ways: individual, group-based and networked learning. Individual learning is broadened to group-based learning, which typically takes place in the classrooms, virtual networks, e-learning platforms, laboratories or other learning environments of the institution. Networked learning extends learning to regional development, international activities and electronic networks. Group-based learning is a good choice when learning is integrated into innovation, research and development projects and learning tasks include argumentative learning, negotiation and debating. Networked learning takes place when participating in demanding I&R&D projects and allows students to learn from their whole environment (Kettunen, Kairisto-Mertanen & Penttilä 2013). Innovation pedagogy also prepares citizens for the digital knowledge society and educates people to be creative and analytical and manage information.

Planning and conducting the course

The design of the new course started already in the spring 2015 by searching for a suitable pilot partner. The Finnish Broadcasting Company (YLE) was looking for a partner to create a new experimental service called YLE-visit and at the same time find a new use for the empty spaces on YLE's campus. YLE's need was to ideate new experiences for people who will participate in YLE-visit. Their target group is young adults 18 to 25 years old. Three negotiation rounds with Haaga-Helia lecturers (3) and YLE were needed before the assignment was agreed on and the contracts were signed.

The course started in August 2015 with a visit to YLE Campus. ICT and journalism students also had the possibility to get to know each other while asking questions of the YLE staff representing the company. The first step was to discover the group that will be the basic user of YLE-visit and to figure out the needs of the basic user. To find answers to the question of What appeals to the target group? students organised workshops, conducted interviews and benchmarked other media companies working both individually and in groups of five to seven students. There were five groups and 32 students, their learning and information sharing platform was Google Drive.

After collecting the research data, the students started ideating sessions in groups – they used both the Tecmarks 365 Ideating Tool and Idea Selection Tool (Tecmark 2015; Byttebier 2002). All ideas were written down for further use and the best ones were presented to YLE in a Grand Idea Workshop. At the same time, students took lectures about product development, prototyping and the changing media and business landscape. YLE also introduced what media and journalistic material could be used as the content of the new product, like historical photographs, video clips, news, sounds and stories and what kind of a copyright problems the use of old material has.

In September, at the Grand Idea Workshop, which was organized by using the learning café concept, the ideas of five groups were presented to the YLE representatives, who selected the winner to be prototyped. The winning idea was a mobile guest book – a combination of all ideas. In September ICT students started to make the prototype and the journalism students the content. After each step, the students commented on the product and prototype and on the content on Google Drive. The prototype was tested with the users of the target group. Finally in November the prototype was introduced to the YLE representatives.

Lessons learned

Each group had a final discussion with the lecturer to evaluate the learning outcomes of the course. They also presented a written self-evaluation and peer evaluation of their group mates. The learning outcomes, based on learning at all stages: individual, group and networks, were successfully achieved. The target group was engaged in the creation process and thus followed Design Thinking, and the project was interesting. Hence, Innovation Pedagogy can be said to support successful learning outcomes and simultaneously guide lecturers' work (See Brown 2009; Kettunen et al. 2013). However, students also stated that there was not enough co-operation or touch points with two degree students. The main problem was that most of the lectures were always on a different week day, hence organising the common workshops and visits to YLE was demanding. Even though students used Google Drive as an information sharing platform, they argued that face-to-face working would have been more fruitful.

Students also claimed that learning how the other students talk and study took time – ICT students used diagrams and images to present the prototype but did not fully explain how the prototype should work. Furthermore, journalism students wrote long feedback papers explaining what kind of content the prototype should contain and in which order to present it, but did not state where the content should go.

The commissioning company YLE was pleased with the results and wanted the prototype to be coded – this project continued in spring 2016.

The lecturers of the ICT and journalism courses had a common evaluation session in January 2016. All agreed the experiment was interesting and successful in its educational aims. It was decided that this teaching format would be continued with and that lectures should be on a fixed day and at a fixed time. Furthermore, it was decided that it would be useful if business students would join the course. Having students from ICT, journalism and business should give the commissioning company a wider perspective on a project's commercial potential and the students could work in groups that mix the study disciplines. Thus, it is now necessary to negotiate with a company in order to acquire a new commission for our students.

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The challenges of anonymous source stories appearing in the dailies of the Solomon Islands

By EDDIE OSIFELO

The nation of the Solomon Islands has encountered many challenges since gaining its independence from Great Britain in 1978. The challenges include politics, economics and social aspects. Media, which was a partner in the country's transition period, has also faced many challenges from government, politicians and the citizens for its role in informing the people. As a young growing industry with a lot of inexperienced journalists in newspaper, radio and television activities, the media is regularly criticized for the way it provides coverage of news events. The public has also sued the media in court, demanding compensation and harassing journalists in their line of duties. This was a common practice during the ethnic conflict from 1998-2000 and the period after the event.

This report investigates the use of anonymous sources for articles in *Solomon Star* and *Island Sun* newspapers in the Solomon Islands. It aimed to explore why the two daily papers used anonymous sources for the news stories they publish. In the Solomon Islands, the two national newspapers faced many challenges in maintaining a strong sense of ethics and accountability as most reporters were not qualified and they compete in a small advertising market to generate revenue. Consequently, they also faced challenges from politicians and other public figures for publishing information from anonymous sources in their papers. The challenges ranged from threats, intimidation, compensation demands and court battles. The study includes a content analysis of the daily papers, interviews with the editors of both papers and some individuals who are affected by the issue.

Challenges journalists face

Journalists face tremendous challenges when dealing with anonymous source stories. Christie (2014) claims journalists make judgmental errors when under pressure to break news. For example, two sources gave the same information of an AK47 gun used in a shooting accident but later the information was proven to be wrong. Furthermore, journalists are under pressure to release anonymous stories because of the deadlines of their newspapers. Dotinga (2004) claims journalists use confidential sources as one means of getting stories. Farhi (2013) argues that the alternative of not using anonymous sources is no story at all. Journalists try to negotiate with their sources to publish their names but in reality, this usually does not work out.

Wasserman (2014) states:

> Certain kinds of reporting routinely incorporate routine reliance on informants who will not talk unless they are assured of anonymity. Although sensitive political and governmental stories are the areas that first come to mind, business and financial news-especially coverage of closely-held companies, professional firms and the like-would be difficult if not impossible to assemble without source

> concealment. Yet confidentiality poses ethical conflicts, chiefly because it may clash with two professional norms: accountability and verifiability. The result may impede truth-telling.

Positive and negative aspects of using anonymous sources

One of the negative impacts of using anonymous sources could result in courts demanding the journalist or the publisher to reveal the identity of the person who leaked confidential information. Sager and Wilcox (2007) claim that every year publishers, reporters and editors are asked by courts to disclose the identities of sources. For example a publisher, John Peter Zenga, refused to disclose the identity of his source to a New York authority after he criticized the government. However, one of the positive impacts of using anonymous sources is journalists have the privilege to expose the dirty dealings of national leaders and confidential information in the government. Sternadori and Thorson (2009) claim anonymous sources could open up the door for 'spin doctors' and 'leakers' to manipulate. This was evident when news organisations discouraged anonymous sources following the exposure of Janet Cooke's fabricated child heroin addiction story and fabricated stories of Jason Blair and Jack Kelly. But anonymous stories came alive in the media following the exposure of the Clinton-Lewinsky scandal and the 1991 Gulf War.

Public perception

The public has negative perceptions when newspapers release news based on anonymous sources. Sullivan (2013) claims that the heart of the problem, on the use of anonymous sources, is one of credibility. This could be influenced by untrue stories leading up to the Iraq war and dishonest reporting by reporter Jayson Blair. Furthermore, many readers see anonymous sources as creating news on face value rather than on facts.

Dotinga (2004) points out that journalists use anonymous sources as an excuse in writing their stories because they are lazy. Journalists think anonymous sources give more prominence to their stories when they use them. The Journalism Education Association (JEA) Scholastic Press Rights Commission (2011) argues that when readers read stories with anonymous sources it makes them wonder whether they are true or accurate. This was after evidence of plagiarism and fabrication were highlighted by 10 papers from the Chicago Tribune to the Sedalia (Missouri) Democrat.

To avoid questions about plagiarism and/or fabrication, it is best to avoid using anonymous sources. Writing gains credibility when all sources are on the record. Sometimes, though, anonymous sources are the only way to tell the story (JEA Scholastic Press Rights Commission, 2011).

Government restrictions

Governments have tight regulations to protect the release of confidential information into the public domain. Methven (1980) states that this is to effectively maintain the functions of the government and protect national security. For example, if the government releases an investigative file, it can help the violator to escape punishment. People who leak government confidential information to the media are liable to face punishment for their actions like losing their job or even jeopardizing their lives. Sager and Wilcox (2007) claim the resignation of former United States President, Richard Nixon, in relation to the Watergate scandal, came about because of one informer in the government, who gave the information to two Washington Post journalists, Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, under the condition of anonymity. Insiders in government try to justify that they leak confidential information to the media in the name of public interests.

Editors

Editors are the heads in the newsroom where they edit stories before they go out for publication. However, editors always face challenges when dealing with anonymous source stories. According to Kurtz (2010), critics complain that reporters and editors allow anonymity freely and when readers find out about the source of information, they lose credibility. That is why it is important for editors to maintain their policy to only publish an article as anonymous, if they have the contact details of that person. They can publish articles as anonymous or with a pen name provided they have the contact details of that person.

Critics also claim that media outlets allow public figures to escape accountability and scrutiny when attributing their claims to unnamed people. Foreman, (1984), Gassaway, (1998) and Smith (2003), also claim that the ethical guidelines of revealing sources of information are in conflict with ‘giving voice to the voiceless’ or those of un-named voices. It is a hard decision for editors to choose between maintaining the ethical guidelines and giving ‘voice to the voiceless’. In this case, editors can publish stories or letters as anonymous or with pen names, provided they meet all the requirements to avoid facing the court.

Solomon Islands

The Solomon Islands is an independent state after it gained its independence from Great Britain in 1978. It is situated in the Pacific between Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu. It is made up of nine different provinces namely Malaita, Guadalcanal, Western province, Choiseul, Isabel, Makira Ulawa, Temotu, Rennell and Bellona and Central Islands. The capital city, Honiara is located on Guadalcanal. Solomon Islands practices the parliamentary system of government where Queen Elizabeth II is the head of the state and the Governor General is her representative. The Prime Minister is the head of the government who is elected by the Parliament and has the power to appoint the Cabinet.

Moore (2013) states that the Solomon Islands has a population of 550,000 people. The majority of the population is dominated by Melanesians with the minority group coming from Polynesia and Micronesia, who are linked to the Gilbertese Islanders due to migration. There are also Chinese and Europeans co-existing with the people. The Solomon Islands has 74 different languages. However, English is the official language and Solomon pidgin. The education system in the Solomon Islands is not compulsory. About 60 per cent of children have access to primary education. The country hosts a number of secondary and high schools. It currently has its own national university that opened in 2013 and hosts other open campuses from the University of South Pacific and University of Papua New Guinea.

However, when the ethnic conflict between Malaita and Guadalcanal took place from 1998 to 2003, it crippled all the state institutions and created dis-unity and disrespect in the community. As such, people with guns went around and abused the culture of compensation practised by tribes in the Solomon Islands for land settlements, marriage and other matters. They demanded huge sums of money from victims and even looked for opportunities to ask for compensation because of the guns they possessed. However, the Regional Assistance to Solomon Islands intervened in 23rd July 2003 and restored law and order, normalcy and reconstructed state institutions.

Media

There are six newspapers in the Solomon Islands, namely *Solomon Star, Island Sun, Sunday Isles, The National Express, Agrikalsa Nius* and *Voice Katolika*. However, The *National Express* has halted its operations and moved into online mode recently. The *Solomon Islands Broadcasting Cooperation (SIBC)* is the national broadcaster and operates *Radio Hapi Isles, Wantok FM* and *Radio Hapi Lagun.* The other radio stations are *ZFM, Gud Nius FM, Paoa FM* operated by *Solomon Star Co. Ltd* and *Gold Ridge FM*. *One Television* is a local television station but it stopped operations recently. The other television stations are *Solomon Telikom Co. Ltd, Satsol* and *Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN)* that is broadcast to other countries.

Media has become an important medium in the Solomon Islands in terms of informing people about national disasters, politics, business and health related issues like Non Communicable diseases. Most people throughout the country access SIBC radio because it is broadcast nation-wide. The readerships of newspapers are centralized on Honiara and few bigger provinces like Malaita and Western province. This was the same for FM stations which attracted mostly youths from the city. The media follows a Code of Ethics under its umbrella body, the Media Association of Solomon Islands, and other international organisations linked to it.

The Anti-Corruption Network Solomon Islands (ANSI), a Non-Government Organisation, established calls to the government on Facebook to enact a Freedom of Information Act to allow a free flow of information to the public for the sake of transparency, openness, communication and accountability. This is important because it can allow media to access confidential information in the government that needs to be released for national interests. Under the Solomon Islands constitution article 12, it guaranteed Freedom of Expression and Freedom of Press. Currently the media legislations in place are the Broadcasting Act 1997, Television (Amendment) Act 1996, Telecommunication Act 2009 and draft Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation Bill 2003. The government delayed the Whistleblowers Protection bill from debate in Parliament on May 3rd 2016. Talasasa (2016), states the Bill, if it becomes an Act can also protect people wishing to remain anonymous while giving information to the media.

ANSI (2013) states:

> Freedom of information is a fundamental human right, recognised by international law. Freedom of information laws allow access by the general public to data held by the national government. They establish a "right-to-know" legal process by which requests may be made for government-held information, to be received freely or at minimal cost, barring standard exceptions. While technological advancement and free flow of information is enjoyed in other sectors of our society, our Government system, in particular the public sector, seems to be very backward in providing public access to public documents and information pertaining to the management and use of public funds being administered by public institutions.

Solomon Islands media and use of anonymous sources

Solomon Star newspaper Limited began from a humble beginning in May 28 1982. It is a tabloid-size newspaper that first came out on Fridays before moving on to being published daily. The late John Lamani from Malaita province owned the paper and its headquarters is on Honiara. Recently, the paper opened a small office in Auki, Malaita province. The paper's circulation varies on different days, but it is between 3500 to 4500. Normally Wednesdays and Fridays have increased circulation. The paper's major selling outlets are in Honiara, Malaita and Western provinces. But it also sends papers to other provincial centres which have connecting flights. *Solomon Star* employs a total of 80 staff working in all departments. Among them are 16 people in the newsroom which include reporters, sub-editors and the editor. However, only three journalists have degrees in communication, one has a diploma and the rest have attended certificate journalism training at the Solomon Islands National University but did not complete their studies due to various factors. Two of the female reporters did not have any formal journalism qualifications but started as cadet reporters.

Solomon Star editor Ofani Eremae states:

> First of all, *Solomon Star* encourages use of sources. We encourage whoever wants to express his or her views must reveal identities. That's the company's policy. However, there are some cases where we have to accept the use of anonymous sources. For instance, if there is a story regarding permanent secretary accused of stealing public funds and someone working under the PS like to reveal what going on there, we will allow that person to talk to us in confidence and acknowledged his story as anonymous. For a person who writes letters to the editor and likes to remain anonymous, we don't encourage this much, but there are cases we allow it to happen. The requirement is we have to know their identity. This doesn't mean that the person can write anything but must be screened by the editor before the stories are published.

Eremae says:

> one case I remember was when people came to ask for compensation about the extra-marital affairs story of a former Prime Minister. They demanded the company to reveal the source of the story, although the source of story came out of social media. Another incident, when the paper ran a story about an outgoing MP from Malaita for abusing constituency funding. The source had provided documents to prove their MP did not account for the money of the constituency.

> After the story came out, three men came and demanded the identity of the source in the office. Although I told them we can't reveal the source, this is the kind of reaction we receive when publishing a story that remains anonymous. Another case I remember was when one man sued us for defamation and demanded us to provide the document we quoted from for a story against him. The story was based on his previous criminal record in Australia. According to documents, he used to be a drug dealer and had a record with an Australian court as a convicted drug dealer. I wrote the story and after it came out, he sued us for defamation. We went to court; we provided the document on which the story was based in court. As a result the accuser did not have the basis to sue us, and in the end, the court quashed the case.

The *Island Sun* newspaper began operation in 2003 during the era of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) that came to restore law and order after the ethnic conflict. Former senior reporters of *Solomon Star* started the paper which came out twice a week. Today the paper comes out from Monday to Saturday but not Sundays. The paper is based in Honiara and employs 35 people of whom 12 are journalists. However, only one had a postgraduate degree in gender and the rest studied certificate journalism at Solomon Islands National University. Its circulation is 3000 papers a day. Its major selling outlet is on Honiara and Gizo in Western province. It recently opened a new office in Auki, Malaita province.

Island Sun newspaper editor, Priestly Habru states:

> the reasons why journalists use anonymous sources in their news stories were because people we seek information from did not want to reveal their identity to the public. They don't have confidence to reveal their identity. But we normally encourage them as much as possible to reveal their identity. Another thing is, there is a line of understanding in the public service that information can only be released by their information officers, permanent secretaries or the Government Communication Unit. Therefore in any controversial stories, the public servants normally hide their stories for fear of being disciplined by the ministry they serve. Another reason is the wantok system, where we are living in a small society which everyone knows each other. For example, if the person commented against a Member of Parliament and it happened that the MP retains his seat, the person might miss benefits from him.

Habru says:

> I remember one issue where people come with legal threats for us to verify the stories or apologise within seven days. We responded to them by apologizing. One example is the Bank of South Pacific where one contributor wrote a private view and BSP said the article contained a lot of errors. So BSP demanded us to apologise or it would take us to court.

Methodology

Three different methods were used to collect information relating to the topic titled: 'The challenges of anonymous source stories appearing in the dailies of the Solomon Islands'. The main purpose of this research was to investigate the reasons behind the use of anonymous source stories by *Solomon Star* and *Island Sun* newspapers. The methods used were in-depth interviews, content analysis and internet research. The interviews were carried out during the second semester long break of Year 3 after the Faculty of Arts and Social Science introduced research in 2014.

The content analysis was done during the 2015 June semester break where I travelled back to Honiara despite resistance from my sponsor – the National Training Unit, due to lack of a budget for research. I managed to come back after we (sponsor and I) agreed to share the costs of the return air tickets to Madang, Papua New Guinea. My internet searches were done using ICT facilities at Divine Word University.

In-depth Interviews

In-depth interviews were conducted with different people to represent the views in the street, government, politics, non-government organisations and both newspapers. A total of seven people were interviewed. I interviewed a local lawyer but found out later that my recorder did not record his voice. The interviewees were:

1. Ordinary citizen, Donaldson Rusa
2. Forum Solomon Islands International (FSII) chief executive officer, Benjamin Afuga
3. Member of Parliament for West Makira, Alfred Ghiro
4. Island Sun newspaper editor, Priestly Habru
5. Ministry of Communication and Aviation permanent secretary, Francis Lomo
6. Editor of Solomon Star, Ofani Eremae
7. Member of Parliament for North West Choiseul, Connelly Sandakabatu

Interviews were conducted after returning to Solomon Islands at the beginning of November 2014 following my exams at Divine Word University. During that period, my country was preparing for the national general election. So everyone, including the candidates and voters, were preparing to return to their constituencies for voting. Consequently, I could not interview two former Prime Ministers, Dr Derek Sikua and Manasseh Sogavare, who were often directly affected by use of anonymous source stories in both newspapers. I dropped my letters at their homes in Honiara to arrange for interview times but they were always busy with campaigns in their respective constituencies in the province and outside of the city. However, I managed to get two returning politicians to replace them after they came to Parliament for the election of new Prime Minister Sogavare.

The research was done in a formal matter over a cup of coffee and soft drinks. I used different semi structured questions to suit my interviewees' backgrounds. When I interviewed the editors of *Solomon Star* and *Island Sun* newspapers, I asked them two main questions: Why did your paper uses anonymous sources for its news stories? What are some impacts on the use of anonymous sources on your paper? I then elaborated other questions from these two main basic questions. For the other interviewees, I asked them this question: How do they see the use of anonymous sources by *Solomon Star* and *Island Sun* newspapers? Then I elaborated some questions from this basic question.

I carried out the interviews before I did my content analysis. As I said earlier, the researcher used a recorder to do the interviews in order to get accuracy and record keeping in cases of any unforeseen circumstances.

Content analysis

The content analysis method was carried out on the *Solomon Star* and *Island Sun* newspapers over three weeks. I chose *Solomon Star* and *Island Sun* because they are the main daily papers, which people read and have access to. Besides, they were also victims of criticism from politicians, lay-people, non-government organisations and government heads for using anonymous source stories. The researcher took into consideration that *Solomon Star* and *Island Sun* have accessible materials in their archives. The analysis focused on the months from October 2014-December 2014, the period leading up to the national general elections. I collected my data on both newspapers based on weeks of each month from October 2014 to December 2014.

The researcher looked for anonymous sources stories that appeared in different sections of both newspapers like politics, health, economy, business, police and agriculture. This was done mainly for local news stories that appeared in both papers, excluding international news and features. The researcher also looked for total and hard and business news pages, total national hard and business news stories, stories with anonymous sources, types of stories with anonymous sources, pages, and whether the stories were the main stories or not on the page.

The size of headlines and space of stories were studied to see whether the anonymous source stories are lead, second lead, third lead, forth lead and so on. The researcher also took photos of the stories in both newspapers that had anonymous sources to keep as part of the data collection. When returning to Divine Word, the researcher used the photos to identify references that both newspapers used to refer to anonymous source stories.

Internet research

Internet research played a major role in completing my literature review, where the researcher collected information from different journals, websites and social media like Facebook. The researcher also had the opportunity to read other dissertations of researchers around the world, who did similar research on the topic.

Summary findings

First, *Solomon Star* and *Island Sun* newspapers use a lot of anonymous source stories on controversial or sensitive issues because people who gave their stories did not want to reveal their identities for fear of retaliation and losing jobs.

Second, politicians and individuals did not want to see anonymous sources appearing on stories because this could question the credibility and ethics of journalists. They questioned whether the stories with anonymous sources are based on facts or used for personal or political interests.

Third, there is no information law in the Solomon Islands to allow media to access confidential information from the government. As such, newspapers will continue to rely on anonymous sources within the government cycle to fight against corruption and malpractices.

Fourth, Solomon Star and Island Sun newspapers have faced many challenges ranging from legal threats, compensation, harassment and court battles for the use of anonymous source stories. However, in most cases both newspapers did not bow down to the threats from the public because they believed what they did was based on facts and not hearsay.

Conclusion

The media in the Solomon Islands has come through a transition period after the ethnic conflict from 1998-2003. Journalists have faced threats in their line of duties to keep the government in check and clamp down on corruption. There was a culture of compensation that stemmed after the conflict, where individuals used any opportunity to demand money from media companies for writing sensitive stories, even though they were based on facts and hard evidence.

The study concludes that *Solomon Star* and *Island Sun* newspapers have used anonymous sources in their stories as the main means of fighting corruption and malpractices in the society. This was evident because most of the stories that used anonymous sources were under politics and business. They did that eventhough companies and individuals threatened their journalists and sued them in courts. The study also concludes that people in government feel free to give hard stories to media under the condition of anonymity otherwise they could be penalized for their actions. The study also concludes that there is no Information Act in the Solomon Islands to allow media to access confidential information from the government. As such, media will continue to rely on anonymous sources in years to come.

The study also concludes that politicians and other individuals do not want media to use anonymous sources to criticize them because they believe sometimes media fabricated the stories.

Recommendations

The research could have been more effective if the researcher interviewed more people. However, the researcher had experienced setbacks from interviewees who did not want to be interviewed. Besides, the researcher did not have clear directions when carrying out the research in 2014. It is only in 2015 that the researcher started to get clear direction from his supervisor that allowed him to collect right information for his research.

The findings indicate that further research should be carried out to prove whether the media has improved its role after the ethnic conflict in keeping the public informed. This is to give a clear picture whether journalists have abided by their ethics in disseminating information to the public or fabricating the news.

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Teaching New Journalism in Digital Age

World Journalism Education Congress 2016

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Abstract

Technology changes is not only about the gadget or the content, it has greater impact in the society. It’s all about sharing what we had created through the media channel. It doesn’t matter the content but they have the desire to create and share it with others In the world of media convergence, every important story gets told, every brand gets sold, and every consumer gets courted across multiple media platforms.

The media convergence talks about how the concept of media is changed where it has an integrated information system where content of media can be spread in multiple platforms of media. Films, comic books, music, television content have been widespread into multiplatform of media, creating a new style of storytelling called the Transmedia Storytelling. It is an ongoing process, occurring at various intersections of media technologies, industries, content and audiences.

This paper illustrates the growth of new media and possible future of teaching new journalism in Indonesia instilled by digital storytelling. It also suggests that journalists can better engage public by adapting the seven principles of transmedia storytelling to journalism.

Keywords: education, journalism, transmedia storytelling

Study Background

We are in the transition era where culture precedes technology and where technology amplifies the culture so that the product of media can be widespread into a larger community. The presence of the worldwide web has brought changes in many aspects in our life. Nowadays, how the internet as the medium of conveying message also changed the way of communication among us. Conveying message is no longer using traditional medium such as telephone, letter or hand phone which we often thought as the latest communication technology. At the dawn of millennium era, all these traditional communication tools had been replaced by advanced communication technology where internet rules over the handy phone which has transformed into what has been popularly called as “smart phone”.

Technology changes is not only about the gadget or the content, it has greater impact in the society. The way that the media is being produced and how the media is being consumed are no longer the same. This is what Henry Jenkins in his book “The convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide” called as The Media Convergence.

In this convergence era, people want to get connected to stories, to new stuff, popular things or what is being hip among the community. The wide phenomena of world connectivity can be referred back to what Pierre Levy’s view of unified human consciousness enabled by computer network or is called as the collective intelligence (Levy, 1997: 1-10).

Levy assumed that in one community, nobody knows everything. One person is impossible to know everything about this universe. This is the reason why people then to gather and shared stories as well as their knowledge. This is where the knowledge exchange takes place and where people get connected to each other to gain the knowledge to achieve their goal. This is what Levy means as the collective intelligence.

These days, information is the learning process has gone through many changes. Teaching and learning activities are not merely done in a traditional classroom where teachers stand in front of the classroom and students sit on their chair listening. Today's students are no longer refers to only printed books on gathering data for their assessments, exams or lesson materials. The presence of many open sources such as Wikipedia make the task of making paper or research project for students become easier.

Students today whom most of them are "Digital Natives" are trapped in the world where they are already mastered all the digital tools while some educational institutions are still using the traditional learning method which ignores or doubts the profound implications of the burgeoning digital and networking technologies for learning and teaching. The result is that in the classroom, students become harder to reach making it a gap between inside-classroom learning and outside-classroom learning. As pointed by Mizuko 'Mimi' Itoh from University of California:

"We are seeing a growing gap between in-school and out-of-school learning as more and more of young people's learning, attention, and access to information is happening outside of classrooms and through online networks and exchanges. That's the disturbing news."

The new digital technology gave us opportunities of what the researcher called "connected learning". This new model was introduce by a group of researcher for bringing young people, educators, and parents together in cross-generational learning driven by shared interests and goals.

Jenkins described further about what Itoh had invented as participatory culture. Based on what is described as convergence, the media decision maker is no longer the top-up media board such as the corporate board room but also the bottom-up liner such as a teenager who posted his song video cover of a famous band. People tend to want to participate. The audience is longer a passive. They want to be actively participating in the creative process, making the media product becomes a pop culture or a mass media celebrity.

Real example of participatory culture can be seen on U.S presidential election in 2008 where the candidate Barrack Obama used social media to socialize his ideas in order to invite young people to get involved or at least pay attention to their political issues. This is what Jenkins called as “Geek out for democracy”.

What happened was that he a success in becoming a mass media celebrity. Everybody wanted to do things that Obama did, everybody wants to be around Obama. In this case, “Obama” has become a product of mass media or what Jenkins called as “the media fandom” which refers to not only a single text community but also many genres (Jenkins, 2012). Obama became a name where everybody was getting hip with. Obama is a part of American pop culture along with famous American idol. Obama had created his own fandom whose status become a form of “community” and somehow it was amazing how a simple act can drawn the whole country to participate.

Another challenge for today’s educators is how to create the right learning environment for the multitasking natives as the 21st century students are thriving in a distracted environment. The environment involved engaging in several activities on multiply platform such as chatting with friends through facebook while writing an essay for school project, requires them to be a multitasking generation.

With all the complexity of media converging and new paradigm of media change, how are we, educators and students, going to survive in this transition era? What is it needed to bring journalism to a new level both to create a compelling piece but also to meet the demand of information society? The convergence brought changes and the best way to understand what to expect from these changes is by examining how media have evolving.

Media Evolution Theory

The evolving world of vast and myriad technology brought development to human communication media. Neuman stated that the ongoing digital revolution in present-day media technology represents an important new beginning in public life and is likely to have a fundamental influence on how individuals, social groups, and societies define themselves, how individuals come to know the world around them (Neuman, 2010). People are often confused whether they are communicating through a mass media or an interpersonal communication. The distinction between this two types of communication media is getting much blurry since digital technology is creating a new kind of mediated communication media. (Rodman, 2012) In addition, communication via the Internet is inherently bidirectional, decentralized, and less easily monitored and censored.

Many news media have changed their traditional platform into a multimedia where most people now have broad accessibility thanks to the new technology called the internet. This is what Ithiel de Sola Pool (1983) called as the "Convergence" this. The concept of media convergence theory emerged where mass media channels many functions such as telephone is not used only for calling relatives and friend but we can watch video, playing the game, listen to the music, taking pictures, reading or watching news or movie. In media studies, the word convergence refers to three types of mergers: those involving technologies, industries, and content. This of course changed the way media producers producing and distributing their consumers.

The convergence also changed the way mass media functions. Mass media sources are becoming more ubiquitous and less authoritative and professionalized. The ability to act as a gatekeeper to set the agenda for public opinion is also become lesser. The content is created into a smaller segmented audience. It is set to reach the new audience in a targeted location. The trend is to integrate the many specialized channels into a single, all-purpose digital network that will provide access at the convenience of the audience. Audiences are evolving and have improved and more expeditious means of providing feedback to the source of the media content and even participate in the creation of the content (Straubhaar, LaRose, 1997).

Jenkins coined the theory of participatory culture in related to the media convergence where nowadays, people has the tendency to take part or participating what is popular. They want to be part of the popular culture where they can produce their own media product and share it with public and again, in the end, they just want to get connected to each other.

The convergence of content is called as the natural extension of technological convergence. It brings together the mediated interpersonal messages with the message of traditional mass communication such as text and television. Facebook, for example, combines traditional yearbooks with community websites, email, blogs, bulletin boards, audio, and video. The internet is the prime example of a converging medium. It carries on the function of interpersonal communication as people exchanging information through private emails, social networking, and instant messages, but it also functions as mass medium. Individuals and company can create websites which is potentially in reaching millions of users. In a converged media, user-generated content becomes mass communication as well. (Rodman, 2012)

Neuman define that as Social Construction of Technology (SCOT). It is a theoretical perspective, an overarching label for a series of more focused theories about the interaction of cultural presumptions, the radical new ideas of innovators and the constraints exerted by entrenched interests and political economy of technical change (Neuman, 2010). As the theory was refined in the literature, analysts drew attention to the notion of functional equivalence, the mechanism predicting that as new media come along that better serve a particular function, the use of the previously dominant medium that served that function declines. Thus television replaced radio as a primary home family entertainment medium in the evening and radio moved to the bedroom, kitchen, and car. And the cellular phone dis-places the wireline phone, especially among the young.

Evolving Journalism

Previously, we have talked about how the changes in technology has changed the way media is being produced and consumed. In journalism world, the definition of news itself experience a thorough development. The debate about the nature of the news continues to this day. It started with Newsreels during the first World War where it took form of short films around 10 minutes long, containing five or six items of current news, human interest features and sports events.

The first newsreels was presented in Paris by Charles Pathe in 1909. The next year, it was introduced to Great Britain and United States. It became extremely popular. During the Second World War, the U.S government supervised most of the newsreels due to highly propagandistic contents. Newsreels then were replaced by television news in 1950s.

After World War II, radio was the dominant source of news for most Americans. Based on a poll taken in 1946 indicated that 63 percent of Americans cited radio as their primary source of news (Rodman, 2012). In 1948, radio news was able to dramatically demonstrate its advantages over the print paper which is considered as slower-moving media. For example, during the presidential election of that year, while those paper were on the streets, network radio was able to instantly broadcast the news that Harry Truman did win and defeated the popular Republican governor of New York, Thomas Dewey. As televison become popular, radio began to rely more on all-music formats with only brief news reports.

Online news preceded the web more than a decade. In these ealry days, database companies allowed paid subscribers to access newspaper online. In the 1980s a few innovative newspaper began to offer their content to online subscribers. These were local bulletin board service (BBSs) that usually consisted of one PC at the newspaper office with one software and a few extras of telephone lines. In 1993, the release of world wide web make the navigation in the internet web easier and encouraged many more newspaper to establish online editions. By 1995, around 150 newspaper were online (Rodman, 2012).

When it is said that the message in convergence age where digital new media applies are both interpersonal and mass communication, we can see from the way it customized based on our needs. We can access to all kind of news from many sources, not only one. This is known as news aggregators where several original online news services were aggregators of other news sources. They provide links to wire services, newspapers, and other news site. Today, Google news is one of the top news aggregators. Google collects headlines from more than 4,500 English-language news sources worldwide, group similar stories together, and displays them according to each reader's personalized interests. The articles are selected and ranked by computers that evaluate, among other things, how often and on what sites a story appears online (Rodman, 2012: 311).

News aggregators like Google News aren't the only New Media that are having an effect on today's news industry. Twitter, Facebook, and other social networking media are also changing the face of journalism. Essentially, you can build a customized news report from all the articles being read in the morning by your social network. This radically changes the concept of the professional journalist as gatekeeper, and with that come some changes in the concept of traditional news values (Rodman, 2012: 313).

One distinctive impact of convergence and the evolving media and journalism is the citizen journalism which becoming people’s new way to produce the news itself. You don’t have to apply for a job at your local newspaper, tv station or online media. With a simple tools as smart phone with many application of video editor and high resolution phone camera, one can perform a journalism duty by carrying out their own news reportage using their camera phone and share it to their social media. It is cheap and easy to do. Some local tv in Indonesia even provide a special program for citizen journalism.

As mentioned before about participatory culture, this type of journalism is also known as participatory journalism. It is the act of everyday citizens, without professional journalism training or experience, playing an active role in collecting, reporting, and analyzing the news. Through this kind of journalism, nonjournalists can use modern technology and the global distribution of the internet to create news stories.

Citizen journalism ranges from a simple travel leisure to a live report of an attack in the heart of Indonesia’s capital city Jakarta. Other than this, new trend in news reporting online can be found in form of blog and video blog or also widely known as vlog. Today, blogs have become an increasingly important source of news. All the major online news sites now have these online diaries where their journalists can record their thoughts. While many professional blog from reputable news media organization, amateur video blogger can also be influential. Thousands of sites where in-house, freelance and amateur journalists can post their observation and analyses of world events. Every point of view is represented in what is now referred to as the blogosphere, and many of these come from a one-sided political point of view. One interesting example and now trending in youth world is fashion blogger where common people make use of their hobby and passion in fashion by publishing their array choices of clothes they choose as fashion advise for their readers or followers. They don't have to be a famous designer who work for famous house of fashion but only people with good sense of fashion and good photographs.

Citizen journalism is changing the way old media report the news. Media futurist have predicted that by 2012 citizens will produce 50 percent of the news peer-to-peer (Bowman, Willis, 2003).

Transmedia Storytelling

The root of transmedia might look back to the original concept of storytelling as one of the oldest media tools. In the past, it is consider not only as entertainment but also a way to pass down custom and tradition from the ancestors to their next generations. In traditional social culture, stories weren't only (addressed) to a few people but to a large audience (Güney, 1971). The word of mouth is a power tool to spread information. Folktales and fables are among those of the oldest forms by which cultural values, beliefs and wisdom had been inculcated in us.

Story telling is a mean of creative expressions which are still important nowadays. Stories get us connected to each other. As, Yale's postmodern art scholar and filmmaker Michael Roemer said in his note (Moloney, 2011):

"In Western culture, story both contextualizes and decontextualizes. It allows us to remain detached yet to become engaged – to know and to feel." (Roemer, 1995, p.25)

Telling stories and receiving stories, in both fictional and factual form, engages us. By using this method, educational subjects can be taught, transferred and developed.

Through mass media, storytelling is being done in a variety of ways. It has no limits because it is applicable to every branch of science with interactive tools. Changing roles and ways of interaction in storytelling through various media introduce a new scope of understanding and use of that art. This new way of storytelling if combined with the education goal could create a new genre of teaching and learning that would attract students to a deep understanding with more context and complexity.

In 2003 scholar Henry Jenkins defined in MIT's Technology Review what he calls "transmedia storytelling" in which entertainment media companies design a franchise to be delivered cross multiple channels in ways that inspire the viewer to actively engage in the story.

Jenkins found science fiction franchise "The Matrix" as his first model of transmedia storytelling. Watching the film trilogy, let alone the whole franchise, is already intriguing as they were somewhat mysterious and vague, with what seemed key pieces of the story missing or only hinted at, luring viewers to search the answers through the other platforms such as comics, animated shorts, videogames. Devoted fans talked and discussed through online forums dedicated to The Matrix fans. Fan fiction can be found anywhere in the internet, cosplayers put on their costumes in many of fans events. They are actively engaged to explore the Matrix's world and story plots. "The sheer abundance of allusions makes it nearly impossible for any given consumer to master the franchise totally," (Jenkins, Transmedia Storytelling and Entertainment: An Annotated Syllabus, 2010).

Camille Bacon-Smith (2000), argued that participants in the science fiction community regularly move from position to position, acting sometimes as consumers, sometimes a producer, sometimes as critic, and sometimes as community builder in the literary world that explodes the boundaries that scholars have put on roles or position-taking (Bacon-Smith, 2003).

Jenkins (2007) on his student hand-out explained about the core of transmedia storytelling. Basically, transmedia storytelling represents a process where integral elements of a fiction get dispersed systematically across multiple delivery channels for the purpose of creating a unified and coordinated entertainment experience. Ideally, each medium makes it own unique contribution to the unfolding of the story. For example, in The Matrix franchise, the keys information are conveyed through three live action films, a series of animated shorts, two collections of comic book stories, and several video games. There is no one single source where one can turn to fain all the information needed to comprehend The Matrix universe.

Transmedia Storytelling so far mostly elaborated in children's media franchise like Pokemon or Yu-Gi-Oh! As education professors David Buckingham and Julian Sefton-Green explain, "Pokemon is something you do, not just something you read or watch or consume."

To have a large group of people paying attention to what you're doing is the key of transmedia. It is about how to spread the story in wider community using the existed technology to make it available to their needs. School Library Media Specialist, Laura Fleming (2001) in her article wrote about how she found transmedia as a successful tool to engage and to capture students' attention in overcoming the reading difficulties. The problem of today's education is the engagement. Over the years, Fleming saw that many children struggled with reading due to lack of engagement. After experimenting on her class, she found out a way to a better engagement and developing a narrative over multiple platforms while interweaving learning, outcomes creates transformational learning experiences. Participants engage, inform, inspire, connect and collaborate over content. It is this interconnectedness that fosters a dialogue which connects learners around the world. This global interconnectivity allow for the collaborative sharing and proliferation of knowledge. Transmedia storytelling exemplifies learning in the 21st century (Fleming, 2011).

Today, in technology enhanced learning and teaching environments, storytelling is supported by various multimedia tools that are embedded in the learning channel in visual, auditory and kinesthetic formats. Adding such aids makes a story become more mediated and digitalized making it richer in content and application. The action referred as to the delivery of the story is known as “Digital(ly) (Story) Telling” (Tingöy).

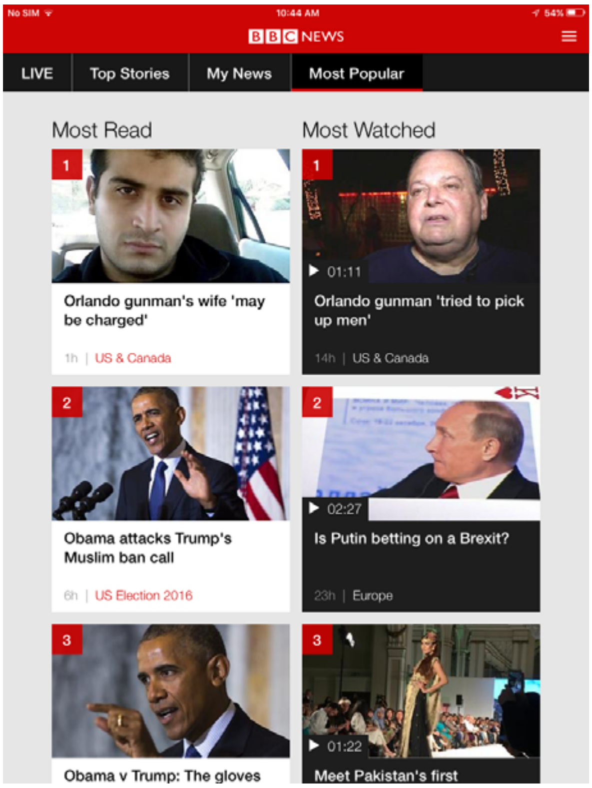
In modern era, where media empires rule almost everything, the power of storytelling is lesser. The modern storytelling tends to only entertain and gave less moral value. However, the use of storytelling in education is a “built into” pedagogy and methodology, so it uses only a small part of entertainment. Therefore, storytelling can be an extremely important resource for modern educator.

Adopting Principle of Transmedia

In his blog (2009) Jenkins assembled a list of “seven main principles of transmedia”: Spreadability vs. Drillability, Continuity vs. Multiplicity, Immersion vs. Extractability, Worldbuilding, Seriality, Subjectivity and Performance.

All of the characteristics of transmedia as he defines it have individually been implemented in a journalism or documentary context before. Though they may not yet have been designed together in a single storyline, all the pieces of the puzzle are there already. Nothing new must be invented to apply transmedia storytelling in journalism (Moloney, 2011).

Spreadability, refers to a process of dispersal – to scanning across the media landscape in search of meaningful bits of data. Stories are spread through fan interaction where public engaged actively in the circulation of media content through social networks and in the process expand its economic value and cultural worth. "Going viral" is an Internet-age term for an idea or production that spreads like a benevolent or malevolent microbe through the mediascape. Often these viral phenomena happen accidentally of media is now an element of nearly every journalism production. Visits to the Web sites of nearly any legacy and new media outlet show buttons to share stories and links on social media sites, email, SMS or a blog with a single click. ***Drillability*** means to go deeper. It refers to the ability to dig deeper into something which interests us. Using the connected information of electronic databases has provided a simple form of drillability. Hyperlinked words in news stories are now common in many online news media.



Reading a text story on sites such as CNN.com, NYTimes.com, or HuffingtonPost.com reveals color-coded hyperlinked words intended to carry the reader to — most often — another piece produced by the same company. The complexity of the subject lends itself to a deeper transmedia implementation. The interactive graphics attached to the story on the Web site do illustrate another option in drillability (Moloney, Transmedia Journalism Principles, 2011).

Continuity is a familiar storytelling technique, and in the transmedia realm, though a story may unfold in separate lines and across diverse media, it still should maintain the coherence and plausibility of the story as a payoff to fans. The media industry often talks about continuity in terms of canons – that is, information which has been authorized, accepted as part of the definitive version of a particular story. ***Multiplicity***, by contrast, encourages us to think about multiple versions of possible alternatives to the established canon. It refers to those varying story lines within the same continuous and coherent realm. Asking "what if" questions both force us to think about the impact of historical events as well as the different factors which weighed in to make some possibilities more likely than others. It helps us to see the different values and norms of these cultures as we look at the way the story has been reworked for local audiences.

Multiplicity can also refer to broad breaks of continuity that may enrich a transmedia universe. Official or unofficial authors may create an alternate universe where the unexpected collide, such as in the recent series of hybrid books like Pride and Prejudice and Zombies, Jane Austen's classic novel about young Elizabeth Bennet was mashed with the recent zombies in England in the 1800s. The novel led to feature film of the same name, which led to the video game, which found its way to the mobile application for smartphones and handheld device like the iPad.

In transmedia entertainment "continuity" is the goal of making many possible incarnations of a story align over time and across media, in journalism it is more continuity of editorial approach and style. No matter the medium of delivery, a "continuous" story maintains cohesive history and character. This is probably best accomplished with the work of a coordinated group of journalists, For example the assignment project in National Geographic where different photojournalist spend time at one place and shoot continuously and serial about the theme given. Instagram, as one of the most popular application for photo sharing has routinely create a "Weekend Hashtag Program" with certain theme and topic which request people from around the world to create a photo according to the topic chosen and post it to their instagram account.

The word ***Immersion*** goes to definition where fan enters into the world of the story, by immersion, Jenkins (2009) means of the idea of moving through a virtual environment which replicates key aspects of a historical or geographical environment. Games provide one way for the members of the public to immerse themselves in a story through action and first-person emotion. Jenkins also thought about activities where students build their own virtual worlds – deciding what details need to be included, mapping their relationship to each other, guiding visitors through their worlds and explaining the significance of what they contain.

While *Extractability* captures another principle which has long been part of education: the idea of meaningful props and artifacts in the classroom. It provides something for students to then take aspects of that story with him or her into the spaces of his or her everyday life. In journalism, similar things is not impossible, as souvenirs are nothing strange. They might come in form of special edition of certain event such as the royal wedding of Prince William and Kate Middleton or reprinted editions of historical newspaper (Moloney, Transmedia Journalism Principles, 2011).

Worldbuilding provides a rich enough tapestry on which the main story can unfold, allowing alternate stories based on different characters and circumstances. It comes out of thinking of the space of a story as a fictional geography.

The core of *subjectivity* refers to looking at the same events from multiple points of view from different characters of one storyline. Twitter has become a platform for fictional characters to express personal viewpoints on events that transpire in their respective fictional worlds (Jenkins, Transmedia Education: the 7 Principles Revisited, 2010). Jenkins' transmedia principle of subjectivity, where a story is told through the eyes of different characters within that story, is also a time-honored technique in journalism. In radio many notable documentary projects have been produced by providing a subject with a recorder to report on his or her own life.

Inspiring photo from assignment project from National Geographic might inspire people to make changes in their life. In journalism world, facilitating a way for the public to act on information is a significant goal. Here the story encourages action from the public. One example has endured every year for a century. *The New York Times Neediest Cases Fund* comes from publisher Adolph Ochs himself, who, in 1911, encountered a homeless man to whom he gave a few dollars and his business card. “If you’re looking for a job,” he said, “come see me tomorrow.” The next year the Times began publishing stories of the 100 neediest cases in New York, a tradition that is repeated every year. The program has raised more than $256 million in its hundred-year history (Moloney, Transmedia Journalism Principles, 2011).

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ETHICAL ISSUES IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN JOURNALISM IN THE 21ST CENTURY

By

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ABSTRACT

Nearly all African countries have Codes of Ethics to guide journalists in seeking "identity and integrity" and connecting people and places. This process has inevitably led to the introduction of Media or Journalism Ethics in the curricula of most institutions offering Mass Communication or Journalism program. Generally speaking, most of the curricula touch on different aspects of Ethics including Introduction to Ethics, Canons of Journalism, The Journalist's dilemma, Privacy, Freedom and Responsibility, Freebies, Corruption, Responsibility to the society, Partisanship, Ownership and Environmental issues. Until about the end of the 20th Century, Journalism education only had to contend with Print, Radio and Television. However, the 21st Century has brought with it new concepts of journalism including Citizen Journalism and On-line Journalism. These concepts have not only changed Journalism identity and integrity but have concomitantly changed ethical issues in Journalism practice in the Sub-Saharan region. The ethical issues in Sub-Saharan African Journalism now include: Who and what determine ethical standards? With the rapidity and bombardment of technology how easy it is for the journalist to adhere to ethical standards in news judgement? Whom or who should the journalist be accountable to? What role does economic consideration play in news judgement? Do ethnic, political, religious and other primordial sentiments play any role in African Journalism? Are Canons of Journalism still relevant in the consideration of 21st century Ethical Issues in Sub-Saharan African journalism? The above issues are examined in this paper. A survey of the journalism codes of ethics in nine African countries south of the Sahara- Nigeria, Ghana, Cameroun, Cote D'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Somalia and South Sudan was undertaken to give a fair representation. From literature review, survey and analysis, it is clear to a large extent there are critical ethical issues in Sub-Saharan African Journalism that should be addressed to make the profession to be socially responsible. Suggestions are therefore, made on the desirability of bringing Sub-Saharan African journalism ethics at par with the rest of the world.

All major professions in the world are guided by their codes of ethics. One of such professions is journalism. Much of the literature on professional ethics of journalism underscore the import of ethics including the tenets of African journalism anchored on culture, communality, connecting people and places, accountability, and identity and integrity although there are infractions by practitioners and uncertified practitioners; and as would be revealed, social responsibility theory of the press is consequential to journalism ethics in Sub-Saharan Africa. It is imperative therefore, that we examine the concept of social responsibility theory of the press, the state of journalism ethics and then, the ethical issues within nine jurisdictions in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Social responsibility theory of the press generally makes journalism accountable to the society within which it operates. The basic assumption of the theory, as enunciated by the Hutchins Commission (1947), is that the press in any society should be responsible to the society in the performance of its functions. Even though the press is ideally supposed to enjoy immense freedom, it must be seen to be carrying out certain essential functions of mass communication and journalism with the observance of professional ethics. In other words, the freedom the press enjoys comes with concomitant responsibilities, one of which is showing a serious and committed mind towards observing the canons of journalistic ethics while carrying out the six basic social responsibility functions proposed by the theory. As the press performs these functions, the avoidance of unethical conducts will make them to be socially responsible; consider public interest; gather accurate, balanced and objective news and stories; and allow for objective analyses of issues of the moment.

The theory is primarily about raising conflict to the plane of discussion. It also canvasses the rights, duties and responsibilities of the press. As stated by Akinfeleye (2003), **"***the social responsibility theory of the Press came into being as a result of pluralism in media ownership and content of the media, which created uneasiness on the part of the public according to Siebert et al".* He (Akinfeleye) further explained that media owners wielded so much power that placed them in a position to determine what to publish and how to publish those facts, opinions, voices, and versions leading to the conclusion that the Press was no longer the "free and open-market of ideas as preached by Mill and Jefferson".

Several authors, including Baran and Davis (2009), stated that it is a post-second World War compromise because, notwithstanding the moves toward professionalization and self-regulation in the United States during the World War II, pressure for greater government regulation of media continued to mount in the resultant anti-communist agitation. This led to Henry Luce, the Chief Executive Officer of Times Incorporated providing funding for an independent commission to make recommendations on what the role of the press should be. Consequently, the Hutchins Commission Report on Freedom of the Press came alive in 1947. Because opinions of members of the commission were sharply divided between those who held libertarian views and those who believed in the desideratum for some form of press regulation, the commission put up 'a synthesis of ideas' that has since been known as the Social Responsibility Theory of the Press.

Baran and Davis (2009) also disclosed that members of the commission had a tough time deciding the type of press theory that should be followed in USA. Majority of the members opted ‘to place their faith in media practitioners, calling them to redouble their efforts to serve the public’. Quoting Curran (1991), they disclosed that the commission ‘endorsed professional responsibility as a way of reconciling market flaws with the traditional conception of the democratic role of the media’.

Secondly, the commission advocated “journalists’ commitment to higher goals- neutrality, detachment, a commitment to truth involving the adoption of certain procedures for verifying facts, drawing on different sources, presenting rival interpretations”. Through the foregoing, the commission concluded that “the pluralism of opinion, once secured through the clash of adversaries in the free market, could be recreated through the ‘internal pluralism’ of monopolistic media, while Market pressures to sensationalise and trivialise the presentation of news could be offset by a commitment to inform”

Lind and Rockler (2001) stated that although the ideals of social responsibility theory have been enduring, their full implications are rarely comprehended by practitioners as they compete in the “ethos of news as business (and) that of news as socially responsible institution”. McQuail (1987) summarised the basic imperatives of social responsibility theory of the press based on the principle that “certain obligations to society should be accepted and fulfilled by the media; these obligations are to be met by setting high or professional standards of informativeness, truth, accuracy, objectivity, and balance”. The summary also stated that “within the framework of law and established institutions, media should be self-regulating in accepting and applying the obligations” entrusted on them by the society. Furthermore, the press is expected to be ‘pluralist and reflect the diversity of the society’, to ‘allow access to various points of view and to rights of reply’. This is so, “because society and the public have a right to expect high standards of performance’ and, therefore, interventions by governments ‘can be justified to secure the public good”.

It is to be noted, however, that apart from being “accountable to society, journalists and media professionals are expected to be equally accountable to their employers and the market’. Foreman (2010), stated that the report of the Hutchins Commission indicted the press of that era as ‘it was neglecting its social responsibility- reporting accurately on news important to society, and choosing instead to focus on sensational stories designed to attract readers rather than inform them’. He disclosed that the commission declared the ‘press has the responsibility of providing “the current intelligence needed by a free society”. Five imperatives of a socially responsible press were identified to be “a truthful, comprehensive, and intelligent account of the day’s events in a context that gives them meaning; a forum for the exchange of comment and criticism; the projection of a representative picture of the constituent groups in society; the presentation and classification of the goals and values of society; and, full access to the day’s intelligence.’’

From the foregoing, it is apparent that social responsibility theory of the press was and still is a child of necessity and in tandem with the libertarian belief in the imperativeness of the individual and the market place of ideas, while holding that the real competition over ideas will be a mirage without government action to spur media owners and journalists to be socially responsible by offering a diversity of voices and ideas. This theory also argues that sometimes materials or news the media want to publish might be harmful to a large number of people in the society or that they may affect national security or laws of the land. Consequently, it has become the fashion for media/press organisations the world over to adopt Codes of Ethics to guide their operations.

For example, the Nigerian Press Organisation (1998) consisting of the Nigerian Union of Journalists, the Newspaper Proprietors Association of Nigeria, the Nigerian Guild of Editors, and the Nigerian Press Council accepted through The Ilorin Declaration "the imperative of a Code of Ethics as a vital pillar of journalism and the necessity for the application of ethics to enhance standards" of media practice, and thus gave birth to the Code of Ethics for Nigerian Journalists. The Code has 15 provisions- Editorial independence, Accuracy and fairness, Privacy, Privilege/Non-disclosure, Decency, Discrimination, Reward and gratification, Violence, Children and minors, Access to information, Public interest, Social responsibility, Plagiarism, Copyright, and Press freedom and responsibility.

Plaisance (2009) urged mass communication practitioners to recognise their obligations as moral agents by understanding the scope and meaning of key principles of media ethics. He argued that 'too many lapses of media practitioners are the result of allowing decidedly amoral factors- deadline pressures, stark economic imperatives, corporate and 'branding' interests- to define the quality of their work."

Social responsibility theory of the press as canvassed by Siebert et al (1963), Kunczick (1988) and McQuail (2005), means that:

1. the press should have obligations to society, and media ownership is public trust;
2. the press is to serve the public by making information, discussion and consideration of public affairs or issues generally accessible;
3. the press is to inform the public truthfully and responsibly to enable it to take self-determined action;
4. the press is to protect the rights of the individual by acting as the watchdog over the government;
5. the press should be truthful, accurate, fair, objective and relevant to the society; the press should be free, but self-regulated; the press should follow agreed codes of ethics and professional conduct as they are with the press in the nine jurisdictions- Nigeria, Ghana, Cote D'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Kenya, Congo, Tanzania, Southern Sudan and Somalia;
6. the press should make its channels available to the public for citizen journalism where citizens send in contributions (comments, reports and or images);

7. the press should serve the economic system by bringing buyers and sellers together through the advertising medium;
8. the press should provide good entertainment, ensure cultural renaissance and the promotion of indigenous languages;
9. the press should be able to hold government accountable to the people, uphold the fundamental objectives and directive principles of state policy, and assist in the protection of the fundamental rights of the people;
10. the press should be financially independent (have financial autonomy) in order not to become dependent on special interests and influences; and
11. under some circumstances, government may need to intervene to safeguard the public or national interest and on issues bordering on national security."

Like any other theory, the Social responsibility theory of the press has its strengths and weaknesses. Baran and Davis (2009), revealed the strengths and weakness of the Social responsibility theory in the following order:

Strengths of SRT:

Values media responsibility; Values audience responsibility; Limits government intrusion in media operation; Values diversity and pluralism; Allows reasonable government control of media; Aids the "powerless" by giving them a voice; Appeals to the best instincts of media practitioners and audiences; and, Is consistent with democratic tradition.

Weaknesses of SRT:

Is overly optimistic about media's willingness to meet responsibility; Is overly optimistic about individual responsibility; Underestimates power of profit motivation and competition; and, Legitimises status quo.

Since Social responsibility theory remains the normative theory guiding most media operations in the democratic world (Baran and Davis, 2009), what role and influence can a socially responsible and responsive press assert within the nine countries under survey? A socially responsible and responsive press can assert the following role and influence, according to Imhonopi and Urim (2004):

Surveillance role; Status conferral role; Information Bank from which society draws rational decision; Enlightenment of citizens about government's policies; The temperature and thermometer of the people; Vanguard (promoter and tribune (defender) of the people's interest; Aids free and smooth flow of economic activities; Instrument for making public policy; Opinion-moulding institution; Entertainment; Projection and promotion of the image of the local environment; and, Builder of morality and value system.

Quoting Onagoruwa (1994), they said:

". . . the peoples' Tribune, the Vanguard of their conscience and the Guardian of their path. (When it strives) . . . to secure Concord amidst conflicting and divergent interest of our geo-polity. (When it stands) . . . to watch the News of our Times Daily with every sense of alertness. (When it acts) . . . As responsible citizens, (and goes all out to) . . . Champion the cause of the truth and in Punching home this truth, (strives to) . . . Tell it with candour but fearlessly, (It is only then) . . . the country (will) look up to (it) as the helpful Democrats of our time. Surely, the mass media must not fail in the collective task to seek and attain a New Nigeria".

SRT plays a critical role in 'the promotion and preservation of national interest and the sustainability of democracy'. Akinfeleye (2003) discussed the basic imperatives of the press/media in this regard to include:

"Common carrier of ideas; Representative picture of the society; Truth and meaning of truth in a democracy; Classification of the values and goals of the society; Uncover and never to cover-up; Monitor the government; Make the government accountable to the people; Inform, educate and entertain the people; Promote the concept of accountability, integrity, honesty, fairness, and equity; Give voice to the voiceless in the society; Society Agenda-setter; Forging national unity and integration; Promotion of society cultures, and the moral value systems; Promotion of sustainable National interest at all times; and, Promotion of Journalistic/Media integrity".

These imperatives can only be accomplished when the press in Sub-Saharan African (including the press in crisis-torn newly independent South Sudan, and the war-ravaged Somalia) operates within the tenets of the social responsibility theory. A brief discussion of the tenets of SRT is undertaken hereafter:

1. **A truthful, comprehensive, and intelligent account of the day's events in a context which gives them meaning**:

   The press must **at all times** report news accurately, professionally and with conscience. News must not only be intelligent, current and meaningful, it must be depoliticised and piloted to satisfying the common good. As stated by Waisbord (2013):

   Both the market and public models of professionalism shared the notion that journalism (media) had to be a public-minded institution removed from politics and oriented toward the greater good to better serve democracy. . .. The notion of objectivity, even-handedness, and fairness.

2. **A forum for the exchange of comment and criticism**: Based on SRT of the media, the electronic media is a commodity market for the exchange of comments and criticisms. Therefore, the market must be open to all. The media sets agenda and keeps leaders and public figures in tow. According to Lang and Lang (1983) "the influence of the news media goes beyond the building of pressure that "something" be done to

prevent misdeeds. In widening the scope of a controversy, they modify the rules of the game, forcing politicians (and other public figures) to justify themselves to an even larger public.

It is only in a democratic environment that the media can be a forum for the exchange of comment and criticism. In an authoritarian or communist/socialist regime, this will be unattainable. The media operating under SRT must, according to Biagi (2010) ensure sound and proven ethical news, editorial and programme judgements as "The consequences of bad ethical judgments usually involve damage to the newsmakers who are involved and to the individual journalist, damage to the reputation of the news organisation where the journalist works and damage to the profession in general".

The hallmark of SRT is for the press to be truthful as this affects its credibility. Biagi (2010) admonished that:

"Truthfulness in reporting means more than accuracy and telling the truth to get a story. Truthfulness also means not misrepresenting the people or the underlying motives of a story to readers and viewers, as well as not reporting disinformation. Another aspect of truthfulness is the belief that government officials should not use the media for their own ends by "planting" stories that aren't true".

If press does anything to the contrary within the arena or forum it provides for the exchange of comment and criticism, it is assumed that it is working against this tenet of SRT. This is because the press has tremendous impact on our sense of place, and, consequently, it must be an unbiased umpire in whatever arena or forum it finds itself.

3. **The projection of a representative picture of the constituent groups in the society**: This is one of the canons of SRT. It requires that news and programmes should not only be balanced but must be seen by members of the public that they are. They must serve as the 'voice of the people'. Journalists, in the words of Rudin (2011), 'have often been criticised for failing to show and discuss the reality of most people's lives'.

   Campbell, Martin and Fabos (2010) were of the opinion that "in a socially responsible press, the press functions as a Fourth Estate- that is, as an unofficial branch of government that monitors the legislative, judicial, and executive branches for abuses of power . . . under this model, the media supplies information to citizens so that they can make informed decisions regarding political and social issues". Consequently, fairness, impartiality and even-handedness must be sacrosanct. No media practitioner under SRT and Codes of Ethics is expected to gain from a report. As stated by Biagi (2010), 'criticism of the media for unfairness results from debates over:

   Close ties that may develop between reporters and the stories they cover- called *insider friendships*; Reporters who accept personal or financial benefits from sources, sponsors or advertisers- called *conflicts of interests*; and, Reporters who pay their sources for stories- called *cheque-book journalism*'.

It is therefore, a desideratum that the press, "like Caesar's wife, must live beyond corruptive tendencies'', otherwise, the accusation of hidden agenda cannot be ruled out.

4. **The presentation and clarification of the goals and values of the society**: As the watchdog of the society, the press is expected to display a high level of responsibility to engender trust.

   Biagi (2010) posited that "the media can be exploited by people in trouble or by people who covet the notoriety that media coverage brings. The media can exploit an event for its shock value to try to attract an audience, without adequately verifying the in the story".

   The media must as a necessity be in a position to present and clarify the goals and of the society. Such goals would naturally include the fundamental objectives and directive principles of state policy, the fundamental rights of the citizenry, the cultures and norms of the society, and such other peculiarities of the state. Patriotism and commitment to the ethics of the profession must be the guiding binoculars.

   Foreman (2010) canvassed that "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. The rule of reversibility, found in the teachings of the world's great religions, is the best single rule of ethical decision-making". Being parochial, biased, myopic and would defeat the essence of SRT of the media.

Main principles of SRT:

1. The media have obligations to society, and media ownership is a public trust;
2. News media should be truthful, accurate, fair, objective and relevant;
3. The media should be free, but self-regulated (perhaps under their umbrella body);
4. The media should follow agreed codes of ethics and professional conduct; and,
5. Under some circumstances, government may need to intervene to safeguard the public interest.

Most frequently found principles in Media or Journalism Codes

1. Truthfulness of information;
2. Clarity of information;
3. Defence of the public's rights;
4. Responsibilities in forming public opinion;
5. Standards of gathering and presenting information;
6. Respecting the integrity of the sources of information;

7. Respect for privacy; and,
8. Prohibition of bribes, gratification or any other benefits.

Most media in the nine countries surveyed, have tilted towards the social responsibility theory of the press with occasional doses of libertarian theory, democratic-participant theory and authoritarian theory of the press depending on social, economic, religious and political inclinations or circumstances. Social responsibility theory of the press is never absolute even in USA where it originated from. It is therefore, not a surprise that there are occasional infractions of its tenets in these countries where despite democratic governance, government is still a dominant media player, and for countries just emerging from or still witnessing war/crisis era like Cote D'Ivoire, Somalia, and South Sudan. Notwithstanding the criticisms of the state of the press in these countries, social responsibility theory of the press is still the best option for our African fledgling democracy.

Ethical issues cannot be considered in isolation. We need to examine ethics to be able to understand ethical issues in journalism in the 21st century. Because of the role of ethics in African journalism, journalists and journalism scholars have been looking at the concept of ethics from different perspectives- contextually, globally and the relativity of ethics. According to Chari (2009), scholars hardly agree on one single concept with the consequence that each concept takes on various shades of interpretation. Notwithstanding the controversial nature of ethics, there are a myriad of definitions attached to ethics whose meanings give a quasi-idea of ethics. One of such is that ethics is "a form of inquiry concerned with process of finding rational justification for our actions when values that we hold come into conflict" (Plaisance, 2009). A bird's eye view of this definition shows that ethics provide us with cogent reasons behind the rationality of our actions, especially when such actions are not inconsistent with our ethical values.

There is no consensus of opinion, even among scholars of philosophy on ethics. Ethics goes beyond the right and the wrong in one's private life; it spreads its invisible tentacles to other areas of life, one of which is our individual professions. Furthermore, ethics, according to Rogers (1965), is the science which investigates the general principles of determining the true worth of the ultimate ends of human conduct. Given this definition, it stresses that propriety of an action is ethically determined by the outcome of the action. In the African setting, there is the lingering issue of many journalists compromising professional integrity because it fetches some kind of reward (as their salaries are not paid regularly, they are corrupt or the economy is excruciating) and therefore, they jettison the need to maintain and practise journalism of conscience and pursue public interest that should subconsciously lead to news objectivity and the entrenchment or consolidation of canons of journalistic ethics in their respective media outlets and milieu.

Walker (2000) according to Plaisance (2009) defined ethics as 'pursuing an understanding of morality, which provides understanding of ourselves as bearers of responsibilities in the service of values'. This definition simply indicates that any ethical step or act taken is the expression of our clear understanding of ethics and it expresses the readiness to face the music of our action when upholding our ethical values. To be ethical requires the understanding of ethics, the sustenance of which requires strong resolve that cannot be influenced by any negative externality or circumstance. The entrenchment of this ethical traits expressed by Walker's definition will promote professionalism in African journalism, albeit, the tendency for this to be a mirage in African journalism is high as the operating environmental factors are quite challenging and tempting. For this reason, it is, sometimes, difficult for media professionals within African milieu to uphold what is right from what is wrong.

As submitted by Plaisance (2009), 'ethics is a branch of moral philosophy that is rooted in the writings of Aristotle, Epictetus, and other ancient Greeks who were concerned with the nature of goodness'. Going further, he stated that 'in his discussion of Aristotle, Christopher Johnstone offers some words that help to clarify why ethics is such an urgent matter of concern today:

> *"Questions of morality and ethics have become even more troubled, vexed by the acknowledgement that there are multiple sets of culturally grounded values having validity in our society, that moral absolutes are not recognised, and that divided autonomy is a value that sometimes outweighs adherence to accepted norms".*

Odunewu (1998) explained that:

> *Ethics is fundamental to journalism because mass media practice is on a set of essentially ethical concepts: trust, objectivity, honesty, privacy, freedom, etc. The role of journalism is to provide information, enlightenment, education and entertainment of the people and these raise ethical questions on the quality of intelligence disseminated, mode or manner of its acquisition and the object for which it is used in the socio-economic and political processes*.

Okoye (2007) listed "truth, fairness, objectivity, integrity, independence, responsibility and accuracy as the canons of journalism/media". Explaining further, he submitted that 'by canons of journalism, we mean the fundamental principles on which journalism is built. They are the ethical lights which guide the journalistic enterprise'.

An ethical code is to assist subscribers to attain integrity, good conscience, respect, honour and professionalism. Like most other codes in Sub-Saharan Africa, the Code of Ethics for Nigerian Journalists (1998) deals with editorial independence, accuracy and fairness, privacy, privilege/non-disclosure, decency, discrimination, reward and gratification, violence, children and minors, access to information, public interest, social responsibility, plagiarism, and copyright. Two countries having the most vibrant press in Africa south of the Sahara (excluding South Africa) are Nigeria and Ghana. Regrettably, during the 2015 general elections in Nigeria, many journalists and media houses made a mockery of journalism through unethical activities, drama and political machinations in concert with the political class. A case in point was the deliberate violation of Nigerian journalistic code by media players who, despite the fact that they were professionals, compromised their personal integrity and professional ethical values, and got enmeshed in financial inducement. They published/aired news, feature stories, advertorials and other programmes that were inconsistent with the norms of Nigerian journalistic ethics.

The concept of media ethics, according to Iyer (2001:1), is not always susceptible to a neat definition. This implies that ethics can be defined in various ways, most of which are subject to distortion or bastardisation of the actual meaning of ethics. It is of interest to note that even if African journalists' definition of ethics in the discharge of professional duties can be influenced or they do not understand ethics, at least, they understand the concept of morals or morality, commonly used in the wider African society. Furthermore, Iyer (ibid) says ethics, as we all know, is the science of morals, and morals are concerned with distortion between right and wrong. A typical African journalist puts himself in a dilemma- the right of the public to know and the reward or benefit behind jettisoning the public interest, either because of his vested interest or that of his boss, usually the owner of the media outlet.

The issue of non-professionals practising journalism in Nigeria as in many other countries under review is another factor that facilitates non-observance of the ethics of journalism. As a result, the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) called on the National Assembly in 2015 to support it by enacting a law that would regulate journalism practice and make it impossible for non-certified people from practising as journalists. The deleterious invasion of journalism by charlatans has done incalculable damage to journalism. The issue is further compounded as most media proprietors show a nonchalant attitude towards it, especially as long as they make their profit. The clamour for the regulation of journalism by NUJ shows the extent to which the effect of non-professionalization of Nigerian journalism has become worrisome having been denting the image of the profession. The situation is not different in Ghana, Cote D'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Congo, Somalia and South Sudan.

In Africa, the proprietor's influence on news selection is the order of the day. Editors agree that proprietors are ready to violate ethics of journalism in order to protect their interest. This brings to the fore the issue surrounding the relationship between media proprietors and editors. According to Nigerian Journalistic Code of Ethics (1998), the decision concerning the content of news should be the responsibility of a professional journalist. However, the influence of media proprietors greatly determines the news and advertorial contents of media in Nigeria, Ghana, Cote D'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Congo, Somalia, Tanzania, South Sudan and Kenya. The relationship between editors and media owners cannot be but frosty as most media proprietors believe in the concept of "he who pays the piper must dictate the tune". Consequently, most of the media establishments find it difficult to survive (Kadhi, 2000).

It is discovered that not only non-professional journalists violate ethical norms of journalism in Sub-Saharan Africa, but also professionals with wealth of experience in journalism. This was exemplified by one of the most prominent and respected political columnists in Kenya, Kwendo Opanga. He was accused of accepting bribes from President Arab Moi's ruling party, the Kenyan African National Union (KANU). This triggered a lively public debate on the issue of journalistic ethics in Anglophone Africa (Kadhi, ibid). The unethical involvement of a professional journalist in such a demeaning and downgrading act calls for African journalists to refocus the destiny and sanctity of the profession in contemporary global society. Also the

President of the Nigerian Newspapers Proprietors' Association (NPAN), Mr. Nduka Obaigbena confessed to have collected about US$2million from the immediate past administration in the country on behalf of his media empire and some of his colleagues. In these two instances, objectivity and social responsibility on the part of the media establishments can hardly be guaranteed.

A question frequently on the lips of most media practitioners focuses on the persistence of violation of journalistic ethics within African setting. The question is: How can unethical conduct be reduced to the barest minimum, if not completely eradicated in the practice of journalism in Africa?

CODES AND CURRENT ISSUES

Apart from the Arab world, no continent has suffered so much devastation and degradation as Africa. The continent has had to grapple with civil and tribal wars, insurgence, political crises, economic crises, educational crises, vandalism and terrorism, among others. These circumstances have prevented journalism from achieving its potentials as envisaged under the social responsibility theory of the press. Presented below are the codes of ethics and ethical issues in journalism in the nine countries surveyed:

COUNTRY	ISSUES INAFRICAN JOURNALISM IN THE 21ST CENTURY
1. Nigeria	• Code addresses Editorial independence, Accuracy and fairness, Privacy, Privilege/Non-disclosure, Decency, Discrimination, Reward and gratification, Violence, Children and minors, Access to information, Public interest, Social responsibility, Plagiarism, Copyright, Press freedom and responsibility. • Ethical Issues include Corruption, news subjectivity, editorial manipulation, invasion of privacy, news commercialisation, religious inclination, indecency/violence, censorship, inclination towards tribalism/ethnicity, social irresponsibility, social media flood gate, handling of terrorism, portraying of violence, declining editorial standard, poverty, plagiarism and copyright infringement, news commercialisation, and charlatans.
2. Kenya	• Code addresses Accuracy and fairness, independence, integrity, accountability, opportunity to reply, unnamed sources, confidentiality, misrepresentation, obscenity, taste and tone in reporting, paying for news and articles, covering ethnic, religious and sectarian violence, recording interviews and telephone conversations, etc. • Ethical issues are similar to those of Nigeria.
3. Somalia	• Code of Ethics based on respect for "Islamic religion" and "Somalia's good tradition" • Ethical issues apart from being similar to those of Nigeria also include lack of confidentiality (as the court can compel a journalist to disclose his confidential source), coverage of the seemingly unending terrorism in Somalia and insecurity of journalists.
4. Ethiopia	• Code addresses Obligation to inform the public on the malpractices of officials, truth based on accurate information, dedication and enrichment of knowledge and experience, prohibition of dissemination of information that endangers the nation's unity and security or sovereignty, professional secrecy regarding the source of information obtained in confidence, plagiarism, slander, integrity of journalism,

		• social and morally unacceptable activities, obscenity and corruption of culture, identification of news from subjective judgment, prohibition of bribes and gratification, prohibition of activities that are inconsistent with journalism, and safety of journalists. • Ethical issues in Ethiopian journalism are similar to those in Nigeria.
5.	Cote d'Ivoire	• Code covers right to information and free speech, responsibility of journalists towards the public, respect of facts, accuracy of reports, defence of the journalist, using fair methods to obtain information, distinguishing journalism from advertising or propaganda, pressure, bribery and gratification, sources of information, breach of social ethics- incitement to tribalism, xenophobia, rebellion or crime, public decency, war crimes and crimes against humanity; privacy of people, correction of false publication, plagiarism and unfounded accusations, supplanting a colleague. • Ethical issues similar to those of Nigeria including self-censorship.
6.	Tanzania	• The Media Council of Tanzania's Code covers the right to truth, professional integrity, non-disclosure of source, social responsibility, respect for human dignity, discrimination, identity and the underdog, facts and comments, sensationalism, correction and right of reply, and working together. • The ethical issues are identical to those of Nigeria.
7.	Congo	• Although the current status of the Code could not be ascertained, version adopted in Kinshasa in March 2004 has nineteen Articles- freedom to operate and freedom not to be separated from the public's right to be informed and to freely express opinions; fairness, accuracy, honesty, sense of responsibility, independence and decency, objectivity and impartiality, acceptance of full responsibility, self-restraint and avoidance of hate/hatred (religious, ethnic, tribal, regional or racial) and the eulogy of any negative value, seeking the triumph of truth through ethical means, gift and gratification of any sort, identity of sources and plagiarism, objectivity, rights of reply, human dignity and good moral standards, promotion of national culture and republican virtues, self-restraint, solidarity towards colleagues and deference to the council, abstaining from publishing corrections concerning unpublished stories/articles, protection of news sources, free access to news and investigation of facts, consciousness clause, informing newsroom of any decision likely to affect, and observance of the code. • Even though the country is embroiled in political and ethnic crises, the ethical issues are similar to those of Nigeria.
8.	Ghana	• GJA (Ghana Journalists Association) Code has 17 Articles: People's rights to true information, social responsibility, professional integrity, plagiarism, respect for privacy and human dignity, respect for national and ethnic values, confidential sources, corrections, rejoinders, separating comments from facts, information and pictures, respecting embargoes, victims of sexual assault, dealing with under-aged, personal grief or distress, and headlines and sensationalism. • Ghana share a lot of similarities with Nigeria. Consequently, the ethical issues of the two countries' journalism are the same.
9.	Southern Sudan	• Southern Sudan is the youngest independent country in Africa. Unfortunately, even since its independence from Sudan, the country has not known any peace. Civil strives and activities of militia men coupled with a battered economy have put journalism practice in a perilous state. Notwithstanding, the newspaper and magazine owners,

	editors, publishers and journalists in the country agreed on the Code of Ethics in June 2007. The Code addresses the following: accuracy and fairness, correction and opportunity to reply, privacy, discrimination, protection of the vulnerable, children, victims of sexual assault, reporting of crime, sensationalism, incitement of ethnic or religious tensions and crime, covering ethnic disputes or clashes, use of confidential sources, financial journalism, bribery, use of recording devices and subterfuge, plagiarism and attribution, advertising and sponsorship, and definition of 'public interest'. • The ethical issues are atypical of most other Sub-Saharan African countries.

NARROWING DOWN THE ISSUES

From our discourse, the ethical issues in Sub-Saharan African journalism in the 21st century could be narrowed down to: Corruption, News subjectivity, Editorial and news manipulation, Invasion of privacy, News commercialisation, Non-observance of confidentiality, Religious and ethnic/tribal inclination, Portraying Indecency/Violence, Erosion of Investigative journalism, Censorship and Self-censorship, Social irresponsibility, Declining professional standards and education, Poverty, Plagiarism and Copyright infringement, Uncontrolled social media.

Corruption is the bane of under development in Africa. However, journalism being the fourth estate of the realm must rise above this. It must like Caesar's wife be beyond reproach. If corruption is eschewed like the plague, journalists in Africa can ply their profession with transparency, objectivity and probity. And, Africa would be the better for it.

News subjectivity takes several forms and shape. A journalist may decide to look the other way when he is supposed to handle a breaking news objectively. There are instances when journalists promote their own agenda and jettison the interest of the profession. Such a situation diminishes the profession.

Editorial and news manipulation is a common feature in African journalism. It is imperative that under no circumstance should a journalist mortgage his conscience and manipulate editorial matters or news to satisfy some vested interests. What should be paramount is the interest of the profession and the well-being of the society.

Invasion of privacy should only take place in the overall interest of the society and national security, otherwise, people's privacy should not be violated. Journalists, especially those in the 'soft sell' media and those operating social media must respect the privacy of people. Invading people's privacy without justification diminishes the profession and for this reason, Sub-Saharan African journalists must eliminate this unethical practice.

News commercialisation under the guise of generating revenue is a disservice to the profession. Many media establishments under economic hardship commercialise news and make it available to the highest bidder. This inevitably affects the quality of news judgment, misleads the public and mortgages the conscience of the affected media establishment.

Non-observance of confidentiality is fatal to the integrity of the profession. It puts the well-being of the affected person(s) in jeopardy. Under no circumstance must a journalist betray his source of information as this is capable of eroding the confidence of members of the public and causing incalculable damage to news gathering and dissemination.

Religious and ethnic/tribal inclinations are common features in Sub-Saharan Africa that is currently plagued by religious terrorism, activities of militia men and tribal/ethnic warlords. Journalists cannot afford to take sides when confronted with these scenarios. They must be objective and above board. Having religious and ethnic/tribal inclinations promote conflicts and Africa has been the worst for it and making it the least developed continent in the world.

Portraying Indecency/Violence is becoming a common feature in the social and 'soft sell' media. This is a repulsive development that must be nipped in the bud. It not only affects the psyche of children but it assaults the sensibilities of the relatives and victims of the violence.

Erosion of Investigative journalism is now a recurring issue in African journalism ethics. Most journalists do not follow up on their stories, do shoddy investigation and rely only on press releases and handouts. Journalists should not encourage the dumping of stories without taking steps to investigate these stories. Indeed, journalism schools must beef up their curricula and sharpen the skills of their students in investigative journalism.

Censorship and Self-censorship occur in many African countries. Some censorship could be in the interest of national security, while some self-censorship could be in the larger interest of the society. Journalists should not allow themselves to be intimidated and censored by any government since they have the responsibility of holding government accountable to the people. The consequences of censorship include news distortion, inaccurate reportage, hindrance to freedom of speech, and distortion of access to information. Journalism is a sacred trust that must not be betrayed. What should be paramount in Journalism practice, apart from the security of the nation should be overriding interest of the society.

Social irresponsibility theory of the press canvasses six main functions as enunciated earlier in this paper. Unfortunately, most journalists in Africa are deviating from them. For African journalism to rank with its peers in other parts of the world, the six functions must be carried out with professionalism.

Declining professional standards and education are becoming a regular occurrence in journalism practice in Africa. Even though the issue of demand and supply has a role here since many journalism schools while trying to meet the demands of exploding student population over stretch their facilities. In some cases, standards are jettisoned on the altar of expediency and the facilities (teachers, laboratories, library, etc.) are grossly inadequate.

Poverty should not be an excuse for unethical practice. Although we can fall into the temptation of agreeing with White (2015) that 'the precarious working conditions of news staff provide fertile conditions for corruption and 'brown envelopes' or under-the-table cash payments to reporters and editors which are a routine feature of journalistic work', our contention here is that rather soiling the image of the profession and one self, one should quit the profession.

Plagiarism and Copyright infringement are global in nature. However, Sub-Saharan Africa must address this twin-issue before the profession is rested in the mud or swamp. If unchecked or uncontrolled, the image and the financial loses to media establishments could affect free flow of information.

Unethical social media is now a factor to be reckoned with. While social media is a necessity of our time, social media practitioners must appreciate the significance and the enormity of what they do. It is desirable therefore, that those in the business of social media must as a necessity subscribe to a code of ethics, It is also desirable that they have a formal training in online journalism to enable them appreciate the norms and nuances of the profession.

Although journalism faces ethical issues in all jurisdictions, the peculiarities of journalism ethics in Sub-Saharan Africa require that concerted efforts be taken by stakeholders to put the profession on the same acceptable global level contrary to the view held by (Kasoma, 1994). In essence, every country should examine the state of its journalism practice vis-à-vis acceptable global practices. Adherence to the tenets of social responsibility theory of the press is also crucial.

African journalism has the potential of ranking at par with its counterpart in other continents, but to achieve this, it must embrace globally acceptable ethical standards.

As we seek "identity and integrity" in journalism, we have the challenge of ensuring that the Fourth Estate of the Realm in Africa espouses the tenets of the social responsibility theory of the press by ensuring high ethical standards within the profession. To do anything to the contrary would make the profession to loose "identity", relevance and "integrity".

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Understanding the nature of media scandals in light of recent revelations in New Zealand's political life

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Abstract

The nature of media scandals is considered in light of the numerous scandals that have recently dominated New Zealand's political life. These media scandals have centred on two individuals: right-wing blogger Cameron Slater and internet tycoon Kim Dotcom. In part, the scandals were driven simply by the fact some of the people involved were celebrities. However, genuinely important issues were raised, including journalistic independence and illegal government spying. Ultimately, the media scandals revealed the conservative character of New Zealand society.

Introduction

New Zealand's recent political life has been dominated by a series of remarkable scandals, which have played out in the country's media. These scandals centred around two men: Cameron Slater, an outspoken right-wing blogger, and Kim Dotcom, an internet tycoon, who the FBI wishes to have extradited to the US for alleged massive online copyright infringements. Some politicians and government officials lost their jobs in the ensuing controversies, whereas others managed to stay in power or even end up stronger than before.

Whereas media scandals have been analysed by scholars overseas, particularly in light of US experience, similar analysis has not taken place in New Zealand. This paper considers the nature of media scandals in light of the scandals that erupted in New Zealand. In doing so, the helps us to better understand the nature of media scandals and their effect.

Background to scandal

A useful definition of media scandal is supplied by Lull and Hinerman (1997):

> A media scandal occurs when private facts that disgrace or offend the idealized, dominant morality of a social community are made public and narrativized by the media, producing a range of effects from ideological and cultural retrenchment to disruption and change (Lull and Hinerman, 1997, p. 3).

That is to say, the media takes private information and makes it public, with the disclosure generally outraging society and producing any number of effects. The media's motives in doing this, the manner in which the outrage is reported and the precise effects engendered, have much occupied scholars.

Scandals often involve celebrities. It has been argued that the purpose of publishing scandals involving celebrities can be regarded as similar to that of dramatic tragedy: 'Effective gossip, like effective tragedy, delights in raising up its subjects on a pedestal and then delights in their fall back to ground (Stephens, 2007, p. 95)

Media scandals have a long history. *Publick occurrences both foreign and domestick*, published in Boston in 1690 and often taken to be the first newspaper published in the American colonies, contained a scandalous report on the French royal family. The king's son, the newspaper related, 'has revolted against him [the king] lately, and has great reason, if reports be true, that the father used to lie with the son's wife' (Harris, 1690, p. 3). Taking offense at such reportage – or perhaps just using it as a pretext to silence an independent media – the colonial government closed the paper down (Stephens, 2009).

Perhaps the most well-known political scandal was Watergate. In the early 1970s, *The Washington Post* helped break the story that then President Richard Nixon was involved in a cover-up to conceal the fact the Republican Party paid people to break into and bug the

Democratic Party headquarters. Nixon was ultimately forced to resign (Woodward and Bernstein, 2014).

The consequences of reporting a scandal may not always be as laudable as bringing down a corrupt leader. When a US college newspaper published the names of a pair of students caught having sex in an elevator, the resulting embarrassment apparently saw the female student involved soon drop out of college (Knowlton and Reader, 2009). The newspaper's editor acknowledged that a major reason she ran the piece was because her readers would find it interesting, but she also said it had a greater purpose: to warn others of the consequences of having sex in public. Knowlton and Reader (2009) were not convinced, saying this did not justify naming the couple. They also pointed out that such stories can remain on the internet for years, as the news media archives its stories online and others repost the items: 'The publication of such a story could very much impose a life sentence upon people who had long ago paid for their misdemeanor' (Knowlton and Reader, 2009, p. 141).

The audience's perceived moral stance can have a bearing on whether a news media outlet feels it should publish scandalous material. An audience that is 'generally tolerant of (or even demanding of) embarrassing information about individuals in their midst may give journalists a sense of license to publish such information' (Knowlton and Reader, 2009, p. 139). Reports on sexual misconduct, for instance, play a greater role in the content of the sensationalist and celebrity-gossip press because that is what their readers crave.

Some commentators are sceptical about the news media's motives in publishing scandals. Even in cases of genuine outrage, the breathless tone of much reporting of scandal renders it a media-constructed phenomenon: 'A muted police report and a red-headline media scandal…can report on exactly the same historical-factual event. Nevertheless, they are worlds apart from each other' (Ehrat, 2011, p. 7).

Even when scandals result in regulatory or other significant change, it may not get to the root cause of the problems. West (2006) points out that the financial scandals of WorldCom and Enron led to 'arguably the most thorough securities law revisions since the New Deal' (West, 2006, p. 325). But Bethany McLean, a journalist who played a key role in breaking the Enron scandal, was soon warning that the legal changes instituted had not stopped the attitudes that had created the scandal in the first place, citing the later subprime crisis as proof (McLean, 2008). Likewise, West notes that in Japan an epidemic of men groping women in trains led to the introduction of women-only carriages. But police told him this meant women who continued to travel in mixed-sex carriages were regarded by gropers as 'asking for it' (West, 2006, p. 326). Nevertheless, West notes that scandals do act as a gauge of what is acceptable, 'forcing debate on topics that might otherwise have gone untouched, especially on taboo topics like sex' (West, 2006, p. 326).

Sometimes the media itself is the perpetrator of scandalous activity. The *News of the World*'s hacking of mobile phone records, including those of a murder victim, caused outrage, ultimately leading to the paper's closure and the embarrassment of its press baron owner, Rupert Murdoch (Davies, 2014). Similarly, the scandal over CBS's reliance on bogus records about George Bush's military record – termed 'memogate' – tainted the reputation of leading journalist Dan Rather, who subsequently left the network (Ehrat, 2011). There is also the recent scandal of NBC news anchor Brian Williams falsely claiming to have been in an aircraft shot down during the Iraq War (Reuters, 2015).

So, we may have a clear idea of what a media scandal is and that they have always been popular with readers. But we are less clear on the media's motives in publishing scandals – is it to effect genuine change or just satisfy their audience's prurient interest? Also, it is not clear what effect publication may have. It may result in changes as profound and admirable as the the removal of a corrupt president. But it may result simply in superficial regulatory change or be as unfortunate as a student deciding she must leave her studies due to personal embarrassment. And in the modern digital age, such stories can exist indefinitely online.

We now turn to the scandals that rocked the New Zealand poltical landscape in 2014. They coalesce around two personalities from the internet world: blogger Cameron Slater and internet tycoon Kim Dotcom.

Cameron Slater

Cameron Slater is well known in New Zealand as an outspoken, right-wing blogger. He is a strong supporter of the current right-wing government, a coalition led by major party National, which has been in power since 2008. A portly man, Slater has long been nicknamed 'The whale' and uses the expression as part of the name of his blog, 'Whale Oil' (www.whaleoil.co.nz). His blog's writing style is brash and outrageous. Indeed, the full name of his blog, 'Whale Oil Beef Hooked', when said in an Irish accent, is a vulgar pun.

Slater exploded onto the wider public consciousness in late 2013 following the re-election of Len Brown, mayor of New Zealand's largest city, Auckland. Brown, a left-leaning politician, was aged in his mid-fifties, married with teenage daughters. Slater, who had never made any secret of his political hatred for Brown, revealed on Whale Oil that Brown had recently conducted a two-year affair with a young woman. Slater posted a signed affidavit from the woman, in which she graphically detailed the physical aspects of the affair. Slater repeatedly called on Brown to resign, calling him, among other things, 'Lusty Len', a 'creepy, sneaky, little ratbag', 'the rooting ratbag mayor' and 'a duplicitous liar' (Slater, 2013a, para. 1; Slater, 2014, para. 3; Slater, 2013b, para. 7). The story became national news and Brown faced a publicity maelstrom.

It remains unclear why the woman, Bevan Chuang, chose to reveal the affair. What is clear is that she originally wanted her identity kept secret – her name is obscured throughout her affidavit on Whale Oil. However, the media generally quickly identified her, based on other details in the affidavit, and Slater soon began using her name too. For his part, Brown quickly admitted the affair and apologised for it, declaring, ‘I have caused my wife and my children harm and shame and humiliation’ but asking the people of Auckland to ‘stand by me’, as he intended to continue to be their mayor (Campbell Live, 2013, paras. 4 and 10).

Brown is still mayor, but with the next mayoral election due in 2016, his popularity has plummetted. Whereas he received 47 per cent of the vote at the last election, recent surveys has his support at 20 per cent or less, with other likely candidates easily outpolling him (Auckland Council, 2013; Orsman, 2014; Horizon Poll 2015). And his campaign team has apparently abandoned him. Brown’s key advisers have reportedly told him he ‘has no chance of winning’ and will receive no financial backing, political support or volunteers ‘for a campaign where his sex life would be centre stage’ (Orsman, 2015, paras. 2 and 3).

Slater was soon the subject of scandal himself. In the run-up to the country’s general election in 2014, investigative journalist Nicky Hager published a book called *Dirty Politics*, which revealed various shady practices in the National-led government. It included numerous revelations about Slater’s close links with senior figures in the government (Hager, 2014). The book garnered much media coverage.

At first the leader of the National Party and Prime Minister of New Zealand, John Key, dismissed the book, describing it as ‘cynically timed attack book from a well-known left-wing conspiracy theorist. It makes all sorts of unfounded allegations’ (Wong, 2014, para. 12). But later events supported many of the book’s claims. The book said members of the prime minister’s office gave Slater preferential treatment in a freedom of information case, allowing him to quickly obtain information to embarrass a senior politician from a competing party.

An independent government inquiry launched in response found that officials had failed to maintain political neutrality. The government agency involved, the Security Intelligence Service, was obliged to apologise (Young, 2014).

The book also revealed that Slater was secretly paid by a public relations consultant, the son of an ex-senior National party member, to publish articles that attacked those who criticised the alcohol or tobacco industries.

And the book said the then Justice Minister, Judith Collins, had leaked to Slater the name of a public official she thought had leaked embarrassing information about the government. Slater had named the official and vehemently attacked him on Whale Oil. The official concerned denied he had leaked anything. Collins, already embattled following accusations she had promoted her husband's commercial interests during a ministerial visit to China, was weakened politically by this revelation. A short time later, an email from Slater, which said Collins was 'gunning' for a senior public servant who had displeased her, was sent to the prime minister's office (Bilby, 2014, para. 4). Collins then resigned, although a later independent investigation cleared her of any wrongdoing and she eventually returned to the Cabinet (Kirk and Ireland, 2014).

Hager obtained much of the material for his book from a hacker, known as Rawshark. In turn, Rawshark had obtained the material by hacking into Cameron Slater's gmail and Facebook accounts and stealing thousands of emails. Rawshark said he undertook the hacking to 'take down this corrupt network' (quoted in Fisher, 2014, para. 11). As part of its investigation into Rawshark's actions, the police raided Hager's house. Hager continues to argue that, as a journalist, he is legally entitled to protect his sources (Heather and Shadwell, 2014).

Despite the scandals, the National-led government convincingly won the subsequent election. One reason for this was the failed political machinations of a controversial high-profile German, the improbably named Kim Dotcom.

Kim Dotcom

Kim Schmitz was born in Germany in 1974 and rose to prominence as an internet entrepreneur. On the back of the dotcom boom he became very wealthy, and changed his surname accordingly. He was convicted of various white collar and computer crimes in Germany and Thailand, for which he received suspended sentences and fines.

Despite his chequered history, Dotcom obtained New Zealand residency in 2010. At the time, Dotcom ran Megaupload, an online data-sharing system, which had millions of registered users. The FBI had the site shut down in 2012 for alleged massive copyright infringement. The FBI has sought Dotcom’s extradition to the US to stand trial on these matters, which Dotcom continues to fight in New Zealand (Fisher, 2013).

Dotcom had a larger-than-life persona. Tall and corpulent, he lived with his petite, glamorous wife Mona and their young children in a leased large home in north Auckland, dubbed the ‘Dotcom mansion’. As part of the internet copyright case, in January 2012 the New Zealand police raided the mansion, arresting Dotcom and several of his associates. The raid was made at the request of the FBI, and FBI officers took part in the operation. Footage of the raid, widely shown on New Zealand television, showed armed police raiding the mansion, some arriving by helicopter. Dotcom was detained in prison, but later released, and his financial assets (valued at about $NZ12 million) frozen. Many in the news media began questioning why such seemingly over-the-top tactics were deemed necessary and a series of court hearings then ensued, wrangling over the legality of the raid (Campbell Live, 2012).

Prior to the raid, the police had asked a government spy agency, the GCSB (Government Communications Security Bureau) to conduct surveillance on Dotcom. By law, the GCSB could only spy on foreigners, and the police erroneously told the GCSB that Dotcom was a foreign national. The legal issues snowballed when an official investigation revealed that the GCSB's spying on Dotcom was illegal because Dotcom was a New Zealand resident. Further, the investigation found that 85 people may have been illegally spied on, because the GCSB was relying on incorrect legal advice regarding when it could assist New Zealand authorities that were entitled to spy on New Zealanders. These explosive findings were contained in a report that was leaked to political reporter Andrea Vance (Vance, 2014).

The Prime Minister then commissioned top government official David Henry to investigate the leak. Henry sought information from those senior government politicians who had copies of the report, but one, Peter Dunne, refused to co-operate fully. Dunne insisted he had not leaked the report, but nevertheless refused to hand over the complete contents of emails he had sent to Vance. Instead, he resigned (Rutherford and Pryor, 2014).

To help track down the person who leaked the report to Vance, Henry obtained from Parliamentary Services (the public officials who run Parliament) records of Vance's use of telephones in the Parliamentary complex and her comings and goings to Parliament via her swipe card usage. This was done in secret, without her permission. This, in turn, caused another furore and was seen as a gross invasion of her privacy and media freedom. Vance publicly said she was 'mad as hell' about being 'snooped on by Parliament's bureaucrats' (Radio New Zealand, 2014, para. 17). Under pressure, the head of Parliamentary Services, Geoff Thorn, resigned. The government apologised to Vance, stating that it acknowledged 'the personal hurt and humiliation that Ms Vance suffered as a result of personal information about her being accessed and released' (Bennett, 2014, para. 4).

Key also apologised for the illegal spying on Dotcom, saying it was due to human error: 'I apologise to Mr Dotcom, I apologise to New Zealanders, because every New Zealander that sits within the category of having permanent residency or is a New Zealand citizen is entitled to be protected from the law when it comes to the GCSB' (One News, 2014a, para. 4).

Dotcom's private life also came under the spotlight when his wife Mona left him in mid-2014. She left the Dotcom mansion in a golf cart in the middle of the night, to avoid security, later telling her story to a woman's magazine. She now lives near the mansion and has a young boyfriend (Anonymous, 2014).

With a general election imminent, Dotcom decided to enter the political arena. As he was not a New Zealand citizen (merely a New Zealand resident), he could not stand for office. However, he bankrolled a new political party called the Internet Party, to the tune of $NZ3.5 million (Blackstock, 2014). The leader of the party was Laila Harré, a well-known left-wing activist and ex-politician. The press secretary for the party was Pam Corkery, a radio host and former left-wing politician.

As time went on, however, the Internet Party became mired in scandal. An early issue was the status of online journalist Alastair Thompson, who had long worked for online news site Scoop (www.scoop.co.nz). In a story broken by Whale Oil, it was revealed that Thompson was general-secretary of the Internet Party. Thompson had a conflict of interest – his role with the Internet Party compromised his status as an independent journalist. Thompson had no option but to leave Scoop (Bennett, 2014).

To increase its chances of electoral success, the Internet Party merged with another small party, Mana. This party focussed on rights for Māori, the indigenous people of New Zealand ('Mana' in the Māori language means 'authority' or 'prestige'). Mana had one Member of Parliament, the outspoken Māori leader Hone Harawira, who had a strong majority and looked likely to be re-elected. Under New Zealand's proportional representation electoral system, this meant that, should Harawira be re-elected, it was likely Internet Party candidates would obtain seats in Parliament too. Many saw the merger as a marriage of convenience, and one of Harawira's high-profile colleagues in Mana, the veteran activist Sue Bradford, left the party in protest at the planned merger. She declared Mana was 'sucking up to a German millionaire…and I don't want to be his pawn' (Satherley and Moran, 2014, para. 4).

The behaviour of some in the party compounded the scandals. The Internet Mana Party's launch took place against the backdrop of the *Dirty Politics* revelations. When reporters asked to interivew Dotcom, he refused. Pam Corkery then verbally attacked the news media on camera, calling one a 'puffed-up little shit' and asking the assembled reporters 'when will you glove puppets of Cameron Slater just piss off?' The outburst was widely reported, with one leading mainstream news station saying the party's launch had 'ended in farce' (3 News, 2014).

Internet Mana began running dance parties around the country. Dotcom appeared as a DJ at these events, and in a widely seen video of one such event Dotcom had the audience chant 'Fuck John Key! Fuck John Key!' (Internet Mana, 2014).

Five days before the election, Dotcom staged the 'Moment of Truth', a major public event in Auckland at which he promised to reveal much-anticipated evidence that Prime Minister Key had lied to the New Zealand public about aspects of the Dotcom case. But the event was a flop, with Dotcom providing no evidence (Garner, 2014).

Worse was to come for Internet Mana. On election night, John Key's government was returned with a comfortable majority and emerged stronger than ever. By contrast, not only did none of Internet Mana Party's new politicians win seats, but its one existing Member of Parliament, Hone Harawira, was voted out. On television, a visibly shaken Dotcom announced to the party faithful that he 'took full responsibility for this loss tonight because the brand Kim Dotcom was poison' (One News, 2014b). Soon after, Mana and Internet split.

Since then, New Zealand has heard little from Kim Dotcom, other than his occasional court appearances (Walters and Dennett, 2015).

Understanding the media scandals

Using the definition supplied by Lull and Hinderman (1997), we can identify the main media scandals discussed above and their effect:

Cameron Slater

- Slater's exposé of Auckland mayor Len Brown's extramarital affair. Brown remained mayor but has lost most of his public support.
- The revelations in the *Dirty Politics* book, including that Slater was paid to write stories and had close links with the National government. This contributed to the temporary halting of Judith Collins's senior political career.
- The fact government agency the Security Intelligence Service had failed to maintain political neutrality in its dealings with Slater, and was obliged to apologise.
- Rawshark's hacking of Slater's email. Rawshark has yet to be identified and the police investigation is continuing.
- The police raid on Hager's house, when Hager argued he was legally entitled to protect his source. Again, this matter is ongoing.

Kim Dotcom

- The nature of the police raid on Dotcom's mansion, including his short period of imprisonment. This was seen by some as excessive.

- The GCSB's illegal spying on Dotcom and other New Zealanders. Prime minister John Key apologised for this.
- The manner in which the investigation of the leaking of the report into the GCSB's activities was impeded. This ultimately saw government minister Peter Dunne resign, although he was later reinstated.
- The investigation's prying into political reporter Andrea Vance's activities at Parliament. This resulted in the resignation of a senior government official and the government's apology to Vance.
- Dotcom's wife leaving him in the dead of night and taking up with a younger man.
- Journalist Alastair Thompson's conflict of interest in his being general-secretary of the Internet Party, leading to his resignation from news organisation Scoop. He has since left the Internet Party and returned to Scoop.
- The supposedly left-wing Internet Party being bankrolled by an internet tycoon, which saw one high-profile left-wing activist leave Mana, the Internet Party's political partner, in protest.
- The Internet Party's attacks on the media and personal abuse of John Key. Ultimately, Internet Mana suffered a comprehensive defeat at the general election, while the National-led government was comfortably re-elected.

Undoubtedly part of the reason these scandals made such an impact in New Zealand is because they frequently involved celebrities (Stephens, 2007). Consider of the reportage on Mona leaving Kim Dotcom. This was only news because she is the glamorous wife of a high-profile person. Likewise, Len Brown's extramarital affair was news because he was mayor of the country's largest city, rather than an anonymous man in the street. True, Brown's case did raise issues of trust, in that Brown was caught in lies, but there was no evidence Brown engaged in lies in his political life (Knowlton and Reader, 2009; Ehrat, 2011).

In some cases, the scandals actually increased the person's celebrity status, thereby exacerbating the scandal. It turned out Judith Collins had not been 'gunning' for a senior government official, but her inability to stay out of the headlines meant she had become a political liability. Dotcom's brand ended up, to use his own word, 'poison', contributing to his party's electoral failure.

But celebrity is only part of the reason these scandals were so widely reported. Many of the scandals raised far more substantive issues than simply a well-known person's dramatic fall. One was journalistic independence. *Dirty Politics* revealed the SIS had compromised its independence by assisting Slater to embarrass an opposition politician. Cameron Slater revealed that Alastair Thompson had compromised his journalistic independence by becoming general-secretary of the Internet Party. *Dirty Politics* revealed that Cameron Slater himself compromised his independence when he secretly took money to write articles furthering his clients' interests. Clearly, journalists are not immune from scandalising society themselves (Davies, 2014).

Another issue the scandals raised is the state's powers (Woodward and Bernstein, 2014). The excessive armed police raid on the Dotcom mansion, the GCSB's illegal spying on Dotcom, the prying into a political reporter's activities in Parliament. These all engendered public concern and, in the latter two cases, government apologies.

And there is the permanence of these scandals in the internet age (Knowlton and Reader, 2009). Anyone interested in these scandals can read about them online. On YouTube, viewers can easily find footage of, say, Peter Dunne resigning, Pam Corkery's attack on the media and DJ Dotcom's rabble-rousing attack on John Key. But, more profoundly, anything that exists on the internet can come back to haunt you. Both Cameron Slater and Judith

Collins learnt this to their cost when their emails were hacked or otherwise obtained. Likewise, Bevan Chuang will likely have her details of her two-year dalliance with Brown available on the internet indefinitely, despite the fact she originally thought her identity would remain a secret.

Conclusions

What was the ultimate effect of these scandals on the wider New Zealand public?

Len Brown's political future looks bleak because of his extramarital affair, even though little, if anything, could be deduced from the scandal about his abilities as a mayor. In contrast, despite the National-led government being forced to apologise for illegal spying and other serious transgressions, it was comfortably re-elected. Why? Perhaps because in both cases the general public's overall response was cultural retrenchment (Lull and Hinerman, 1997). That is to say, the public was far more appalled by Brown's sexual misconduct than by anything revealed about the government. As Kim Dotcom's behaviour become ever more outrageous, it served only to strengthen the government's hand.

More recently, John Key has become embroiled in another scandal, repeatedly pulling the ponytail of a female worker in a cafe. The media was soon showing archive clips of him playing with the hair of young girls, and reporting suggestions he may be a hair fetishist. In light of the above discussion, it will be interesting to see how the public ultimately responds to that (O'Brien, 2015).

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Journalistic Sources: Evaluation in Third Space

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Journalistic Sources: Evaluation in Third Space

Introduction

The professional practices of journalism ask that producers gather and orchestrate a variety of social discourses and perspectives in the form of the *sources* they report (Lam et al., 2015). As such, journalists engage with the *heteroglossia*, or multi-voicedness, of the real, civic world (Bakhtin, 1981). We can consider journalism a heteroglossic form, with many voices coming into contact with each other. In doing journalistic work, then, youth have opportunities to consider and compare multiple perspectives as they produce a piece that expresses their own ideas. These opportunities provide youth with the chance to practice understanding and respecting others' perspectives, an important civic capacity (Gould, 2011), but also to shape their own narratives about their lives.

However, limited research exists on the actual learning that occurs during such processes of news and media production (Young, 2011), especially compared to studies of learning in other domains like STEM. Therefore, we do not know in detail how producing a digital story about a civic issue, for example, contributes to a young person's thinking about other viewpoints or their ability to communicate their perspectives. Further, Soep (2006) argues that research on youth media production often only celebrates the multimodal literacies such work affords; however, in not investigating student work closely, youth expression is essentialized, portrayed as "authentic," and beneficial in and of itself. Further, student-created media, in picking up the cultural tools and engaging in the practice of digital production, can potentially reproduce dominant portrayals of racialized groups, as well as engage in other stereotypical representations (Soep, 2006). Even work that seems to offer an "authentic" voice can serve to reinforce perceptions of fixed and inherent difference (Bhabha, 1994; Spivak, 1994). The challenge, then, for teaching media production to youth is to support them in picking up and contributing professional practices that are powerful, and not in reproducing or joining with problematic institutional practices.

In this study, we look at a civic youth journalism program designed as a third space, in that students learned journalistic practices while their everyday experiences and knowledge were positioned as resources. We seek to understand how young people analyzed the civic perspectives and ideas that they gathered as part of journalistic work, which we argue involves engagement with heteroglossia, or the multiple social voices of the world (Bahktin, 1981; Holland, et al., 1998). In addition to documenting the ways in which journalistic practices provided opportunities for gathering and evaluating diverse sources, we also attend to the affordances of a third space environment for supporting students' moves to adapt, extend, and transform those practices. To that end, alongside detailing the ways students evaluated the diverse sources they gathered as journalists, we also analyze moments when sources of information from other contexts were brought into classroom conversations. Our findings indicate that a third space design supported students in using journalistic practices and in drawing resources from their everyday lives and communities; further, we find an emergent classroom practice of *contexualization*, in which student use both journalistic and everyday sources to make sense of sources. This research contributes theoretically to our understanding of how students transform disciplinary practices in third space as well as how to develop and sustain it in a diverse context and methodologically moves us to consider what we learn in one context to understand another.

Theoretical and Disciplinary Background

Journalistic Evaluation

Journalism educators engage young people in journalistic activities or practices, which involve picking up and using the cultural tools of news media production, such as shooting and editing video footage. One particular practice of journalism is that of *source evaluation*, in which a journalistic source—an interviewee, an official report, another journalistic text—is evaluated by the journalist to decide on whether and how information from that source should be included in the story. This task, in which the perspective or information offered by a source is made sense of by the journalist, is one asked of civic participants who go on to make choices based on sources.

The ways in which journalists perceive the role of sources varies significantly across contexts, reflecting the individual journalists' own values, as well those of the broader journalistic culture (Hanitzsch, 2007). Some journalists see their job as objectively mirroring reality; others see it as a purely subjective task, one in which they gather multiple realities to construct their stories. For both, sources provide evidence and fodder for a journalistic story: "The task of the journalist is to piece together discourses created by other sources into a narrative that follows news conventions" (Carlson, p. 529, 2009). In attributing sources, journalists cultivate credibility and often the appearance of objectivity and distance from those sources. Journalists who are explicitly subjective with their work also gather other voices and perspectives to buttress and illustrate their ideas. The source, further, often serves as the evidence for the point being made in a piece of journalism, "and therefore requires no verification beyond its accurate attribution" (Carlson, 2009, p. 527). However, sources do not end up in journalistic work indiscriminately: they are evaluated by the journalist, often with more information left out of the final piece than in. Journalists seek sources who have directly experienced the topic being covered, or who may have studied or researched it.

Problem with the practice. Professional journalists often evaluate a source based on its societal authority with elite, official, and “an overabundance of white male sources” dominating many forms of news coverage (Carlson, 2009, p. 239-530). This practice, in turn, may serve to reinscribe societal authority. Alongside this problem with sourcing, the American Society of Newspaper Editors (2013) found that minorities are highly underrepresented in American newsrooms, comprising only 12 percent of newspaper and online journalists. This lack of newsroom diversity might affect the portrayal of minorities (Johnston & Flamiano, 2007). For example, people of color are overrepresented in the news as perpetrators of violence and crime (Dixon, Azocar, & Casas, 2003; Dixon & Linz, 2000). According to focus groups conducted by the Chicago Community Trust (2011), members of the city’s low-income communities—representative of its majority-minority racial and ethnic population—feel both inadequately covered in the news and under- informed about current events.

Heteroglossia

Heteroglossia, or multivoicedness, is, broadly, a condition of the world that education researchers have argued should and must be leveraged for deep learning (Roseberry, et al., 2010, Bang et al., 2012), in which learners learn not pick up the knowledge, skills, and practices of a domain, but also understand the ways in which knowledge is produced and bound within that domain. All languages exhibit heteroglossia, in that they comprise multiple social voices - each voice has a specific point of view that is "characterized by its own objects, meanings and values”

(Bakhtin, 1981). Individuals understand words within the context of the voice that produced it, its “background make up of contradictory opinions, points of view, value judgments.” (Bahktin, 1981 p. 281). Through engaging with the heterogeneity of social voices (their perspectives; their epistemologies; object/meaning relationships; their contexts), individuals make meaning of the world (Roseberry et al., 2010; Bang, et al., 2012). In some disciplinary contexts, the heterogeneity of language and the social voices from which learners may draw is dismissed offhandedly or deliberately suppressed; the consequences of such an orientation is particularly detrimental to marginalized students. Their everyday social voices are positioned as deficits to overcome in classrooms, which generally privilege white, middle-class practices over even heteroglossic disciplinary practices (Bang, et al., 2012).

Journalism as Heteroglossic

We argue that journalism texts are heteroglossic discursive spaces. First, these texts are multi-voiced, in that the points of view of representatives of a variety of social groups are represented by sources and put into conversation by the journalist. Therefore, in making journalistic texts, producers must engage with the voices that exist in heteroglossia – journalism practices, such as source evaluation, offer some tools for how to approach different voices, a type of metalanguage, “a language for talking about language, images, texts, and meaning-making interactions” (New London Group, 1996, p.77). However, as with heteroglossia of language broadly, the voices included in journalistic texts are socially stratified, in that some voices exert more power and authority than others. Bakhtin argues that some media, including newspapers, are “capable of stratifying language, in proportion to their social significance” (p. 290), we see this with journalism in the section above. Therefore, in not wanting to further disenfranchise youth voice by offering them only tools that can lead to stratification, we need to design for third space, which allow for challenging and reshaping problematic practices.

Third Space

One important way of conceptualizing third space comes from postcolonial theory, which has engaged deeply in understanding how discourse presupposes, exerts, and cements power; this theory offers a lens for understanding how we might conceptualize the shifts in semiotic relationships required for learning to happen in such a context. Bhabha (1994) suggests a hybrid "third space" in which meaning is not fixed, but rather it is adaptable. He writes that in third spaces:

> The 'right' to signify from the periphery of authorized power and privilege does not depend on the persistence of tradition; it is resourced by the power of tradition to be reinscribed through the conditions of contingency and contradictoriness that attend upon the lives of those who are 'in the minority'" (p. 3).

This destabilization of tradition may be disruptive, shift boundaries, and binaries, and challenge expectations (Bhabha, 1994). We have seen this happen with journalism in recent social movements. The Arab Spring, for example, was a civic and political revolution germinated on networks that were deemed social (not civic) and functioned independently of state media. Such radical use of tools can profoundly challenge dominance (Kahne, et al., 2014), including that of journalistic representation. For example, we see this now with the Movement for Black Lives using social media to amplify community perspectives on police killings that mainstream journalism outlets did not cover or covered selectively.

Moje, et al. (2004) document the ways in which Bhabha's articulation of third space has been taken up in educational contexts, which taken together suggest that “the bringing together of Discourses and knowledges in third space as a productive scaffold for young people to learn the literacy practices that are framed by the Discourses and knowledges privileged in the content areas” (p. 44). In addition to providing access, working with multiple discourses supports youth to navigate between contexts themselves. Finally, they argue that the broader goal of third space is to bring together “texts frame by everyday Discourse and knowledge into classrooms in ways that challenge, destabilize, and, ultimately expand the literacy practices that are typically valued in school and in the everyday world” (p. 44). Gutierrez (2008) specifically notes that third space is about more than valuing students’ cultural practices; more than scaffolding to school-based practices; instead, it’s a space “where the potential for an expanded form of learning and the development of new knowledge are heightened” (p. 152).

A prevailing metaphor in sociocultural theories of learning is that of a bridge – building bridges from content literacy to home literacy, third space moves us toward thinking about destabilizing what’s on either side of the bridge, resisting binaries. Gutierrez (2014) further adds to this metaphor, arguing we should consider the syncretic, with “learning as movement” both vertically – building expertise within contexts/disciplines – and horizontally –building connections across contexts/disciplines. Here, not only do we value the horizontal moves as much as the vertical, but again we look to youths’ everyday lives, contexts, and expertise as a tool to complicate, investigate, and destabilize existing forms of “academic” knowledge. Returning to the metaphor of bridges, whether they move vertically or horizontally, whether they take learners somewhere known or if that place is built in the process of arriving, researchers interested in equity must additionally consider who builds the bridge. Much of the research in this area looks to educators, researchers, and designers to do the work of identifying relevant funds of knowledge, cultural contexts, everyday knowledge that might be of use to learners. Lee (2001) looks to signifying in the African American community; Moje et al. conduct a three-year ethnography to identify relevant areas from which teachers may build third spaces; Gutierrez's work involves youth analyzing and studying the everyday genre of *testimonio* while learning academic writing.

Research Questions

This study asks:

1. In what ways does journalistic source evaluation provide opportunities for engagement with heteroglossia?
2. In what ways do youth extend those opportunities with sources and tools of their own?
3. How can we better design curriculum for teaching journalistic evaluation practices in third space, with more opportunities for extending students' everyday and journalistic evaluative repertoires?

Analytic Framework

Educational research on the concept of third space (Gutiérrez, Baquedano-Lopez, Tejeda, 1999; Gutiérrez, Rymes & Larson, 1995; Gutiérrez & Vossoughi, 2009; Kamberelis, 2001; Lee, 2001, 2004; Moje et al., 2004) suggests that hybrid environments which young people are free to draw from multiple and familiar linguistic and cultural repertoires as they engage in academic activity, allow for transformative learning. In these spaces, youth leverage the perspectives, talents, and knowledge that they already have in order to pick up and transform new cultural practices (Engeström, 2001; Gutiérrez, 2008; Gutiérrez, Baquedano-Lopez & Tejeda, 1999; Gutiérrez et al., 2011). As this research is interested in seeing how students think about heteroglossia, multiple voices, traditional authoritative models, where the teacher's and domain's perspectives are the ones students should engage with, are not adequate lenses for analysis. Attention to hybridity and third space drove the design of the curriculum and analysis of the implementation.

Methodology

Data gathered for this study are part of a design-based research project (Brown, 1992; Cobb, et al., 2003; McKenney & Reeves, 2012; Easterday, Rees Lewis, & Gerber, 2014;) we are conducting on the teaching and learning of civic journalism in communities underrepresented in that domain. Different researchers approach this methodology differently, but at a basic level, DBR affords "both 'engineering' particular forms of learning and systematically studying them" (Cobb, et al. 2003, p. 9).

Students and Context

The Urban Organizing Association (a pseudonym) has a faith-based, activist, community-organizing model for effecting social change. They seek to institutionalize a journalism and digital media program for youth from surrounding neighborhoods. With leadership at the organization, as well as with colleagues in my department, we developed a curriculum for a 5-week summer program to teach journalistic production, critical media literacy, and civics skills.

The UOA program enrolled 15 Black, Hispanic, and mixed-race high school-aged students. Participants received small stipends through a city initiative for youth jobs. These students self-selected into teams of 2-4, who worked together to plan, report, and produce short digital stories about topics in UOA’s focal areas for community organizing. Three teams chose to work on issues of food justice; one chose to the topic of employment. The first author served as teacher for the class.

Curriculum

The curriculum was informed by theories of third space, as a way to address the challenge of asking students to take up practices from a profession that often overlooks and misrepresents their communities. We sought to develop a space in which students’ “right to signify” was presupposed, and not bestowed upon them only once they had mastered expert disciplinary practices. Instead, we sought to value the ways in which disciplinary practices and tools were hybridized, taken up and adapted to better serve participants’ goals. In such a space, the use of tools and interpretations of objects is layered and draws from many, oft-conflicting, discourses (Lee, 2004; Wertsch, 1991).

While the dominant media tends to privilege elite voices, journalistic production lends itself to multiplicity of perspectives quite well. Journalism requires that a producer draw from several, often-conflicting sources to craft a coherent message using multimodal representational tools. The curriculum also asked that students do this, while emphasizing their power to reframe a civic issue from their own perspective and to draw from otherwise marginalized voices.

Professional journalism involves finding sources of information, people, data, or direct experience, through which to tell a story. These sources are deemed credible based on their direct, lived experience with the issue being covered, (someone living with a disease); their authoritative expertise (a doctor studying the disease); and the information’s relation to reputable organizations or institutions, (a non-profit organization or government’s report on the prevalence of that disease). After establishing credibility, professional journalists may evaluate a source based on their fit into a story—looking for individual's perspective or experience to illuminate or typify a trend or statistic, or data to bolster an individual's claim about their perspective or experience. In an opinion piece, a source is evaluated relative to the journalists' opinion—does it change their opinion, bolster it, or challenge it?

In the learning context of this program, human sources were deemed credible if they were members of the community affected by the topic covered in the piece; if they were activists working in the community to address the topic; or if they were experts, such as professionals or researchers, studying the issue. Texts, both primary and secondary, were also used as sources by the students, particularly to provide data and expert perspectives, in part because of the lack of access to professional researchers given the limited time period in which students completed their pieces. Gathered online, primary sources of data included government reports or statements from non-profit organizations. Secondary sources, less likely to be used by professional journalists, included other media sources, so news pieces covering the same issues the students covered. In particular, we discussed finding and representing sources that would support students in telling stories that challenged dominant narratives about their communities.

Students in the program evaluated their sources at different points in the process of creating their short documentaries. First, they planned who they would ideally like to speak to, or what information they needed, given their topic of interest. These sources were not always reached by the students. Next, in contacting and interviewing human sources, students reported conducting on-the-spot evaluations; back in class, they often mentioned in informal recaps with me that someone had said something interesting or irrelevant. The sources were also evaluated when being incorporated into their pieces. Video editing involved cutting short statements made by interviewees, summarizing textual sources, and ordering them based on structure of the story. As we explore in the data analysis below, the process by which these sources were evaluated were manifold, but often involved consideration of whether the students believed the source; how the information changed or affected the students' perspective on the issue; whether the source jibed with the students' story schema, was redundant, or tangential given the other information in the piece; and finally, how an audience might react to the information.

Data collection and analysis

Field notes, video recordings of classroom instruction, discussion, and group work, artifacts of student work, and directors' commentaries were collected for this study. At the end of the program, the first author conducted directors' commentaries with each student group. This involved asking students generally about how they felt about their final mini-documentaries. Then, they watched the video together, and the researcher stopped after each cut, asking students about the decisions they made.

The first round of analysis involved content logging the data corpus. From this, we identified several *classroom events* in which students and the teacher engaged in the practice of journalistic evaluation to transcribe and code closely. An event comprises a classroom activity, in which a particular practice is enacted and interactional structure is maintained (Bloome, et al., 2005). These events were then further broken into journalistic evaluation episodes, which constitute my units of analysis. For coding, the beginning bound of an episode occurs when participant, teacher or student, offers up a new object of analysis (topic to discuss, interview to go over, fact to ponder), and ends when that object ceases to be reacted to.

We selected three events to analyze for this paper because they are examples of sustained practice of journalistic evaluation and include a variety of sources. We identified journalistic evaluation practices as occurring when the content of a source, an idea, perspective, or fact is introduced and then assessed. The first event is a 45-minute classroom discussion in which students and the first author debrief on the interviews students conducted over the weekend, asking people about their perspectives and ideas about race. The other two are directors' commentaries, about an hour long each.

Premilinary Findings

The analysis below begins with a description of the various sources, both designed-for and emergent, that were introduced in classroom discussion and directors' commentaries. We will show that journalistic source-gathering practices empowered students to articulate the perspectives they deemed relevant to their topics. Further, students also offered sources gathered through everyday interactions in order to extend our analysis of the perspectives introduced through the journalistic practices they engaged in through the summer. Next, we will show that students and the teacher similarly used novel journalistic, disciplinary, and everyday evaluative tools alongside those covered in the curriculum, to extend and complicate the analysis of the sources discussed. We argue that this hybrid use of tools is necessary given the unanticipated perspectives represented in students' sources. Finally, we will close with a discussion of the moves students and we make, drawing on tools and sources from their experiences and backgrounds, to better contextualize the perspectives they gathered as part of their work. By hybridizing taught journalistic practices, the class explored the geographical, scalar, and some ideological contexts of students' sources.

Sources

Sources gathered through designed activities. The left column of *Table 1* details the sources that students discuss in the data, which they had gathered through the journalistic tasks designed in the curriculum. As expected given their instruction, students conducted interviews in person, and conducted research and gathered secondary sources online.

Journalistic Sources Sources introduced through engagement in curricular journalistic practices	**Exogenous Sources** Sources introduced in discussion, reflection, and extension of curricular journalistic practices
<u>Everyday Sources</u> ● interview with family members ● interview with friends	<u>Everyday Sources</u> ● past experience with family members ● past experience with friends ● past experience with video games ● past experience with teachers ● interview with individual on social media
<u>Local (geographically) Sources</u> ● interview with individuals living in Englewood/Chicago Lawn ○ adults ○ youth ● interview with expert classroom speaker (community activist) <u>Distant (geographically) Sources</u> ● interview with individuals in downtown Chicago	<u>Local (geographically) Sources</u> ● past observation of students' own community
<u>Secondary Sources</u> ● other media sources ● research and statistics	<u>Secondary Sources</u> ● past experience with journalism/news ● facts from school science

Table 1

The sources that students gather as part of their journalistic work include those that are from their everyday environments, such as friends and family; are local geographically; are distant geographically; and are secondary sources not involving direct student-conducted interviews. Although students were encouraged to find and interview expert sources (people who had studied or advocated for an issue) they largely relied on secondary sources to lend perspectives that went beyond everyday experience with an issue. The instructor guided students in identifying generally what sorts of sources they may need. Still, the students were arbiters of who and what they included or did not include in their pieces, and who and what they decided to bring into discussion. The journalistic practices of gathering sources with interviews and secondary research empowered youth to parse through viewpoints that they gathered, not simply those were gathered, vetted, and deemed relevant by just the teacher or curricular designer.

Exogenous Sources In addition to sources that students gathered as part of the journalistic practices included in the curriculum and instruction, students and the instructor both introduced other sources of information in source evaluation events. These exogenous sources were used in order to extend the conversations we had about journalistic sources.

Excerpt 1 is from a discussion about the interviews students conducted on race. A class-wide conversation begins with the instructor asking students if they had heard any new perspectives on race in the interviews they had conducted over the weekends. Two students shared ideas that their sources had expressed: one that race is “your attitude and how you act” and the other that “there’s only one race: the human race.” Mike follows the introduction of these two journalistic sources gathered through interviews with geographically local individuals with one he had experienced in the past:

1	Mike	Alright, so I was playing my game right. And. It's like
2	Gulu	Which game?
3	Mike	Grand Theft Auto.
4	Gulu	Ok.
5	Mike	But it's like, it's like a lot of it. It's race war sometimes on there.
6		Like they'll just talk about random stuff.
7		And there was, one dude was saying that race does matter because it's like your pride and like your heritage where you where you come from. You know what I'm saying.
8		Like some races have some cu cultures he was saying like you wanna you wanna stay true to your culture.
9	Gulu	OK.
10	Mike	So he said race does matter.

Excerpt 1

In line 5, Mike articulated the relevance of this everyday source to the topic at hand, saying that he's experienced "race wars" as a gamer. Then, he shares a perspective that is different from the previous two, and any that we had discussed in the prior week. Immediately after this, another student, Jasper, who identifies as African-American, shares two events in which other players in his online games use "the n-word".

Here, students extend our conversation on journalistic sources by offering a point of comparison with earlier ideas, as Mike's source suggests that race does matter. And then, Jasper uses another exogenous source to provide an illustration of the idea that games include "race wars" by Jasper. These sources of information all lie in Mike and Jasper's past experience in an everyday space, where they play video games and talk online with strangers. Although these sources may be geographically distant, they are part of students' everyday lives, experienced in their homes, in the activities they elect to do in their free time.

Students sharing sources from their experience in everyday contexts in a conversation about journalistic sources is an example of hybridity, or the bringing together of ideas gathered through the new practices taught in class with more familiar spaces. The curriculum emphasized the value of the everyday by encouraging youth to interview their friends, family, and members of their communities. Students also drew from their past everyday experiences, sources not gathered through interviews or research. Their lives become resources with which to consider their classwork. This points to their recognizing the value of their own experiences to the journalistic task at hand. Students rarely draw from exogenous "expert" sources—lessons, news sources, data, or research they have come across in either their personal or academic lives. Instead, their sources often come from informal interactions.

In *Excerpt 2*, Mike again pulls together his everyday contexts with journalistic tasks. The week prior, after assigning students the task of conducting interviews about race, the class brainstormed the types of perspectives we may try to gather. The list included perspectives from elders, young people, people of different races, and people who study race issues. Students suggested that we also interview people who are racist.

1	Mike	Oh Miss, I got an interview, I got an interview from a racist guy.
2	Gulu	You got an interview with a racist guy?
3	Mike	Yes.
4	Gulu	Alright. I wanna hear about that.
5	Mike	He didn't do this terrible. He was like, "What is your race?"
6		I was like, "I'm African American."
7		He was like, "You should be ashamed."
8	Several Students	<Laughter>
9	Gulu	He said that to you?
10	Mike	Yeah
11	Gulu	How did you react to that? What did you follow up with?

12	Mike	You know, I kept it professional. I mean that’s his opinion.
13		He did real bad. He was real bad.
14	Gulu	And where was this?
15	Mike	He didn’t say nothing negative.
16		Oh this was on Facebook.
17	Several Students	<Laughter>
18	Gulu	O.K.
19	Jasper	You should be ashamed.
20	Gulu	How did you find this guy, and were you like Facebook chatting with him or video chat?
21	Mike	Oh no, it’s this guy named Cautious online.
22		Like a real redneck.
23		He said. We connected through his Facebook account. I just called the dude up and he said I could talk to him. We just basically connected through Facebook.

Excerpt 2

Here, Mike takes the curricular task of gathering multiple perspectives on race through interviews and adapts it. The curriculum and my instruction does not explicitly guide him toward conducting online interviews, although professional journalists sometimes do this. Rather than seeing the relevance of his experience as a source to discuss in the the classroom, he finds a journalistic source in the context of his everyday online experiences.

In this discussion and in the directors’ commentaries, exogenous sources are introduced by students to 1) offer a point of comparison to an earlier perspective, or 2) illustrate or add additional detail to an earlier point of view. In both preceding excerpts, Mike introduced his source as a counterpoint to the perspectives shared by the sources other students introduced. Jasper, following *Excerpt 2* with more examples of his experiences with racism in games, is an example of a source used to illustrate a preceding point. In these cases, exogenous sources are used to extend discussion of our journalistic sources. This allows students to complicate the limited range of perspectives they had time to gather with those they had experienced in other contexts. With no one immediately available to offer up a racist perspective, for example, students draw from their lives in order to more deeply understand and discuss these ideas.

In gathering journalistic sources, students were able to access a range of ideas from contexts other than the immediate learning environment; however, the class was limited temporally and geographically, given time constraints of a five-week program and the lack of easy and affordable public transportation. The class brought exogenous sources to extend conversations beyond what was immediately available as a source that they could interview.

Tools

Tools introduced through designed activity Similiarly to their use of sources, students picked up and used curricular tools throughout the program to engage in journalistic evaluation to 1) evaluate truthfulness and accuracy and 2) evaluate fit into the story of curriculuar and exogenous sources.

Curricular Tools Introduced through instructional design	**Exogenous Tools** Emerged and extended in discussion
GOAL: Evaluate Truthfulness/Accuracy	
fact-checking ● statistics/data ● existing research and reports	fact-checking ● science ● school literacies ● critical analysis (teacher-introduced) ● social sciences (teacher-introduced)
corroboration ● relevance and fit to lived experience ● relevance and fit to past observations	corroboration ● relevance and fit to specific individuals ● magnitude of problem

expertise of source ● lived experience ● academic or professional credentials	● relevance and fit to cultural norms expertise of source ● personal connection with source ● perceived lived experience ● perceived education/knowledge
Goal: Evaluate Fit into Story	

connection to story schema
● main idea
● story arc
● coherence
 	
effect on audience
● connection to audience interests and areas of influence
● persuasiveness
● effect on community broadly
 	
range of perspectives
● comparison between sources
● range of sources representing different views
 	
evaluation of missing information
● more details for audience
● more details for clarity
● more perspectives
	connection to story schema
	● connection to interview question asked
	
	effect on audience
	● appearance of interviewee
	● perceived expertise of interviewee
	● emotions of audience
	● effect on individuals in community
	
	evaluation of missing information
	● more details for self
	● more levels of scale
	    ○ more data
	    ○ other levels of affect
	● more context

Table 2

Exogenous Tools Students and I also drew from our existing repertoires in order to evaluate both journalistic and exogenous sources. These exogenous tools, in the right column of *Table 2,* include some used by some professionals but not taught explicitly in the curriculum.

Excerpt 3 is a transcript of a source evaluation event in the discussion about students' interviews on race in which both students and the instructor use many tools to evaluate Isabel's source.

1	Isabel	I was at a hotel and <unclear> um get her perspective on it.
2		And I was talking to this one lady in Spanish, she kinda went crazy on me.
3		<interruption from someone walking through the room>
4		But like umm, when I was talking to her she she kept saying how I should be ashamed because my my race is full of sluts.
5	Gulu	Mmmhmm.
6	Jasper	You’re Puerto Rican?
7	Isabel	Yes.
8	Several Students	<Talking at once>
9	Mike	<Mumbling> is that true or?
10	Gulu	Soo, and how did you respond to that?
11	Isabel	Well that’s not
12		<turns to face another student who said something unclear> Thank you!
13	Gulu	Alright, really, really quickly.
14		How do we, as journalists, umm
15		First of all, sorry, I’m gonna like pause for a second.
16		So, when you said “is that true” is that a question we can actually answer
17	Jessica	/No, it's an opinion./
18	Mike	/It/
19	Gulu	/with evidence?/
20	Several Students	/<Talking at once>/
21	Mike	I mean. Majority rules. Though
22	Jasper	I have a question.
23	Gulu	That's why. Let's let's let's like work through this and then if you have a question and it's related we'll connect.
24		So, like majority rules.
25		So, first of all, the world slut is a derogatory term, right?
26	Jasper	Yes. What is a slut?
27	Gulu	So that's like, it's an opinion that people have about women's behavior. Right?
28		So there's nothing you can prove there. So it's like saying that, umm...
29		That all... okay so this is like a positive one but like, just to kind of, when people tell me that all Asian people are smart, right?
30	Jasper	<quietly> That's not true.
31	Gulu	Umm. First of all, that's not true because nothing can be proven by that.

But like, intelligence is different from person to person. Right?

Excerpt 3

Isabel's source offers a perspective—that Puerto Rican women are sluts—that is from outside the classroom context, like all journalistic sources that students interviewed. Unlike the other journalistic sources who shared perspectives that the instructor personally found offensive, and that countered the values and culture of UAE. Here, participants search for ways to evaluate it in other ways. Mike asks if it's true in line 9, and the class overall begins speaking at once, indicating their interest in discussing the source's claim. The instructor first tries to maintain our use of journalistic tools by asking how she reacted in the moment in line 10. She then tries to guide students to think like journalists in line 13. She does not wait for students to take up this tool, however; she asks them to pause, in part because of her own discomfort with considering the source using the tools she had introduced. Simply calling this source one perspective of many would leave students attributing the claim to someone else, but not considering its accuracy. So, she then asks students to consider evidence (line 18), a tool she suspected they were introduced to in argumentative writing in school. After students react a bit to this, she offers her own evaluation of the term slut, in which she tries to explain that the term is derogatory in lines 25-27. This comes from her personal critical and feminist ideologies, which involves looking at how language maintains unequal power relations. She then quickly make a pedagogical move that is familiar to her as a teacher—using analogies—when she make a comparison with stereotypes about Asians and intelligence in line 29, and move to make a point about not being to measure intelligence like one measures behavior. While she offers up my own evaluation, Mike briefly interjects with his own exogenous evaluation tool in line 21. He says, “majority rules” drawing from an everyday way of decision-making in a democratic society.

In this excerpts, exogenous tools augment our conversation beyond the evaluative scope of curricular tools. The source made a claim that offends my ideological commitments. So when students react with interest to Isabel’s source, the instructor pulls tools from several different areas to try to model a way to guide students to think about the claim, although this was not done deliberately, as she jumped from one method to another quite quickly. In this case and others, the exogenous tools allow the conversation to go deeper; hybridizing the practice again allows the discussion to move beyond the confines of the curricular to more deeply engage with the topics students are covering.

Contextualization

In using both journalistic and exogenous sources, students engaged in a process of contextualization, leveraging their knowledge to make sense of the perspectives shared by their journalistic sources. Contextualization involved asking where the source comes from, what it might represent, and how it compares to other similar sources on different dimensions. The contextualization moves made suggested that students understood that journalistic sources do not stand on their own. They pulled in exogenous sources to understand how geography and ideology affects information and to understand data at different scales in order to ascribe significance to it.

Geographic Contextualization: Geographic contextualization involved making sense of the perspective shared by a source by placing it in different geographies and comparing across geographies. For example, in a directors’ commentary, two students reflected on their past experiences to describe the physical differences between their neighborhood and their city's downtown. They connected this to their interviews, noting they only interviewed one employed person in their neighborhood, while every interviewee downtown had a job. They recognized that their sources' perspectives about the recession were in part shaped by their geographic location.

Scalar Contextualization: Scalar contextualization is making sense of the perspectives shared by a source by considering its effects across different levels of society. One example involved another group's directors' commentary, in which two students wonder about a claim that smoking is unhealthy, citing family members who smoke and are "fine." While they argued that individual stories deeply affect audiences, students often struggled to explain what individual experiences meant alongside the data they encountered, and included, in their work.

Ideological Contextualization*:* Ideological contextualization is making sense of a source's perspectives given the ideological background and values of the perspective. *Excerpt 3*, where we engage in conversations about different ways to analyze the source, is an example of ideological contextualization.

Discussion and Design Implications

These findings show that journalism practice can provide youth with a generative context for gathering, thinking about, and evaluating a variety of both journalistic and everyday sources, using journalistic, and other disciplinary and everyday tools. Further, the ways in which they pick up and hybridize practices taught in the curriculum shows that youth journalism production taught in a third space provides more than just an opportunity to speak up; instead, it's an chance for youth to engage in a process of contextualization, thinking particularly about the geographic, scalar, and ideological dimensions of the voices they encounter as novice reporters.

Journalistic work serves as an opportunity for youth to express themselves, and further to engage in a process of thinking about their own perspectives alongside and relative to other voices. The data also serves to complicate and challenge arguments of fixed, and inherently liberating youth voice. Instead, we see that young people choose to engage with ideas with many lenses and nuances, which are not always evident in their final media piece.

However, third space, hybrid journalistic learning environments pose a particular design challenge: the curriculum and instructor must be prepared to be unprepared for the sources and tools students bring into the space. In order to contextualize new information students may require support to engage with content or disciplinary tools that are unexpected for curricular designers and/or unfamiliar for the instructor. Students bring in ideas and perspectives that may be difficult to address in the moment, in that they pose an ideological challenge for the instructor or broader educational context.

This points to a need to consider how to balance learning goals. It is not enough to cover journalistic evaluation when students want to move beyond attributing perspectives to others, and comparing between them. Given that students do engage in contextualization of sources, civic journalistic curriculum must draw from other disciplinary areas to support youth development. Specific scientific, geographical, and historical disciplinary tools would have helped students in this iteration. However, because we do not know what students in every program may cover, we must look more broadly in reconsidering the design.

We must further develop students' capacities to use the types of exogenous tools and sources students brought into the space. For many third space educational researchers interested in developing youth spaces that challenge traditional pedagogies, "learning is viewed as an activity in which heterogeneous meaning-making practices come into contact—explicitly and implicitly, intentionally and emergently—to generate new understandings, extend navigational possibilities, and adapt meaning-making practices to new forms and functions" (Roseberry, 2010, p. 324). This implementation saw, and was designed for, heterogeneous meaning making practices coming into contact. The next step toward improving student learning is to deliberately support young people in developing the meaning-making practices they used alongside the journalistic practices introduced to them. Further, given the ideological commitments of UAE and third space pedagogies, we must also improve upon the tools of critical analysis necessary for ideological contextualization. How to best prioritize these tools requires goal-planning and discussion of values, but is necessary given the nature of journalistic evaluation.

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Training methods of listening-based questioning

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Introduction

Quite a lot of literature has been published on journalistic interview as a genre and as a method (e.g. Eds. Ekström M, Kroon, A. & Nylynd M, 2006, "News from the Interview Society"; Nylund 2011). Most of these approaches handle interview as a genre, its development, functions, strategies in the first instance. Journalism textbooks also list various interview types (e.g. vox pop, the quicky,in-depth interview etc.) and briefly refer to various interviewing technique: "Most interviewers stress active listening is one of the most crucial skills. /…/Given this willingness to talk, the journalists' role is to listen intelligently and help the conversation along with concise, clearly focused questions." (Keeble 1994, 74). Most of these approaches do not clarify what is listening-based and clearly focused questioning, neither provide techniques for training these skills. The aim of this presentation is to introduce few methods for training listening –based questioning. The training exercises have been developed at the University of Tartu over 15 years.

These methods are used in basic interpersonal communication course for journalism students, The purpose of the basic course is to train the partial skills of listening and questioning skills. For this reason there are two types of exercises. First, partial skills of listening and questioning are trained by means of short interaction exercises (1-2 or 3-4 consecutive questions, and 1-2 or up to 3-4 consecutive answers). After that the trainees move on to more sophisticated interaction exercises the aim of which is to train the skill of noticing the use of different partial skills.

To train the noticing skill, it is important to video-record the whole learning process, which enables to analyse the techniques used as well as to repeat the exercise if it comes out that the techniques previously learned have not been used in a rational manner. As the students are different, and contact hours are limited, we increasingly use pre-recorded *model-exercises* students can watch from Internet. As we prefer that students themselves use "desired techniques", we prefer to demonstrate some "false techniques" (techniques that produce disturbance and confusion) with the help of specially designed and pre-recorded videos.

There are two types of pre-recorded training materials. A. Interviews where the task for the students is to listen, watch and notice various techniques. B. Pre-recorded exercises with pauses and instruction how to proceed or finish the interview.

In this presentation we shall demonstrate four pre-recorded A-type exercises. It is important to note that our aim is to produce these exercises economically: it is not our aim to create errorless and staged dialogues. These exercises are used for some time and then should be renewed.

At the advanced course, students practice more complex formats: e.g. conflict interviews (that also contain recognising various demagogy techniques and coping with such techniques), longer persona interviews that contain recollections and retrospective insights, as well as moderating group interviews and conversations.

The specifics of a journalistic interview: basic techniques

Just like active listening is the basis for communication training as a whole, good listening is also the basis for journalistic interviewing. According to Brownell (2010, 114-147) a skill-based model of listening-centred communication includes six components: Hearing, understanding, remembering, interpreting, evaluating and responding. As Brownell further points out: “Viewing listening from this behavioural perspective enables educators to develop specific instructional strategies around these concrete components of an often elusive process.” (op.cit.) Our teaching model is based on these 6 listening skills clusters, although for the students all these components are not specifically stressed. In the beginning of the course, the main aim is to provide evidence for the students that listening is a skill that demands special training and their motivation to train daily is the only way to become successful in interpersonal communication.
“… Few other skills are dependent on motivation as listening… the only thing we know for certain is that there is a strong link between motivation to listening and listening effectiveness” (op. cit. 147, 148).
What is specific about a journalistic interview, is that its primary goal is directive listening: i.e. translate experts, disseminate truth, and less emotional listening (expressing empathy, support and sensitivity) as well as negotiable listening (Wolvin, 2010, 21). Therefore the specific objective of journalistic interview is **precise** listening to the information – i.e. factual information, specific expressions as well as information gaps – rather than responding to the emotions of the person talking that is one of the main objectives in supportive interactions (MacGeorg, Feng, Burleson, 2011). For example, it is important for a journalist whether the interviewee says 'There will be a public ceremony in the university today' or "There will be a public ceremony <u>with a concert</u> in the university today'.

The first technique we train is **“**<u>reflecting the answer via rephrasing: exact reflection, summarising reflection, and so-called 'reflection of wrenches”</u>.

> A statement: “I don't want to eat this school food.” Reflecting with a question: 'You don't want to eat **this** school food?” Or: 'You don't want to eat **school food**?' On the basis of the same example we also introduce the possibility of the so-called *reflection with a wrench*: “You don't like the taste of school food?”

We emphasise that the difference between these two reflections lies in the fact that in the first case, the questioner noticed that the interviewee presented a statement on a specific school menu. In the latter case, the interviewer leaves unnoticed the reference 'this', and focuses on the statement that the interviewee does not want to eat school food as such. In other words, in the latter reflection, a selection has already taken place during the process of listening. The questioner (knowingly) leaves one detail unnoticed.

The purpose of such short exercises is to train the skills of close listening, as well as the skills and courage to ask clarifying questions immediately. The ability to reflect the answer via rephrasing also enables to adjust the focus of the interview.

This technique should not be used too often, but for learing purpose we construct dialogues where the technique is repeated and modified. The aim for the students is to listen –watch and describe what rephrasing they noticed. The advantage of pre-recorded exercise is that we can repeat the video at the classroom. "Formulating questions based on active listening":
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZzZLQ_X4xVc

The second specific aspect that journalists need a special training is noticing wrong presumption in questions (e.g Q: "How many journalism students were immatriculated this year? A: " Non."). To introduce the topic of questions that contain presumptions we normally use classic literature – the question posed by Karlsson, a figure from the Astrid Lindgren's book, to the housekeeper Miss Bock: 'Give me a short answer – yes or no: have you quit drinking brandy in the mornings yet?' And Lillebror answered that she could not reply to this question because she had not ever started drinking brandy in the mornings.
There are quite a number of questions where expressions used in the given language may give an evaluative presumption: e.g. 'How fast did that car go?' (in fact, the interviewer wants to know how many kilometres per hour the car moved); 'How tall have you grown?' (the questioner wants to know how much the child has grown), or 'How old is your astrakhan fur coat?' (the questioner wants to know the age of the fur coat, and not to emphasise that the fur coat is old).
Questions with presumptions are justified when the interviewer already has some information on a presumption. Thus, presumptions must not necessarily be avoided but it is important to be able to notice wrong presumptions and correct such presumptions on the basis of listening.

The next exercise "False assumption in questions" is constructed so that the interviewer is asking the questions which include false assumptions, but the interviewee do not reflect or rephrase the false assumption but answers the questions just in a friendly way. The task for students is to formulate the false assumption in each question and propose better questions.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QuQIJe-K_QE

Ability to listen precisely, notice false assumptions and ability to rephrase (the question, answer and false assumption) is needed when we introduce the first strategic technique: keeping the focus of the interview. For example, if a journalist is asking about a garden and the interviewee is talking about gardening, there is a risk for several misunderstandings. Some politicians shift the focus purposely, therefore it is important to train journalist to notice this and use contra-techniques.
Here we demonstrate one pre-recorded exercises - "Fight for focus" – where the learning aim is to listen-watch and wise up what is the focus of interviewer and what is the main message of the interviewee. This exercise is based on "unwanted" technique, it does not include paraphrasing that would enable to create better understanding between the interviewer and interviewee.

When the students have formulated the main focus of the interviewer and the main focus of the interviewee the task is to discuss how the paraphrasing would help to create more precise communication between the interviewer and interviewee. It is important to stress, that the responsibility to paraphrase should be divided between interviewer and interviewee.
For example, the Interviewer asks: What kind of driver are you in the rush hour traffic?
Answer: You presume that I can drive a car / You presume that I have a driving licence? Or: You presume that I am a driver?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1TepiieIGm4

The fourth specific aspect is the "scope" of the questions. For example, a traditional question posed by students is: 'How did you decide to become a journalist?' The scope of this question is made big by an extremely big leap in time. If the interviewee has not recalled it before (i.e. if he or she does not have an answer at hand), then he or she must start recalling back in time to find the so-to-say starting point of becoming a teacher.

In order to explain the "scope of a question" we use the hierarchy:
Question of large scope: What kinds of examinations have you experienced during your life?
Question of medium scope: What are the grading conditions for your concerning Keeble, R (1994) The newspapers handbook, Routledge, London and New York

this term's subjects?
Question of small scope: What are the grading conditions for the subject of Interviewing?
Yes-or-No question: Have you taken any oral examinations at the university?

The last pre-recorded exercise is mainly constructed for training to notice the scope of questions, but there are also other techniques (some support the efficiency and good information flow, other produce misunderstandings). The task for students is to find out different interaction techniques, mainly the scope of different questions and analyse the possibilities and risks of questions of large and medium scope.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HKzXBHXxVjo

If the interviewee is experienced in media relations, he or she will normally not bother much about the scope or mode of questions but will still answer within the scope of the given topic, as he or she considers most appropriate. However, if the questions really need to function as tools to help the interviewee, then the scope of questions is indeed important.

Summary

In this text we presented some examples of short exercises and four pre-recorded examples. The difference between these two training tools is that students can easily create these short exercises by themselves and hence they can train some basic skills in pairs or in small groups. The next step is to train noticing skills to the extent that it becomes "automatic". This takes time and one should not use the classroom time for such training. The exercises we created for this presentation are simple, but we also create exercises where students should recognize mixed techniques in longer dialogues. Our interest is to change the ideas and exercises among the journalism educators and create best practice network.

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SOURCE PERCEPTION OF STUDENT JOURNALISTS' PROFESSIONALISM

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Abstract

How do sources perceive the professionalism of student journalists? A survey of campus sources for a student publication (*N* = 121) reveals that student journalists are largely perceived as professional in terms of punctuality, eye contact, and grooming, among other qualities. The least highly ranked professional quality was preparedness. Additionally, this research explores whether aspects of professionalism predict perceptions of accuracy and what contributes to a source being willing to be interviewed again. The findings are interpreted through experiential learning theory and are used to suggest ways in which journalism educators can enhance source perceptions of student journalists.

Keywords: Student Journalists, Experiential Learning, Professionalism, Survey

Introduction

Experiential learning is critical to the development of young journalists. Rhodes and Roessner (2009) wrote that “journalism education should include professional training in the classroom” (p. 305) and found that hands-on practice with a magazine publishing class gave “students an added advantage of gaining real-world knowledge” (p. 311). Bailer (1995) suggested that students who work on student newspapers grow rapidly because of their responsibility for the finished, published product.

Previous research has shown that student newspapers are often considered to be fairly on par with their professional community counterparts in terms of readability, information shared, length of articles and the use of sources (Bodle, 1996). However, Bodle noted that there are other markers of quality that warrant assessment. One such area may be the actual journalistic process and how sources perceive the professionalism of reporters. In the case of student newspapers, certain community members, such as faculty, staff, and administrators, may be recurring sources of information for the campus publication. Therefore it is necessary to cultivate amicable relationships with sources whose help may be sought again in the future. Practicing professionalism also serves the students no matter the field in which they actually plan to pursue future employment. This research investigates whether sources believed students journalists were professional when they interacted in actual interviews.

Literature Review

Experiential Learning Theory

Experiential learning is “the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience” (Kolb, 1984, p. 38). Kolb specifically focuses on the process of learning rather than outcomes, and notes that gaining knowledge is a transformative process that constantly evolves. Much of the existing research related to experiential learning theory is found in the medical field (psychology, medicine, nursing) and in fields such as accounting and law (Kolb, Boyatzis, & Mainemelis, 2000). In the experiential learning cycle, individuals must balance grasping and transforming experiences, and do so differently based on their learning styles. Frequently, individuals who study communication or journalism fall in to the "diverging" learning style (Kolb, Boyatzis, & Mainemelis, 2000). Individuals who have a diverging learning style (Kolb, Boyatzis, & Mainemelis, 200, p. 230):

> have broad cultural interests and like to gather information. Research shows that they are interested in people, tend to be imaginative and emotional, have broad cultural interests, and tend to specialize in the arts. In formal learning situations, people with the diverging style prefer to work in groups, listening with an open mind, and receiving personalized feedback.

This description of a learning style that may be strong in people who are studying journalism suggests that a student newspaper might be an ideal learning environment for individuals who are predisposed to the diverging style. Fittingly, Brandon suggested that researchers apply "the theory of experiential learning to journalism education" (2002, p. 62) as a new approach to assessing the learning environment.

Journalism Education

Brandon (2002) observed that journalism education was largely apprentice-like until Joseph Pulitzer endowed the school of journalism at Columbia (though there is some argument about whether the school of journalism at the University of Missouri was established earlier).

Since that time, what makes for a strong journalistic education has been debated. Should it be more practical or more theoretical? This conflict between a more academic form of journalism or "journalism studies" and a more hands-on approach can be seen internationally as well. When discussing global journalism education Deuze (2006) noted that there are five primary kinds of journalism education around the world including models based at universities, standalone schools, and apprenticeship programs. Deuze indicated that while there are five models, literature regarding journalism education suggests that two models are becoming predominant: a western model, like what is seen in the United States, Canada, South Korea, and Great Britain that involves training through programs at colleges and universities; and a blended model of standalone training and university training as is seen France, India, China and South Africa. Deuze said that the move toward these approaches is indicative of "increasing levels of professionalization, formalization and standardization worldwide" (p. 22). Ultimately, every journalism education program "traditionally covers practical skills training, on the one hand, and general contextual education and liberal arts courses, on the other hand" (p. 23). However, in discussing the factors that must be considered when assessing journalism education Deuze notes that differentiating between practice and context can be difficult.

In a 2006 essay Theodore Glasser stated, "An education in journalism begins with the actual practice of journalism" (Dates et al., p. 148). Glasser says that most of what journalists need to learn comes by actually practicing the craft of journalism and that is why strong journalism programs emphasize laboratory-style classes—which are often some form of student produced media—internships, and faculty who have had professional experience. In the same essay series, Mitchell Stephens puts forth 13 principles for journalism education, the first of which is a call for students to complete "real" assignments (Dates et al., 2006). He also calls for experimentation with new reporting styles, and mixing in more reading and critiquing as well as practice. Arguably, student media outlets are one area in which the components of practice, critique and context can come together.

Student Newspapers

In a survey assessing college experiences and general life satisfaction, it was determined that students who experienced an opportunity to apply course knowledge outside of the classroom were more likely to be engaged in their workplace later in life (Carlson, 2014). Internships, or time on a college newspaper can provide students with the “real-world” experiences that could contribute to future happiness.

Bailer (1995) noted that student newspapers allow young journalists to grow quickly because of the inherent responsibility that comes with publication. While Bailer was speaking about high school students, this same growth can be seen in students working on their college publications. In a case study, Rampal (1982) found that connecting a student newspaper with an affiliated academic department increased the publication’s quality and reputation and the credibility of the program correlated with increased opportunities for internships and jobs for its students. By comparison, Bodle (1997) observed that instructional independence of campus newspapers was not clear-cut and that even publications that were ultimately laboratory newspapers should assess whether the support of the university was worth potential, subtle editorial influence. Indeed, much of the existing research on student newspapers addresses issues of censorship and university interference (see for example Filak’s 2012 work on self-censorship, Merrett’s 2007 work on administrative influences, and Lehmert’s 2002 exploration about whether the removal of advisers is a form of censorship).

However, more professionally oriented publications such as Quill and Nieman Reports often address other work related to student media including hands-on learning opportunities. Stewart (2007) highlighted different projects in which students took charge and learned by reporting on Hurricane Katrina, publishing in online magazines, and going into their communities to cover stories as real journalists. Supporting the need for experiential education a Hartford Courant reporter wrote, “Classes in journalism, which I also took, covered the basics—news and feature writing, copyediting. But it was the hands-on experiences both at the school paper and in my internships that was so valuable” (Ubinas, 1999, p. 17). Stewart also observed that even making mistakes was a learning opportunity.

Accuracy

In journalism, accuracy is the cornerstone of professional behavior. In “A History of News” Mitchell Stephens refers to accuracy as a sacred duty. And when things are inaccurate, they warrant corrections. In student media, Bailer (1995) observed that students need to make mistakes to learn, while another journalism instructor incorporated a requirement in her news writing class that students write corrections when they make mistakes (Patterson, 1978) and found that it was a worthwhile exercise.

The correction as we know it today emerged in the 1970s, however, Silverman (2007) identifies the early 20th century as a turning point in journalism in which the advancement of early journalism education and the creation of the Pulitzer Prizes were emblematic of the increasing formalization of standards. He writes, “The early twentieth century was critical for the growth and acceptance of accuracy in the North American press, and its evolution would influence other journalists around the world” (p. 46). This dedication and professionalization was also seen in the creation of formal journalistic organizations, such as the Society of Professional Journalists, which was established in 1909 and the American Society of News Editors, which was founded in 1922. Both of these organizations also had codes of ethics or statements of principles—the ASNE code put forth its "Canons of Journalism" in the same year as its founding, and the Society of Professional Journalists modeled its own code on the ASNE's canons in 1926.

While accuracy and independence are paramount in the Society of Professional Journalists' code of ethics, the treatment of sources is also addressed. It reads, in part, "Ethical journalism treats sources, subjects, colleagues and members of the public as human beings deserving of respect."

Like respect, certain other aspects of professionalism are fairly universal. For example, the notion of being on time is a marker of professionalism and so is a person's physical appearance. Outside of the positive influence of parents, however, where are students learning these professional behaviors today? Is there room for modeling these behaviors and does it occur in a classroom or in a less traditional learning environment?

Professionalism in Journalism

Defining professionalism can be challenging and Hammer (2006) noted that is a broad idea often more easily identified by what is *not* than what it is. In the past couple of decades, with the advent of bloggers and the notion that anyone today can be a journalist, some have called for more standardization in what it means to be a professional in the field. Yet, historically, others have expressed concern that any kind of licensing—similar to what is seen with doctors and lawyers—may lead to restrictions on a free press (Meyer, 2004). Waisbord

(2012) notes that journalism is “beyond doubt” a profession (p. 74) but the question should be how, in this era, to improve the reputation of the journalistic profession so that it may better serve democracy. He writes, “The troubles of contemporary journalism show what happens when professional standards are dropped” (p. 74).

Meyer, a former newspaperman and holder of the Knight Chair of Journalism at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, believes that there may be some value in a form of a certification program for professional journalists. “A certificate is basically a piece of paper that says some recognized agency has examined a person’s ability and found him or her qualified in certain areas and at certain levels of skill” (Meyer, 2004, p. 242). Meyer stated that certification would allow employers to quickly understand the qualifications of job applicants. He also points to the idea that completing a degree in journalism is already a form of certification unto itself.

Gleason (2004) suggested that journalism education is a rare area where students at quality programs have the ability to enhance their liberal arts education with strong professional influences and “a solid grounding in the values and practices of the profession” (p. 4). Gleason also argued that journalism is one of the few areas in which many of the educators have strong professional backgrounds, in addition to their academic qualifications, which makes them uniquely suited to teach students “how to be good journalists, and why professional values matter” (p. 4).

Many have elucidated these values, such as ethics. In the field of journalism this is perhaps most apparent in the Society for Professional Journalists code of ethics, which was most recently updated in 2014. There are many qualities that define what it means to be professional, and every profession has distinctive characteristics regarding what counts as professional behavior in that particular field.

Professionalism and Experiential Learning

Much of the research linking professionalism and experiential learning addresses the fields of medicine and law. Boyle, Beardsley, Morgan and Rodriguez de Bittner (2007) explored the evaluation of professionalism of student pharmacists. The three categories assessed included communication (and respect), appearance and timeliness. "Faculty members continue to support the 2 goals of establishing clear professionalism expectations and holding students accountable for professionalism. Considerable effort is expended on documentation, hearings, remediations, and follow-up" (Boyle, et al., 2007, p. 7). Likewise, Cruess and Cruess (2006) discussed the medical field in noting that experiential learning should create "structured opportunities that allow students… to discuss professional issues in a safe environment, personalize them and, it is hoped, internalize them over the course of education and training" (p. 206). This allows the students to develop a professional identity and Cruess and Cruess call for continued education in the role of professionalism in undergraduate- and graduate-level curriculum. In addition to role modeling, evaluation is cited as a critical factor so that students may learn if they are meeting the norms and standards of professionalism (Cruess & Cruess, 2006).

While there is research addressing the professionalism of *professional* journalists, there is relatively little research addressing the concepts of *student* journalists, professionalism and experiential learning. One study briefly reviewed the professionalism of student journalists at Texas Christian University in the 1980s (Thomason & Wolf, 1986) In that study, sources were given a one-page evaluation that asked "if the reporters were prompt and courteous" and asked the sources to evaluate "the reporters' interview techniques and background preparation, as well as the fairness and accuracy of the article itself" (p. 41).

In this research, the authors seek to further connect the concepts of experiential learning, professionalism and student media by surveying actual sources who interacted with student journalists to explore what markers of professionalism the student journalists are meeting and how the interaction might color the willingness of the source to work with student media again. A source's willingness to engage in future interactions with student journalists may have lasting impact on the future educational opportunities of other students. Therefore the authors propose the following research questions:

RQ 1: How professional do sources perceive student journalists to be?

RQ 2: What factors contribute to perceptions of accuracy?

RQ 3: What factors contribute to a source's willingness to be interviewed again?

Method

Study Design

A web-based survey using Qualtrics software was conducted shortly after the completion of the spring 2015 semester. Using the online version of the campus student newspaper, all university-affiliated sources' names were gathered and then, using university directories, email addresses for all university sources were obtained. Some sources, such as the university president, provost, student government leaders, and prominent athletes appeared in multiple articles. Ultimately, 396 unique sources were identified.

Participants

One hundred and twenty-four people took the survey. Of those, data from two respondents who did not complete the survey was excluded from analysis. Another person reported not interacting with a journalist, and was thus excluded, yielding a final survey response rate of 30.5%. The remaining respondents (*N*=121) included freshmen (*n*=5), sophomores (*n*=5), juniors (*n*=21), seniors (*n*=27), graduate students (*n*=3) faculty (*n*=27) staff (*n*=14), and administrators (*n*=19). Almost every major or department of the institution was represented, with a range of about one to three people from each major/department. Participants were also of a wide variety of ages, ranging from 18 to 70 (*M*=31.92, *SD*=14.09). Respondents identified as "female" (*n*=72), "male" (*n*=46) or "other" (*n*=3). As an incentive for completing the survey, respondents were given a chance to win Starbucks gift cards.

For the purposes of this study, professionalism on the part of student journalists refers to generally respectful behavior (punctuality, personal grooming, articulation, eye contact, listening behavior, preparedness and confidence). Separate questions also addressed specific journalistic practices. For example, the state of California is a "two-consent state" meaning that both parties must be aware of a recording taking place. As such, a student journalist would have a legal and professional obligation to receive permission to record an interview. The survey instrument asked the participants to provide feedback on their interaction with a student journalist, including whether the student journalist was punctual, asked relevant questions, and whether her or she recorded the interview. Participants were also asked about their readership of the student newspaper, whether the article in which they appeared was accurate, and if they would be willing to be interviewed again based on their experience. Demographic information was also collected.

Results

General Descriptive Statistics

Of the 121 respondents, most reported being interviewed in person (*n*=98, 81%). Some reported being interviewed via email (*n*=18, 14.9%), and very few reported being interviewed through other means, (phone, *n*=3, 2.47%; other, *n*=2, 1.65%).

The majority of participants (*n*=81, 66.9%) reported having a scheduled interview time, and the minority (*n*=22, 18.2%) reported spontaneously occurring interviews. The remaining 18 participants (14.9%) reported that their interview was conducted electronically, so the timing of the interview could not be ascertained.

Of the 81 respondents who reported a scheduled interview, 77 (95%) reported that the student journalist arrived on time. Only one respondent who reported a schedule interview (*n*=1, 1.2%) reported that the student journalist was late. Some people reported not being able to remember (*n*=3, 3.7%).

The majority of the 98 in-person interviews were recorded (*n*=90, 91.8%), and five were not (5.1%). However, of the 121 total respondents some reported not remembering if their interview was recorded (*n*=8, 6.6%), and some respondents chose not to answer the question (*n*=18, 14.9%). It may be that the 18 respondents who chose not answer this question were those who were interviewed electronically.

Of the 90 respondents who reported that the student journalist recorded the interview, most also reported that the student journalist asked for permission before recording (*n*=86, 95.5%). Three respondents (3.3%) reported the student journalist did not ask permission and one person said they couldn’t remember (1.1%). Only participants who had previously reported that the student journalist had recorded the interview responded to this question. So 31 of the 121 respondents (25.6%) did not answer the question regarding whether the student journalist had asked for permission to record.

In terms of interview duration, almost all interviews were less than 20 minutes. Most were between five and nine minutes (*n*=37, 30.6%), and some took even less than 5 minutes (*n*=22, 18.2%). Twenty-six people reported interviews between 10 and 14 minutes (21.5%), and 19 people reported interviews lasting between 15-20 minutes (15.7%). Only five respondents reported that their interviews were more than 20 minutes (4.1%), while 12 respondents reported that their interview was conducted electronically (9.9%).

Professionalism

To address RQ 1: *How professional do sources perceive student journalists to be?* A series of Likert scales was used to assess professionalism of the student reporter. In these, respondents were asked to assess the student reporter in terms of punctuality, grooming, articulation, respectfulness, eye contact, listening skills, preparation, and confidence. The respondents rated the student journalist highly on all measures (See Table 1). The average for each measure was above 5, on a 7-point scale. The lowest, though still very high, rated quality was “preparedness” (*M*=6.1724, *SD*=1.267), and the highest was “punctuality” (*M*=6.62, *SD*=0.877). For each participant, the ratings for these characteristics were averaged together to form the variable “professionalism” (*M*=6.333, *SD*=1.059) which is used in subsequent analyses.

Factors that Predict Perceptions of Accuracy

To address RQ 2*: What factors contribute to perceptions of accuracy?* The authors conducted a backwards step-wise regression to determine the optimal model for predicting perceptions of accuracy of the final article (i.e., the factors that best predict accuracy ratings). The factors that were examined include; how long the interview took (Duration), the familiarity of the respondent to the student reporter (Familiarity), how often the respondent reads the student newspaper (Frequency), the professionalism (Professionalism) of the student reporter, and the relevancy of the questions asked in the interview (Relevancy). All continuous variables were centered to avoid issues with collinearity. Factors were removed from the analyses if they were non-significant predictors. The models were repeated until all included factors were significant predictors of accuracy perception.

The final model included two significant predictors; Relevancy and Frequency (p's<.02). Overall, the model accounted for 39.6% of variance [$adj.\ R^2$=.396, $F(2,93)$=32.129, p<.001]. Thus, how relevant the questions were during the interview and the frequency with the respondent reads the student newspaper were significant predictors of perceptions of accuracy.

Factors that Predict Likelihood of Subsequent Interview

To address RQ 3*: What factors contribute to a source's willingness to be interviewed again?* A second, similar, analysis was done to determine the factors predicting the likelihood of a respondent accepting a subsequent interview. The same factors were included in the model as in the previous analysis (Duration, Familiarity, Frequency, Professionalism, and Relevancy), with the addition of accuracy perception (Accuracy). After a stepwise backward elimination of predictors, the final model included Professionalism, Relevancy, and Accuracy (all p's <.02).

Overall, the model accounted for 45.5% of the variance [*adj.* R^2 = .455, $F(3,93)=25.875$, $p<.001$]. Thus, several important factors significantly predict the extent to which an interviewee would accept a subsequent interview. These factors include the student reporters' professionalism, the relevancy of the questions she asked, and the accuracy of the article that resulted from the interview.

Additional Findings

For further exploration of the findings, a series of independent sample *t*-tests were conducted to determine if student interviewees answered the questions differently than faculty (the biggest sub-group of interviewees other than students). A separate independent *t*-test was conducted for each of the questions and for the perception of professionalism (see Table 2). Results show that, for most measures, faculty did not have different answers to these questions (all *p*'s >.40), and did not perceive the student journalists differently (all *p*'s >.5) than student interviewees.

The only measure student and faculty interviewees differed on were ratings of punctuality. Faculty perceived the interviewers to be more punctual (M-6.96, SD=.209) than student interviewees (M=6.30, SD=1.166), $t(46.86)=3.575$, $p=.001$. Levene's test indicated unequal variances (F=14.60, $p<.001$) so degrees of freedom were adjusted from 64 to 46.855. It is important to note that while this difference is statistically significant ($p<.05$), the means are very close, and this small difference in ratings may not be practically significant (M_F=6.96 vs. M_S= 6.30).

Overall, the finding that faculty and students both perceived student journalists similarly is important, because it shows that student journalists are engaging in professional interviews for student interviewees as well as faculty interviewees.

Accuracy Related Effects

Lastly, another series of independent *t*-tests were run to explore differences in people who reported that the articles written about them were more accurate versus people who reported that the articles were less accurate. The “Accuracy” measure was split into two categories (High vs. Low) by grouping people that reported scores above the mean (High, n=87) and below the mean (Low, n=10). Note that some participants did not read the article written about them, and thus did not rate accuracy. These participants are not included in this analysis.

Results showed that people who said their statements were accurate reported that the interviewer asked them relevant questions to a greater extent (M=6.02, SD=.964) than people who reported their statements were inaccurate (M=4.50, SD=1.269), $t(95)=-4.574$, p=.001.

People who said their statements were accurate reported having known the interviewer to a greater extent (M=2.44, SD=1.962) than people who reported that their statements were inaccurate (M=1.5, SD=1.269), $t(14.58)=-2.076$, p=.056. Levene’s test indicated unequal variances (F=7.621, p=.007) so degrees of freedom were adjusted from 94 to 14.577.

People who reported that their statements were accurate reported more likelihood to do a subsequent interview (M=6.63, SD=.823) than people who reported their statements were inaccurate (M= 4.80, SD=1.751), $t(9.462)=-3.267$, p=.009. Levene’s test indicated unequal variances (F=10.446, p=.002) so degrees of freedom were adjusted from 95 to 9.462.

People who reported their statements were accurate reported reading the campus publication more often (*M*=4.97, *SD*=1.475) than people who reported that their statements were inaccurate (*M*=3.90, *SD*=1.370), *t*(94)=-2.176, *p*=.032.

People who reported their statements were accurate reported greater levels of perceived professionalism (*M*=6.376, *SD*=1.072) than people who reported that their statements were inaccurate (*M*=5.216, *SD*=1.302), *t*(95)=-3.169, *p*=.002.

Discussion & Conclusion

The findings of this research suggest that professionalism and accuracy are closely linked and that sources for student media are more likely to be willing to serve as a source again when their journalists exhibited qualities of professional behavior. As such, cultivating professional tendencies such as punctuality, respectfulness, preparation and confidence in student journalists may enhance the relationship between the publication and campus community members thus leading to more beneficial experiential learning opportunities.

Student news media organizations may want to consider spending time on discussing what makes a professional interaction between sources and journalists. This study indicates that time spent discussing professional courtesies such as promptness, grooming, and preparedness would not be ill spent, as these factors do contribute to more positive assessment from sources. Additionally, as student media does not occur in a vacuum, it may be to the benefit of future student journalists if their predecessors establish a track record for professionalism. Experiential learning opportunities may be enhanced if student journalists and student news organizations create a strong reputation. Anecdotally, it would not be surprising that a source who had a poor, unprofessional interaction with a student journalist would be unwilling to participate in future interviews. Indeed, Thomason and Wolf reported that in their 1986 study of student journalists, sources “appreciate the fact that someone cares about how they perceive the reporters’ conduct” (p. 41).

In a way, teaching professional behaviors protects the learning opportunities of future students. Although “preparedness” was still highly ranked by participants, it was the lowest ranked quality of professionalism, so helping students to plan for interviews and to ask relevant questions is critical. This is especially true in light of the fact that sources who reported that the student journalists they interacted with were prepared (by asking relevant questions) reported higher perceptions of accuracy and a willingness to participate in future interviews.

These findings also suggest that there is room for increased publicity on the behalf of student publications, as survey participants who found that their statements were accurate reported reading the student publication more frequently. The association between consumption of the student publication and perceptions of accuracy may warrant further investigation. At least anecdotally, there is often room on college and university campuses to educate the associated community on how student media is organized, what its goals are and how it functions.

Limitations and Future Research

Ultimately, this research is limited in that it addresses the professionalism of only one group of 18 student reporters from only one institution. A larger study that looked at multiple institutions with different practices, e.g., comparing financially independent student media outlets with more of the “lab-style” based publications could yield interesting findings. Student media outlets that have less oversight from faculty may produce different findings, as might larger institutions compared to smaller ones. However, this research does establish a starting point for discussing what markers of professionalism sources are looking for in their journalists (students or otherwise) and which of those factors contribute to the sources' perceptions of credibility and accuracy.

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Table 1

Mean +/- SD of Professionalism Measures

Measure	*M*	*SD*
Punctuality	6.62	0.88
Grooming	6.38	1.01
Articulate	6.22	1.10
Respectfulness	6.66	0.81
Eye Contact	6.52	0.90
Listener	6.56	0.83
Preparation	6.17	1.27
Confidence	6.36	0.99

Note. *M*= Mean, *SD*= Standard Deviation.

Table 2

Student vs. Faculty Perceptions of Student Journalists

	Student		Faculty		
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t*-test
Relevant Questions	6.14	1.086	5.93	1.072	0.856
Familiarity with Interviewer	2.6	1.959	2.7	2.127	-0.219
Subsequent Interview	6.36	1.212	6.59	0.888	-0.898
Readership Frequency	4.61	1.681	4.38	1.525	0.574
Professionalism	6.28	1.26	6.59	0.532	-1.246
Accuracy	6.04	1.148	5.85	1.387	0.59

Note. M= Mean, SD= Standard Deviation. T-test refers to test statistic. None of these test statistics are statistically significant.

Table 3

Low vs. High Accuracy ratings

	Low Accuracy		High Accuracy			
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t*-test	
Relevant Questions	4.5	1.269	6.02	0.964	-4.574	***
Familiarity with Interviewer	1.5	1.269	2.44	1.962	-1.479	
Subsequent Interview	4.8	1.751	6.63	0.823	-3.267	**
Readership Frequency	3.9	1.37	4.97	1.475	-2.176	*
Professionalism	5.22	1.302	6.38	1.072	-3.169	**

* $p<.05$
**$p<.01$
**$p<.001$
Note. M= Mean, SD= Standard Deviation. T-test refers to test statistic.

STUDENT NEWSPAPER MANUALS NEED CLARIFICATION ON CORRECTION PRACTICES

Revised Submission for WJEC 2016

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Abstract

Previous research has found that college newspapers do not always publicize their errors and corrections on their websites (Hettinga, Clark, & Appelman, 2016). This research explores the policy manuals and handbooks of 15 university and college newspapers in the United States. It finds that the policies were vague in identifying who was responsible for accuracy; primarily had limited recommendations for preventing error; and that of the handbooks that did have corrections policies, the policies varied in their completeness.

Keywords: College newspapers, Accuracy, Corrections, Policies, Thematic analysis

Introduction

Accuracy is the foundation of journalism. Despite the surfeit of information available, the Pew Research Center found that people believe journalists are more necessary today to help make sense of the content that is out there. However, news organizations are criticized for inaccuracy and are even accused of covering up their mistakes (Pew Research Center, 2013). Corrections, the small notes on page 2 of a print publication, or at the bottom of an article online, are one symbol of news media's willingness to be transparent with readers and to be clear when a mistake was made.

However, previous research found nearly half of student newspapers analyzed failed to publicize corrections on their publications' websites (Hettinga, Clark, & Appelman, 2016). Nonetheless, the more professional the student newspaper was, based on items such as how frequently it published and whether the website included any statements or language about accuracy, the more likely it was that there were corrections to be found on the publication's website.

Accuracy is perhaps the most important skill journalists today need, according to a survey of educators and professionals (Finberg & Klinger, 2014). In the same report, Finberg and Klinger recommended different resources for teaching the core skills they identified. They identified four resources for teaching accuracy including "NPR's Ethics Handbook; Verification Handbook; [and] Reuters Handbook of Journalism" (p. 26). So handbooks may be a logical place to look for language regarding how college newspapers should handle errors and corrections.

The current research extends this discussion by examining the handbooks and manuals of different student publications to see which outlets have clear language or recommended best practices that may enhance the use of corrections at student publications and thus increase efforts to be ethical, transparent and credible.

Literature Review

The Society of Professional Journalists' code of ethics preamble reads, in part, "Members of the Society of Professional Journalists believe that public enlightenment is the forerunner of justice and the foundation of democracy. Ethical journalism strives to ensure the free exchange of information that is accurate, fair and thorough." Accuracy is significant enough that it makes the first 50 words of one of the most widely regarded codes in journalism. SPJ also makes the connection between an informed, active, democratic public and a strong media presence.

Scheuer (2008) observes that a democratic government depends on informed citizens, which is why press and speech are often protected, as seen in the First Amendment of the United States Constitution. Scheuer also flags the role of media as business, control of the media over content and the watchdog role of journalism as other factors that contribute to the necessity for journalistic excellence in a democracy. Similarly, McChesney (2000) discussed the need for media to fulfill the watchdog role, and specifically identifies the need for "reliable information" (p. 1). To be fair, McChesney was actually critiquing the U.S. news media for failing to achieve these aims. He writes, "It scarcely provides any reliable information or range of debate on most of the basic political and social issues of the day."

Scheuer notes that journalism seeks but struggles to achieve perfectibility. This struggle is certainly compounded by ever-present deadlines and an ever-shrinking workforce. Indeed, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that nearly 5,000 jobs for "reporters, correspondents, and broadcast news analysts" will be lost in the decade between 2014 and 2024 (2016). Yet, even before these modern pressures, Pulitzer Prize-winner Carl Bernstein has been quoted as referring to journalism as “the best obtainable version of the truth.” Later, Bernstein denigrated the modern media’s prioritization of getting information out quickly over quality (Bernstein, 1992).

So, with speed being the name of the game, and fewer eyeballs reviewing content before it goes live, it seems inevitable that mistakes will be made. How the media reacts to and addresses those errors becomes critical. As a part of the Journalism Credibility Project conducted by the American Society of News Editors, Urban (1999) found that audience members appreciated corrections, with more than three-quarters of respondents indicating that they felt better about the publication when an error was corrected. According to the report, one participant said, “Stress accuracy. If there's a mistake, admit it. People are more likely to believe you. Don't hide it in small print. Let them know you want them to know your mistakes” (para. 25). This finding was later supported by an informal editor poll (Silverman, 2011). Similarly, Nemeth and Sanders found that *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* increased the number of corrections that they published, which may have resulted in increased perceptions of credibility on behalf of the audience (2009). Nemeth and Sanders also observed that this was a shift in previous conceptions, claiming that “Heretofore, corrections were published reluctantly and as a defensive measure to placate angry readers” (pp. 99-100).

No matter the reason for the shift, corrections in one form or another are here to stay. In 2010, Cornish called for more focus on policy regarding corrections for online publications. Other research on newspaper errors and their subsequent corrections has found that the majority of errors tend to be factual—addressing name errors, location errors and so forth—and the errors are of relatively low impact to readers (Tillinghast, 1982; Hettinga & Appelman, 2014). Little research, however, has addressed where students learn of the process for addressing error.

Therefore, for journalism educators, it is necessary to prepare students to correct the mistakes they will inevitably make. Where do student journalists learn about corrections?

Hettinga (2016) suggests that there is relatively limited information about corrections in popular journalism textbooks. One journalism educator did incorporate writing corrections into her news writing class (Patterson, 1978), but there is little other evidence—anecdotal or otherwise—of instructors taking similar steps. One possible way that student journalists might learn of corrections is in an experiential learning setting—while working for their student newspapers. Students will make mistakes and correcting them ought to be part of the learning process.

Student Publications

While participating in a student publication imbues student journalists with a sense of responsibility (Bailer, 1995), there is room for research regarding the norms and standards of the college newsroom. Nelson (1988) described college newspapers as a “microcosm of the commercial newsroom” (p. 39). Nelson wrote about the importance of having written job descriptions and clear policies. He identified a conflict of interest policy as particularly beneficial as well as “one on clarifications and corrections and one on ethics and professional responsibility” (p. 41). So as far back as the late 1980s, at least one college publication did have a written policy regarding the use of corrections. More recent research though, found that nearly half of college newspaper websites did not have corrections that could be found using a search function, and of publications that did have corrections, most were more than one year old (Hettinga, Clark, & Appelman, 2016). The decision to publish a correction is one that even professional journalists wrestle with (Hettinga, 2013), and even some professional publications lack written policies for handling corrections. A 1988 study of newspapers in Arkansas found that 70 percent of newspapers had a corrections policy, but less than a quarter had a written policy (Fowler & Murmet, 1988). The authors of that study recommended that future studies "examine written policies to determine their similarities and differences" (p. 858). Formal written policies were found to be absent in a more modern context as well. In examining corrections for online publications, less than 20 percent of those that did have a policy had the policy documented (Ang & Nadarajan, 1999).

Research on Policies at Newspapers

The lack of policies mirrors a lack of research on items such as policies and manuals. Much of the research that does exist on policies at newspapers is solely dedicated to professional publications. For example, Splichal and Garrison (2003) found that nearly two-thirds of the publications they surveyed did not have a policy regarding the privacy of public figure such as politicians. "The studies also found only about one in 10 had those policies in writing. More interestingly and more telling, more than half of these respondents did not know if the privacy policy was formalized in writing" (p. 85). Other research related to policy has been limited to specific newspapers: Riski and Grusin (2003) used a case study to explore a controversial, victim-naming policy of one publication; while Sheehy (2010) explored the history and evolution of unnamed source policies at *The Washington Post*. He wrote, "The evolution of The Post's policies and practices emphasizes how journalists must improvise when old rules do not apply to new situations" (p. 94).

Of the research that addresses manuals policies at student publications, some is dated such as Hook's 1974 essay on staff manuals. Hook largely addresses the role of the adviser in managing the newsroom and examines best practices and topics to include in a staff manual (Hook, 1974). More recent research—similar to the research on professional publications—is limited to special topics. Wickham (2004) found that of college newspapers in the Southeast Journalism Conference 73 percent of those that participated did have a written code of ethics, but only 10 percent had specific, written policies related to diversity. Internationally, Cousins and Kypri (2008) explored alcohol advertising and corresponding policy at student newspapers in New Zealand.

With the somewhat limited research related to policies and handbooks at college newspapers and the existing evidence that some college newspapers are not publicizing their corrections online, the purpose of the current study is to examine the policy manuals and handbooks of college publications for language related to corrections. As college newspapers are learning environments, how the reactive mechanism for inaccuracy is represented is crucial.

Method

Student newspapers manuals were gathered from a variety of outlets. Some were found on the websites of college publications, while others were solicited via a student media adviser listserv. Ultimately, 15 student media handbooks from different sized, public and private universities and colleges were reviewed to explore their language regarding accuracy and corrections. As these were all electronic documents, a search function was used to document sections of the handbooks where the words “accuracy,” “accurate,” “inaccurate,” “inaccuracy,” “incorrect,” “correction,” “clarification,” “error,” and “mistake” appeared. Complete coding of the text, focusing on the aforementioned areas, was performed. Themes from the coded data were developed using the process of thematic analysis developed by Braun and Clarke (2013).

Findings

The purposive sample included four private colleges and universities, 11 public colleges and universities and one community college. Fourteen different states from around the United States are represented. Six of the publications self-identified as weekly in print, four were every other week in print and two printed multiple times per week. Circulation ranged from 1,500 to 10,000 (see Table 1). Several of the campus publications failed to make clear their publication frequency or circulation. This lack of transparency at college publications has been previously documented (Hettinga, Clark, & Appelman, 2016).

Most of the handbooks were from 2013, however, several were more current and at least one was older. In terms of length, the manuals ranged from 8 pages to 56 pages. The average length was about 24.5 pages, and the median length was 22 pages.

Despite the wide range of handbook sizes, public vs. private, and variation in publication frequency and circulation, several common themes were identified:

1. Accuracy was identified as a professional principle, but who was responsible for accuracy was often unclear.
2. The importance of preventing error was stressed, but only simplistic best practices such as recording interviews and checking names were identified.
3. Corrections policies were common but ranged in their effectiveness.

Accuracy as Professional Principle

"Accuracy" was used in every handbook except the manual for *The Linfield Review*. However, *The Linfield Review* states that it "adheres to the statement of principles the American Society of Newspaper Editors adopted in 1975 and makes every effort to adhere to the code of ethics the Society of Professional Journalists/Sigma Delta Chi adopted in 1996," both of which reference accuracy.

For the remaining handbooks, how much "accuracy" was referred to did vary. For example, "accuracy" only makes two appearances in the charter for *The Stylus*, the student newspaper at the State University of New York at Brockport. The 24-page document identifies "accuracy" as a responsibility of the copy team, and it is used as a quality of "sound news judgment." In handbooks that referred to accuracy more extensively, it was frequently included in mission or standards statements. Under "Mission Purpose and Responsibility" *The Washtenaw Voice* calls for student journalists to "Be honest, fair and courageous in gathering, reporting and interpreting accurate information" while in the section "About the Wildcat" the Arizona student newspaper states that one of its primary functions is to serve as "A major source of news, information, opinion and advertising for the University of Arizona. Student editors need to be particularly sensitive to covering all facets of the university as accurately and as fairly as possible." Similarly, in a discussion of what it terms "News or Objective Journalism" *The George-Anne* indicated that, "Accuracy, fairness, impartiality and reliability are the foundation of objective reporting. Journalists, as seekers of the truth, always should strive to attain these qualities in their objective reporting."

While it was common to see statements regarding accuracy as a principle or a responsibility, *whose* responsibility it was to be accurate was often unclear. Only *The Vermont Cynic* explicitly said that accuracy was the responsibility of the entire staff. It read, "All staff members and editors are held responsible and accountable for the content – including factual accuracy and quality – of the work they produce, submit and manage." Otherwise, accuracy was frequently found in various job or position descriptions. Copy chiefs or copy editors often had language referencing “accuracy” in their responsibilities. In *The Elm’s* handbook, copy editors duties include “read[ing] and edit[ing] all copy that appears in the publication for errors of grammar, punctuation, wordiness, clarity, accuracy, fairness, and completeness.” Similarly, photo editors were called upon to ensure the accuracy of photos. Other sections varied.

Interestingly, sports editors were among the most common to have explicit language regarding accuracy in their job descriptions. Also somewhat surprising was the limited number of manuals that had specific language regarding accuracy in the job descriptions of editors in chief. While it would be logical to assume that editors in chief are commonly endowed with the highest level of responsibility for their student publications, only *The Elm* handbook specified this obligation. It read, “It is the EIC’s job to ensure that all tasks are completed on time and that The Elm is an accurate, balanced representation of the Washington College student body.” However, in other manuals, the editor in chief was given duties related to accuracy, such as approving the running of corrections.

Preventing Error

The majority of manuals did stress means of preventing error. However, this was usually in vague language, with limited specific recommendations or best practices. The most common recommendations to prevent error had to do with checking names with sources, and recording interviews to ensure quote accuracy. There was also overlap between preventing error and job responsibilities, which goes back to the previous section’s observations regarding who was responsible for ensuring accuracy. Under editorial policy, the manual for *The Horizon* from Indiana University Southeast reads,

> All work submitted for publication at The Horizon will be checked and rechecked for accuracy. Under no circumstances should information ever be assumed; reporters and editors should check all facts. This includes checking the spelling of names and accuracy of titles/majors. Students' names and majors and staff/faculty names and titles should be checked against the directories available in The Horizon newsroom.

The Arizona Wildcat manual was more specific in preventing name errors by stating that names, titles and majors should be rechecked via phone or email. Similarly, the *Golden Gate Xpress* from San Francisco State noted that misspelling a name is offensive to the source.

Several of the handbooks (*The Daily Kansan, The Horizon, The Mercury, The Wildcat, Xpress*, and *The Butler Collegian*) indicated that some verification by sources might be appropriate. *The Kansan's* statement reads, "For some stories and artwork, such as those that involve complex scientific information, a knowledgeable source might be asked to verify the accuracy of specific elements of the story before it is published." Similarly, *The Mercury* from the University of Texas at Dallas stated:

> Staff members may, however, send excerpts of an article to a source in some rare cases. If an article contains dense and complex information that is beyond the expertise or comprehension of the writer and editor, staff members may ask the source to review the information and verify its accuracy.

However, both of these statements are qualified by stating that this sort of verification should be done in consultation with the appropriate editor. And these statements also corresponded with language that indicated that the entire article should not be shared to prevent forms of prior review. The other source verification language had to do with verifying sources' quotes.

The importance of accurately quoting sources was reiterated in the recommendation that reporters use recording devices. *The Mercury* handbook reads, “Newspaper staff members are required to bring a digital voice recorder, notepad and writing utensil to all in-person interviews in an effort to ensure the accuracy and integrity of quoted material.”

Besides these specific recommendations of name checks and quote accuracy, however, language about preventing error reflected professional values, but made limited practical recommendations about how to maintain accuracy. For example, *The Ferris Torch* suggested that student journalists should “Try to write [their] articles as soon after the meeting or interview so the event will be fresh in [their] mind[s] and [they’ll] be more likely to recall information accurately.” While this might seem logical, many journalists would caution against working from memory. Other language regarding how to prevent error was most commonly found in job descriptions. In *The Northwest Missourian*, the copy chief is required to “Edit stories of all types that appear in the publication, correcting inaccuracies, wordiness, poor organization, bad grammar or other writing errors” but the manual doesn’t explain how to identify or correct those issues.

One area where the handbooks did tend to be more explicit was in best practices to prevent legal issues, specifically libel. *The Horizon* notes that crime coverage warrants “extra care” and then differentiates between arrests and charges, stresses attribution, and discusses identification of both suspects and victims. *The Butler Collegian* also noted that routine stories can be the most overlooked and thus result in legal issues. In addressing libel, *The Collegian* clarifies that being a quote does not prevent being culpable for libel, that small edits to quotes could be suspect to lawsuits if it were to change the meaning of the quote, and that even headlines could lead to libel on an otherwise accurate story. As an area of concern, libel was also referenced in conjunction with practices related to corrections in several handbooks.

Corrections Policy

While libel and corrections were often associated—*The Northwest Missourian* states that "Running a correction (the legal term is retraction) is not a defense, but doing so can reduce punitive damages if you're sued for libel and lose"—not all of the handbooks addressed corrections in any way. One third of the handbooks analyzed did not have their own policies related to making corrections. *The Loquitur* from Cabrini College did not have its own policy, but it did reference the Associated Collegiate Press code of ethics, which does make recommendations as to how to write corrections.

The word "correction" is often used in a limited fashion, if only to indicate that they are necessary when something is inaccurate. *The George-Anne* wrote that, "Having to make a correction in a publication is like trying to 'unring a bell.' Careful reporting and diligent editing are the best defense against having to make corrections. Despite the best efforts of the staff, errors will occur." A couple of the handbooks echoed the sentiment that despite intention, errors do occur. *The Arizona Wildcat* situated this inevitability in the context of learning. In the handbook's section about the publication, it stated that the purpose of the publication was "to give students the opportunity to act independently, *to make (and learn from) mistakes*, to contribute to campus life as a voice for the students and to develop leadership and organizational skills" (emphasis added).

Despite the acknowledgement that errors are inevitable, most of the policies regarding corrections are somewhat limited. The entirety of *The Vermont Cynic's* policy reads,

> The Vermont Cynic is committed to producing a factual and unbiased product. That being said, we are not perfect, but errors we do make are unintentional and we dedicated to correcting them. Corrections and clarifications can be sent to cynic@uvm.edu.

The Ferris Torch's policy is even more succinct, "It is the duty of news media to make prompt and complete corrections of their errors." But there is no information about what actually warrants a correction, or how to format the correction. This is similar to the Kansan Media Policy Guide, which uses the word "correction" a total of six times, but also fails to indicate what is worthy of being corrected, or how to do so. *The Butler Collegian's* media guide has an "Ethical Guidelines and Best Practices" section that addresses corrections, but also does not give examples of what needs to be addressed.

Perhaps the most thorough corrections policy can be found in the handbook from the University of Texas at Dallas. It begins,

> When an erroneous statement is published or broadcast, a correction should be published or broadcast in the first issue or segment possible after the inaccuracy is discovered. The prominence of the correction should be reasonably commensurate with the importance of the original article or broadcast.

In addition to making some recommendations regarding timing and location, *The Mercury* (University of Texas at Dallas) actually gives best practices for writing the correction itself. It states, "In most cases, the error should not be restated within the correction in order to avoid confusion." *The Mercury* gives examples, tips its hat to *The New York Times* and its policy, and goes further in addressing how to address corrections online.

Several other handbooks also address online accuracy, with *The Horizon* stating that changes can be made to the original piece if a correction is warranted, but that an accompanying editor's note must explain the changes. Information about correcting online content was often accompanied by statements indicating that content would not be removed from the site unless there was a factual error.

Discussion & Conclusion

When situating the current research in the context of previous work regarding the presence of corrections on the websites of college newspapers, this research suggests that there may be a disconnect between policy and practice. All of the reviewed handbooks had some sort of language related to accuracy, and two-thirds had their own corrections policy while still others referred to codes of ethics that had some correction recommendations. But previous research has suggested that student newspapers do not use corrections as frequently or successfully as they might (Hettinga, Clark, & Appelman, 2016).

These documents, which student journalists may turn to for guidance, often lack explicit language or recommended best practices of how to be accurate and how to address inaccuracy when it occurs. For students to practice professional, ethical journalism, they may need stronger guidance than is currently offered by their policy manuals. This could be addressed in a variety of ways.

Faculty advisers may want to review and update their handbooks if appropriate. Notably, student editors edited several of the handbooks. Certainly, student editors should take ownership of their polies and best practices, but faculty or professional advisers may be more familiar with policies and standards for accuracy or corrections from professional publications. If a faculty adviser does not have a role in editing the handbook, he or she may want to consider incorporating talk of accuracy, best practices, and corrections in the newsroom. This could be added to beginning of the year/term training or in associated classes.

One thing that may be important to stress is that making mistakes, while unfortunate, is a part of journalism, and that being honest with those mistakes is only likely to enhance the publication's relationship with its readers (Nemeth and Sanders, 2009). The very visible nature of journalism means that students' work is held to higher, more public scrutiny and it behooves them to be transparent with the audience when an error occurs.

For publications that already have clear policies to address inaccuracy, it may be to the benefit of those students to review the policy and to see how well they are adhering to their own standards.

Limitations and Future Research

This research is the interpretation of the author. It only addresses a few handbooks from different college publications in the United States. However, the findings do suggest that there is room to develop more effective handbooks for college publications, specifically in the areas of accuracy and corrections. Explicit language on what warrants a correction, how to write a correction and where to place a correction may be beneficial to student journalists who will make mistakes as they learn and practice the art and skill of reporting.

Future research may want to expand on this research by more explicitly comparing the policies and handbooks of student publications with varying levels of editorial independence—for instance, do student publications that have more oversight (by faculty advisers, lab classes, etc.) have stronger or weaker corrections policies than their more independent counterparts? Additionally, future research may want to explore how advisers, and student editors themselves talk about errors and their resulting corrections.

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Table 1. Student Newspaper Manuals Analyzed

	Publication	University	Private/ Public	Print Publication Frequency	Circulation	Manual Length
1.	**Arizona Daily Wildcat**	University of Arizona	Public	3x per week	8,000	56 pages
2.	**The Butler Collegian**	Butler University (Indiana)	Private	Weekly	1,500	45 pages
3.	**The Elm**	Washington College	Private	Weekly	*	17 pages
4.	**The Ferris State Torch**	Ferris State University (Michigan)	Public	*	*	30 pages
5.	**The George-Anne**	Georgia Southern University	Public	*	*	21 pages
6.	**The Golden Gate Xpress**	San Francisco State University	Public	Weekly	10,000	13 pages
7.	**The Horizon**	Indiana University Southeast	Public	2x per month	*	18 pages
8.	**The Linfield Review**	Linfield College (Oregon)	Private	2x per month	*	8 pages
9.	**The Loquitur**	Cabrini College (Pennsylvania)	Private	Weekly	1,500	23 pages
10.	**The Mercury**	University of Texas at Dallas	Public	2x per month	4,500	33 pages
11.	**The Northwest Missourian**	Northwest Missouri State University	Public	Weekly	4,000	30 pages
12.	**The Stylus**	State University of New York at Brockport	Public	*	3,500	24 pages
13.	**The Washtenaw Voice**	Washtenaw Community College (Michigan)	Public	2x per month	*	38 pages
14.	**The University Daily Kansan**	University of Kansas	Public	4x per week	9,000	22 pages
15.	**The Vermont Cynic**	University of Vermont	Public	Weekly	3,500	26 pages

* Previous research has documented that student publications are not always forthcoming with information related to funding and circulation (see Hettinga, Clark, & Appelman, 2016).

NEWSWRITING TEXTBOOKS EARN LOW GRADES FOR TEACHING ACCURACY

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Abstract

Accuracy is the foundation of journalism, so it is critical that we assess how this concept is taught in journalism textbooks. Ten popular journalism textbooks were reviewed for how they represented the concepts of accuracy and the reactive correction. Thematic analysis indicates the majority of textbooks analyzed dedicate little space to defining accuracy or giving specific recommendations as to how to be accurate. Additionally, accuracy is most commonly framed by how it relates to the public in terms of journalistic responsibility. Extreme examples of lawsuits and firings are used. While the focus on accuracy, or lack thereof, is certainly not reason alone to choose or reject a textbook, educators may want to consider the representation of accuracy when making their textbook selection. At the very least, if selecting a textbook that does not have a strong emphasis on accuracy, instructors may want to make a conscientious effort to build upon the basic discussions of accuracy, as all of the texts agree that accuracy is one of the most important qualities of journalism.

Keywords: Accuracy, Corrections, Textbooks, Thematic Analysis

Introduction

Despite the common belief that young people don't consume news, the American Press Institute reported in 2014 that, "the majority of Americans across generations now combine a mix of sources and technologies to get their news each week," (p. 1) but where they seek their information often depends on the topic. However, Americans of all ages are more likely to trust news that they learn directly from a news organization, compared to information that they obtain through something like social media (American Press Institute, 2014). Indeed, 87 percent of Americans reporting trusting information that comes straight from news organizations at least moderately, if not strongly or completely (American Press Institute, 2014). Legacy media, such as broadcast news, radio news and newspapers are among the most trusted news sources (American Press Institute, 2014).

In spite of this trust, Americans also believe news media is far from perfect. In fact, nearly 66 percent say that news is often inaccurate (Moos, 2011). Previous research has found that errors in newspapers tend to be factual and usually have limited impact on the readers (see Charnley, 1936; Berry, 1967; and Hettinga & Appelman, 2014). Trends in the industry may be contributing to increased inaccuracies—whether perceived or real. Russial asked as far back as 1998 what would happen if the number of copy editors were reduced, and in 2010 the Pew Research Center reported that only a quarter of readers thought news outlets were accurate, which was the lowest percentage since Pew started tracking such information in 1985 (Pew Research Center, 2011).

Speed of information is also an aspect of news media that may be introducing error. Few can forget the media mistakenly announcing that Representative Gabby Giffords had been killed. In their book "No Time to Think" Rosenberg and Feldman (2008, p. X) write,

> We have before us amazing news technology and fantastic speed; we have before us technology washing over us like tsunami, velocity trumping veracity, frenzied pack reporting and fiery crashes waiting to happen as news zooms out of control around slippery hairpin curves on perilous fast tracks.

So as media outlets compete for audiences among an increasingly broad and diverse field of information sources, one area in which the news media can work to differentiate itself is in the area of accuracy. Silverman (2014) wrote, "As so much in the world of news and information changes, the fundamental bond of trust between journalists and the communities they serve is one of the few things that doesn't. In fact, its importance has grown" (para. 1). Cultivating that trust can be enhanced by members of the news media rededicating themselves to accuracy and improving perceptions of accuracy and transparency among consumers.

To build this trust, journalism education may want to increase focus on accuracy and fact checking. Where students learn about these qualities becomes the question. Students do care about their course textbooks, however, Besser, Stone, and Nan (1999) acknowledged that there have been relatively few studies that examine textbooks or their use. The purpose of this research is to explore how popular journalism and news-writing textbooks address the topic of accuracy.

Literature Review

Even senior editors struggle to define accuracy (Hettinga, 2012), but citizens rely on accurate information to make informed decisions to participate in democracy and to function in society (Scheuer, 2008). Scheuer says that the quality of journalism contributes to the quality of democracy. He writes, "Journalistic excellence is neither a single irreducible value nor a random aggregation of practice or principles, but a family of related values for informed citizenship" (p.

57). Certainly one family member of those related values is the quality of accuracy. In fact, Scheuer describes accuracy as journalism's "Ground Zero" (p. 65). If accuracy is "where everything else begins" (Scheuer, p. 65) it seems pertinent that we examine how the textbooks that students rely on teach and define the concept of accuracy.

Journalism Education

In the United States, journalism education left a more apprenticeship style in the early 1900s and became more like the different models of higher education that we see today (Brandon, 2002). Since then, journalism educators around the world have worked to find balance between the practical and theoretical aspects of curriculum (Deuze, 2006). Even with this possible contention, a survey of practitioners and instructors found that they largely agreed on the core skills future journalists need: "basic journalism skills—grammar and style, news judgment" (Du & Thornburg, 2011). This supported previous research by Pierce and Miller (2007) that also found basic journalism skills to be the most important. A more recent study identifying the essential skills needed by journalists today found that both professionals and educators rated "accuracy" as the number one skill (Finberg & Klinger, 2014). So, how and where are journalism students learning about this skill?

Textbooks

Chatman and Goetz (1985) state that the selection of a textbook is one of the most important decisions that an educator can make. This was supported in a survey of mass communication students, in which Besser, Stone and Nan (1999) found that students generally had strong feelings about their textbooks and associated good textbooks with strong classes (and the other way around). Besser, Stone and Nan (1999) wrote, “These responses confirm that students consider textbooks an integral part of the course learning experience” (p. 15). The students also identified the quality of writing as the important aspect of textbook quality. A good textbook serves as a foundation for the instructor to build upon (Chatman & Goetz, 1985).

In an examination of news writing textbooks, Peck (2004) noted that entry-level texts' weak coverage of philosophy and ethics could be confusing to students. Peck questioned whether an introductory text was the appropriate venue for such an in-depth topic, observing that beginning news writing textbooks were “where the principles of the profession, or practical ethics, should be discussed but also … where students should learn what is news and how to write leads and cover the who, what, when, where, why, and how” (p. 356). Among the principles of the profession is certainly the value of accuracy.

Early journalism textbooks may have also shaped the identity of the profession and its values (Sumpter, 2009). Early journalism textbooks included exercises on checking the accuracy of quotes and in a review of their indexes “accuracy in news” and “need of accuracy” was one of only terms that appeared in the majority of texts analyzed (Sumpter, 2009, p. 50). This suggests that even in the earliest journalism textbooks, accuracy was fundamental in journalism education.

Even with the shifts in the field of news media today, accuracy is, as Scheuer (2008) noted “Ground Zero.” With its long history in journalism education, and with the observation that even senior editors have varying definitions (Hettinga, 2012) evaluating how this key concept is represented in modern textbooks is critical.

Method

A purposive sample of 10 common journalism textbooks was identified (see Table 1). Previous research has identified that 10 dominant publishers account for nearly two-thirds of textbook sales (Nicholls, 2012). Among the 10 publishers were Oxford University Press, Pearson, McGraw-Hill, Cengage, and John Wiley & Sons. The majority of the selected textbooks represent these top publishers. Several of the publishers are not represented because they do not publish textbooks in the areas of journalism or media writing. For example, Thomson Reuters specializes in legal textbooks. Other factors that influenced selection were the publication date of the newest edition, and the identification of the textbook as one commonly used by journalism instructors (Gallagher, 2014).

Each of the 10 textbooks was examined for its language that specifically addressed the concept of accuracy and any content addressing “corrections.” Corrections—the reactive mechanism for inaccuracy—are another area worthy of examination, as they have been shown to potentially aid in building credibility with readers (Nemeth & Sanders, 2009).

As a starting point, the author used the indexes of each text to identify which pages focused on the topics of accuracy and corrections. Fitzpatrick (2010, para. 2) wrote,

> A good index is more than just an alphabetical list of all the text’s proper nouns and their locations; it’s a way of thinking about the ideas within the text that can guide a reader to the sections they most need to consult.

After identifying the pages that were most likely to contain the relevant content, the author use thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2013) as the methodological approach for this study. This approach is flexible and appropriate given the small sample size. After familiarization with the sample, complete coding was conducted. After coding, the author searched for and identified common themes. These common themes are discussed below.

Findings

While this research is qualitative and intended to explore the representation of the topic of accuracy in journalism textbooks, some basic math sheds light on the commitment of the authors to that concept. The nine true textbooks average about 315 pages (ranging from 259-479 pages) and we find that on average, in the indexes, the words “accuracy” or “fact checking” appear on about 11 pages per book. The word “accuracy” fails to make an appearance in the index of “Inside Reporting” by Harrower, which was the most popular textbook identified by Gallagher (2014), and also fails to appear in the index of “Feature and Magazine Writing.” “Correction” only appears in the index of three of the textbooks. In terms of proportion, the Filak text, “Dynamics of Media Writing” fares the best, with 22 of its 271 pages (about 8 percent) containing references to “accuracy” or “fact checking.” Indeed, “Dynamics of Media Writing” has an entire chapter called “Being Accurate, Relying on Facts.” No other book has a chapter solely devoted to this concept, although “Telling the Story” has a chapter called “Gathering and *Verifying* Information” (emphasis added). This surface analysis, however, was indicative of things to come.

The major themes included:

1. Accuracy is identified as the most important value or responsibility, but few textbooks provide specific, concrete definitions or practices for being accurate.
2. Accuracy is heavily situated in interaction with the public, whether it is through concern for public perceptions of the media, or through information gathering with sources.

3. Inaccuracy is discussed either with very negative language choices, and positioned in discussion of libel, lawsuits and extreme examples of journalistic misconduct, or it seen as “inevitable.”
    a. Mechanisms for addressing inaccuracy are rarely addressed.

Accuracy as Journalistic Standard

To begin, as a vocabulary term, “accuracy” is poorly—and rarely—defined. The term is commonly used as something to do or to be, without telling students exactly what it is or how to do it. For example, under the bold heading “The Importance of Accuracy” in Bender, Davenport, Drager and Felder, we get the following statement:

> Errors affect the public’s perception of the media and ultimately the media’s credibility with the public. Audiences will wonder whether any of the other facts in the same story or in other stories are correct. Editors, instructors and the public do not tolerate sloppiness of any kind, and they are particularly critical of errors in spelling, names and facts because there is rarely any excuse for them. Reporters who repeatedly submit stories with errors may be suspended or fired and have a hard time finding a job elsewhere.

While there is nothing explicitly wrong with this statement, it frames the notion of accuracy by referring to a failure of accuracy as something to avoid. It does not tell students what it means to be accurate or how to practice being accurate. As far as actually defining “accuracy” only two texts include actual “glossary” definitions. Stovall’s “Writing for the Mass Media” (p. 252) defines it most completely:

> The chief goal of media writing, which tries to present correct information in a context that allows the reads to interpret it accurately. Accuracy is one of the four major goals of media writing; the others are clarity, precision and efficiency.

Whereas Filak's "Dynamics of Media Writing" defines accuracy much more succinctly, "A journalistic standard that requires content to be correct" (p. 253). Filak's definition refers to journalistic standards, which is a common area also addressed by multiple textbooks. Indeed, there is a heavy emphasis on professional values, journalistic responsibility and defending the profession. "Writing and Reporting for the Media" describes the professional news media as being more accurate than most Americans believe and indicate that, "professionals who manage news organizations do their best to report the news as fairly and accurately as possible" (p. 21). Similarly "Media Writing" describes journalists as "the purveyors of truth" (p. 28).

In addition to defending the profession, there is a heavy emphasis on accuracy as one of many journalistic standards. Indeed, while poorly defined, "accuracy" is often upheld as the number one standard for journalists. "Writing for the Mass Media" described accuracy as "the chief goal of any writer for the mass media" (p. 29) and later reiterated that it was the overriding goal of any writer for the mass media and that accuracy should govern all of the writer's actions. "Telling the Story" framed this journalistic standard as a question and indicated that every responsible journalist has an obligation to ask whether something is accurate. In a discussion of quotes, "Telling the Story" stressed the importance of quoting sources accurately and again noted that the first obligation of any reporter is to be accurate. "Dynamics of Media Writing" was the most clear and said to students reading the text, "of all the skills you will learn as you read this book, accuracy is the most important one" (p. 32).

So, although accuracy as a concept is often poorly defined, it is put forth as the most important aspect of journalistic responsibility. However, how students should uphold this standard is often vague. Perhaps the most common example of how to be accurate was in the discussion of names. Names were a commonly cited example of something to be checked and students were encouraged to get the correct spelling from the sources as well as to check secondary sources such as directories or phone books. Recording interviews was also often discussed as a means of preventing error.

Besides these basic precautions, however, most of the textbooks dedicated relatively little space to how students could prevent error. Not surprisingly, “Dynamics of Media Writing”—the only book to have an entire chapter dedicated to the concept of accuracy—was the most thorough and explicit in explaining how to prevent error. Among the usual suspects of recording and checking names, Filak took readers through a list of “Basic Fact Checking” that encouraged journalists to “do a line-by-line examination” for items such as words that would not be caught by spell check, but that were not correct. Filak even discusses how to use a spell-check function properly. He encourages students to check math, differentiating between percentages and percentage points, and even says that if reporters are providing directions they should go so far as to drive the route themselves. Filak is also one of the only authors to go beyond the basics of checking spelling, etc. to position accuracy as a broader issue. He writes,

> You can have everything spelled right and the math done perfectly, but that doesn’t mean you have an accurate piece of writing. … Bigger concepts, nuanced word choice and similar issues can put you in hot water just as easily as a misspelled name or an incorrect street address.

He then describes being careful with quotes and their context, checking hoaxes, and strong sourcing. “Writing and Reporting for the Media” discusses how to be accurate by discussing the use of checklists—something supported by Craig Silverman of “Regret the Error.” The authors provide their own checklist that build upon Silverman’s proposed checklist.

“Reaching Audiences” is perhaps the next strongest in providing explicit tactics to maintain accuracy. Though considerably more succinct than Filak, it does provide an eight-point list of ways to be accurate, followed by more extensive discussion of clear language.

Accuracy and Audience Relations

The importance of clear language and accuracy are often positioned in terms of how it will affect readers. Journalistic norms and standards are often framed as an obligation to the general public. “Reaching Audiences” stated, “Accuracy is comforting to audiences, who depend on information” (p. 62) and “Writing for the Mass Media” (p. 29) observed that

> Most people expect that the mass media will take reasonable steps to present information accurately. There is a tendency for mass audiences to believe what they see and read in the mass media, and this inclination translates into a responsibility that those who work in the mass media must fulfill.

The failure to be accurate is commonly identified as a means of losing an audience. Several of the texts noted that news organizations would not be able to retain audiences if they were inaccurate. In today’s media-saturated environment, the loss of readers or viewers could be devastating for news outlets.

Frequently, inaccuracies were seen as a kind of “slippery slope” in which small errors will accumulate. It was not uncommon to see the textbooks question how audiences could trust the news media on larger issues if journalists often made small mistakes.

However, while frequently discussing the need to be accurate to maintain audiences, some of the texts also identified the public as a cause for some errors. When discussing sourcing, several of the texts noted that sources might have their own agendas, provide misinformation and generally be biased in such a way that journalists cannot trust them. “Writing and Reporting for the Media” stated that, “Reporters are vulnerable to misinformation because many people want to get their views publicized” (p. 21) while “Writing and Reporting News” connected inaccurate sources to the growth of social media. Rich observed that the increased reliance on using content from social media as a source of information leads to new avenues for inaccuracy.

Negative Framing of Inaccuracy

To be clear, inaccuracy is a negative, but the textbooks explored in this research tended to position inaccuracy in one of two ways. One approach was that some error was inevitable, but that everything possible should be done to minimize it. The other approach was to focus on very extreme examples and to associate inaccuracy with firing and lawsuits.

Perhaps the former approach is the more realistic. Several of the texts did observe the increasing deadline pressure of the 24-hour news cycle, but emphasized that accuracy should not be sacrificed to deadline pressure. Again, Filak’s “Dynamics of Media Writing” was among the most accessible for students. He wrote (p. 58),

> Perfection is unattainable and yet that is what is expected of you in this field. Obviously, you won't be perfect, but you need to hold yourself to a standard as close to perfection as possible, because accuracy is the essential virtue of media writing.

"Reaching Audiences" also noted that everyone is likely to make mistakes from time to time, as did "Telling the Story."

Other textbooks were swift to put the blame for errors on journalists. "Writing and Reporting for the Media" wrote "Carelessness and laziness cause most factual errors" (p. 21) while "Writing and Reporting News" said that most lawsuits were caused by carelessness. Several of the texts also used extreme examples of journalistic misconduct. Jayson Blair, Stephen Glass, and Janet Cooke were frequent examples of individuals who deliberately violated journalistic norms and standards by plagiarizing and fabricating.

Whether discussing major errors that actually become their own news stories or smaller "inevitable" errors, few of the textbooks shared how to address mistakes when they were made. Corrections are a mechanism to address errors. "Writing and Reporting News" noted that newspapers around the globe print corrections for small errors such as names, but they don't necessarily undo the harm caused by publishing incorrect information. "Telling the Story" discussed corrections in the context of online publications and noted that some news outlets use corrections for transparency, while others "act as if they never make mistakes" (p. 338). The Associated Press Stylebook is one of the most thorough in discussing how to handle a correction for its different products, while "Reaching Audiences" (although noting that a correction could be seen as an admission of guilt in the case of a lawsuit) noted that most publications do have policies for writing corrections, and discussed correction display and style.

Discussion & Conclusion

In summary, these 10 popular journalism textbooks uphold accuracy as the most important journalistic standard. However, there is an inherent contradiction in that most of them also dedicate relatively little real estate to covering or defining the concept, and only a few of the books gives students explicit, concrete practices for how to be accurate. This lip service may be doing a disservice to future journalists.

Accuracy is often positioned in terms of how it affects (or is affected by) the audience. It is discussed an expectation or responsibility for journalists. It is something that journalists must be. But, these textbooks often provide limited advice in *how* journalists can fulfill this obligation. Only a few of the books go beyond recommendations such as “check names.” If accuracy is truly the most important journalistic standard as the majority of these texts proclaim, then it is the responsibility of the instructor to address specific approaches of how to fact check and ensure accuracy as a supplement to the books that fail to go into detail.

It also seems as if several of the textbooks chose extreme examples of errors in a kind of scare tactic. Certainly, journalists who deliberately set out to mislead readers should be held accountable, but the Jayson Blairs and Janet Cookes of the world are few and far between. In a pullout in “Writing and Reporting for the Media” editor Joe Hight notes that a truly “objective” journalist might not exist but says that “You can know that credible journalists must strive to be fair, ethical and clear to readers, viewers or listeners. And, most of all, accurate” (p. 308). Rather than using these notorious figures who become news stories unto themselves, it may behoove instructors to talk to their students about their own mistakes and adopt the slightly more realistic approach that Filak advocates—that perfection may not be attainable, but it’s worth striving for. Certainly, journalists are human, and they do make mistakes, but a journalist’s responsibility to the public requires them to try to prevent errors as much as possible. It also requires that they address inaccuracy when it does occur. The majority of the textbooks examined have room to improve in discussing how to address mistakes.

As accuracy is the bedrock of journalism, it is critical that we assess how we teach this concept to future journalists. As students and instructors rely on textbooks for guidance, examining common textbooks for how they teach this foundational concept is necessary. This analysis indicates that textbooks fail to explicitly define the term accuracy, and few include best practices or realistic examples of how to ensure accuracy. And, when things go awry, only a couple of the textbooks examined mention corrections. While these weaknesses are not enough to discount using a textbook in a class, educators may want to be proactive in defining accuracy and teaching students best practices to be as accurate as possible.

Limitations and Future Research

This research is the interpretation of the author. It is not meant to be generalizable and only addresses a few textbooks common to the United States. However, it may heighten educators' awareness of the fact that even popular textbooks are limited in their coverage of what is arguably the most important concept in journalism. As educators we have an obligation to our students and to the profession to make sure that we are thoroughly addressing this principle.

Future research should address other ways that accuracy is taught. Certainly, education is not limited to textbooks. Focus groups or interviews with journalism instructors may shed light on how they approach this critical concept.

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Table 1. Textbooks Analyzed

	Title	Author(s)	Copyright Date	Publisher	Top-10 Publishers
1.	**“Telling the Story” 5th ed.**	The Missouri Group (Brian S. Brooks, George Kennedy, Daryl R. Moen, Don Ranly)	2013	Bedford/St. Martin’s	
2.	**“Writing and Reporting News: A Coaching Method” 8th ed.**	Carole Rich	2016	Cengage Learning	X
3.	**“Writing and Reporting for the Media” 11th ed.**	John R. Bender, Lucinda D. Davenport, Michael W. Drager, Fred Fedler	2016	Oxford University Press	X
4.	**"Inside Reporting: A Practical Guide to the Craft of Journalism” 3rd ed.**	Tim Harrower	2013	McGraw Hill	X
5.	**“Dynamics of Media Writing”**	Vincent F. Filak	2016	Sage Publications	X
6.	**“Reaching Audiences: A Guide to Media Writing” 6th ed.**	Jan Johnson Yopp, Katherine C. McAdams	2013	Pearson	X
7.	**“Feature and Magazine Writing: Action, Angle and Anecdotes” 3rd ed.**	David E. Sumner, Holly G. Miller	2013	Wiley-Blackwell	X
8.	**“Media Writing: A Practical Introduction” 2nd ed.**	Craig Batty, Sandra Cain	2016	MacMillian	X
9.	**“Writing for the Mass Media” 9th ed.**	James G. Stovall	2016	Pearson	X
10.	**The Associated Press Stylebook**	David Minthorn, Sally Jacobsen, Paula Froke (editors)	2015	Basic Books	

In praise of Subjectivity: a New Discourse for Journalism Educators

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Abstract

This paper is an attempt to re-think the fundamental ethics of journalism, made more urgent by the rapidly changing nature of journalism in a digital age. As audiences seek to distinguish between journalists, bloggers tweeters, campaigners etc. how are we to define journalism, who is a journalist and are distinctions between professional journalists, those paid to do journalism, and those doing it for other motives, important? In this paper the concept at the heart of traditional journalism – objectivity - is challenged and, it is argued, should be abandoned in favour of a foregrounding of subjectivity. But this is not subjectivity per se but as a means of reaching fairness, the ultimate ethical goal. Fairness is something that can only be judged by the journalist him or herself who ultimately knows if the report that has been uploaded, printed or broadcast is a fair representation of what he or she has seen, heard or learnt. From this follows a number of injunctions which should inform the teaching of those doing journalism – both professionally and otherwise.

Keywords

Journalism, bloggers, objectivity, subjectivity, fairness, bias, impartiality, transparency and verification

Introduction

It is a truism to state that new technology has changed journalism profoundly. But many traditional journalists maintain that despite all the technological developments – and in particular the rise of Twitter, Facebook and the blogosphere – the practice of journalism remains essentially unchanged. Perhaps more importantly they argue that there is a fundamental ethical divide between professional journalists and the rest – citizen journalists, bloggers, social media posters etc. This paper challenges this view and argues that the line between activists, posters, bloggers, blogging journalists, citizen journalists, campaigning journalists, commentators and 'journalists' (pure and simple) has become ever more blurred. And this blurring does not just relate to the expression of opinion and the transmission of rumour and gossip, but also reaches into the dissemination of news – indeed in some cases bloggers and posters now cover news better than journalists. This blurring also throws into doubt traditional journalistic conventions of objectivity, truth and so forth; and, as I go on to catalogue, it requires the creation of a new ethical creed to guide journalists – professional and otherwise - alike.

I will argue that this blurring of the distinctions between journalists and others has rendered as irrelevant, and even wrong-headed, traditional notions of journalistic ethics. And if this is the case it is bound to have serious implications for those concerned with the teaching of journalism. I am proposing a new journalistic code which has at its heart the notion of subjectivity as a positive virtue. This is a direct challenge to the central concept at the heart of traditional journalism - objectivity. I will argue that subjectivity is a far more useful touchstone, giving journalists insight into how their own biases, partialities and experiences might be affecting their reportage and in so doing help journalists achieve their single most important ethical value – fairness, the ultimate test of the ethical journalist. So this paper represents something of a call to action, spear-headed by the next generation of journalists, the true digital natives.

But this call is not made as some sort a post-modern panegyric arguing that there is no reality and that everything is relative. It is more a social constructivist argument that journalists and audiences have long laboured under the delusion that there is a single ‘reality’ that can be perceived by journalists and communicated to audiences. The fact of the matter is that it is journalism itself that constructs realities for both journalists and audiences, as Poerksen (2009) writes: ‘‘Objectivity is a subject’s delusion that observing can be done without him.’’

If this was clear, well before the internet transformed and disrupted the news business, that there are many realities and all are partly true and all are partly misleading, depending on the stance of the journalist, the platform, the provenance and the audience. This paper seeks to replace the traditional journalism code with a new one that describes a journalism practice that recognises the limitations of journalism but also celebrates its communicative and democratic possibilities. Many contemporary commentators are lamenting the way that the digital environment seems to be leading to the ‘death of journalism’, this is a limited view of journalists and journalism. This approach instead is a manifesto that should enable journalists not just to survive the digital environment but to prosper within it.

Objectivity: the dream that died

The central traditional pillar is objectivity, whether realised or aspired to. It is a seductive concept; but like much that it is seductive it flatters to deceive. Social constructivists emphasise the selectivity (of facts. interviewees and stories) that is at the heart of the journalistic process and it is through this selection that we journalists give meaning to the world around us. Poerksen (2007) goes as far as suggesting that objectivity is used by journalists “..to renounce personal responsibility for what is being observed.”

It must surely be self-evident that objectivity as such is, and has always been, a problematic concept. That is because journalists are social animals. They have a gender, an ethnicity, a family, a social background, a personal history, a set of prejudices and so on, all of which impact on their ‘way of seeing’ (Berger 1977). They also have an ingrained sense of ‘professional’ values and expectations which colour how they go about their work. Herman and Chomsky (1994: xii) summarise the pressures thus: “Most biased choices in the media arise from the pre-selection of right-thinking people, internalized preconceptions and the adaptation of personnel to the constraints of ownership, organization, market, and political power.” Every attempt by journalists to argue that they are able to put aside their own beliefs and feelings and become, or aspire to become, genuinely ‘objective’ strengthens a dangerous canard. For it is when journalists believe they have attained Olympian objectivity that they are in greatest danger of failing to see how their own conscious and unconscious motivations are affecting what and how they report.

It’s necessary because many journalists across most of the world still cling to the idea that their mission, which is attainable, is to provide their audiences with ‘objective’ information’ epitomised by the demand from the British public during the recent EU referendum, and taken up by some journalists, that the two sides in the debate should ‘just give them the facts’; suggesting that there were ‘facts’ available about what would happen to the UK in the immediate and longer future if and when the UK decided to withdraw from the EU. About the future there can be no ‘facts’, other than it is going to happen. To put it another way the notion of objectivity is akin to the notion of "the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth". Such an ambition was never attainable and the digital world has made such contentions appear even more threadbare.

There has been new thinking about objectivity, journalism practitioners Kovach and Rosenstiel (2007) probably lay claim to the key text, seeking to deconstruct and challenge the traditional model of journalism by suggesting that objectivity is a method rather than a goal but they have still retained their faith and basic allegiance to the concept. This paper goes further in challenging the absolute notion of objectivity.

Subjectivity: the starting point

Given the previous arguments about the dangers of objectivity, it seems incumbent on journalists (professional or otherwise) to recognise 'where they are coming from'. This does not mean writing or broadcasting from a particular perspective per se, but it does imply recognising that, consciously or otherwise, everyone has their own particular perspective. In so doing journalists, and those 'doing journalism', are that much better equipped to counteract it within their own work and ensure that the audience is made aware of the partiality of the journalist or news organisation. The failure to recognise this can be problematic. Some years ago this author, whilst working for the BBC at Westminster, would observe how some journalists, despite working in a political arena, would declare that they had no political views of their own. Putting aside the issue that everyone in a democratic society has a responsibility to have a view about politics, these journalists were potentially dangerous. They failed to recognise their own prejudices and were thus ill-equipped to monitor their own output to ensure its fairness. Conversely, colleagues who openly declared their own personal politics, were better able to monitor themselves to help ensure that their own output was not demonstrating any obvious bias (and their colleagues were well-placed to **call 'foul' if they thought the reporter's prejudices were showing in their on-air output).**

Truth: singular and plural

The notion of the 'truth' is almost equally problematic – in most situations, there many truths not one. Deliberate falsification is rare but arguments as to what are the most important elements of a particular event are not. Take, for example, a political meeting; the journalist reporting the meeting hears 19 speakers say that the British Labour Party should stick with its present leader, Jeremy Corbyn, and one says that he should go. Some would see the 'truth' of the meeting being an overwhelming show of support for Corbyn. But if the one speaker against was a former minister, then undoubtedly that would lead the reporter's story. Whose 'truth', is right?

Impartiality: the impossible dream

Impartiality is equally problematic, even if the UK's broadcasting legislation, which requires broadcasters to be "impartial in matters of public controversy" (BBC Trust 2016), implies that it is not. The BBC's Editorial Guidelines, for example, state that "impartiality lies at the heart of the BBC's commitment to its audiences." But should a journalist be 'impartial' between the racist and the non-racist, the climate scientist and the climate-change sceptic, the eminent historian and the holocaust denier? If the answer is no – as it surely must be – how does the journalist decide which stories require impartiality and which do not? Clearly political stories ought to demonstrate impartiality, but what happens when the journalist works for a newspaper with a political line that requires not just reportage but 'informed comment' as well. And what of the category of 'campaigning journalist' – a badge that many now wear with pride? Is the journalist campaigning against pollution from a local factory required to be impartial in the controversy? And what happens if his or her newspaper, or TV station, decides that it is going to formally back the campaign? Whither impartiality then?

Balance: taking sides

The problem with balance is that it implies that all stories have two, more or less valid, sides. As the discussion about impartiality suggests, giving equality of treatment to two sides in a number of areas can be highly problematic. But there is another issue. Many, if not most, controversies that catch the attention of the media have more than two sides to them – situations, once investigated in depth, are generally more nuanced than they might first appear and hence do not lend themselves to simple 'on the one hand, on the other hand' treatments. Even when there are two sides, balance becomes problematic. In the recent EU referendum campaign in the UK the BBC insisting on 'balancing' every claim with a counter-0claim, even when for example (as was the case) an eminent scientists, economists and business leaders argued for Remain, this was 'balanced' by a statement from (usually) a lone scientist, economist or entrepreneur saying this was not the case. The result was coverage that was tedious, confusing and seriously misleading. (Gaber 20016)

Bias: all in the mind

For all the reasons outlined in the discussion about objectivity, journalists are rarely genuinely unbiased. Perhaps in reporting a football match between two teams about which the reporter has no strong feelings, a journalist might begin with an unbiased approach. But during the 90 minutes, biases can, and do, develop – this team is playing unfairly, that team is showing more determination, the referee is being unfair, and so on. All (or most) journalists start determined to be unbiased but by the time it has come to putting the story together, unseen, unheard and unrecognised, bias will have reared its ugly head.

Independence: paying the piper

Are journalists really independent? Independence implies writing or broadcasting without let or hindrance. But journalists need to reach audiences and be paid for it, in order to be able to consider themselves professional journalists. If the TV channel won't commission the programme, the programme does not exist (unless it is streamed on the Internet – as millions of video bloggers are now doing on sites such as Youtube). The columnist might demand that not a word of his or her copy is altered, but if his or her writing ceases to please the editor or proprietor, then he or she will lose their column – a thought that is undoubtedly in the back of the minds (if not further forward) of every working columnist. As for the mere mortal hacks labouring away in the foothills of the news, they too have editors and owners and thus no real independence. Conversely, it can be argued that the online amateur journalist, with no concerns about being sacked, is in fact more independent than the professional journalist. He or she is freer to pursue stories or to vent spleen – freer to write whatever catches his or her fancy – than their more traditional journalistic cousins.

Accuracy: preferred sources

One might argue that all journalists – pro and am - try to get it right all the time, even if they also try to put their own spin on the events and select the facts that suit their own particular purposes. The earlier example of the reporter at a political gathering covering a two-hour fringe meeting in 250 words is one example – his or her report might have accurately reported the words he or she chose to select but for anyone who attended the meeting they would, in all probability find that the newspaper report of the meeting bore little relationship to the meeting as they had experienced it. So accuracy is important but it is not enough.

Scepticism: but never cynicism

One of the first rules taught to would-be investigative journalists when listening to an informant is for them to ask themselves, "Why is s/he telling me this?" If the answer is less than clear, then it's suggested that the journalist treats the information with extreme caution still keeping an open mind. This is scepticism in practice. Cynicism is to assume that all informants have an ulterior, usually malign, motive. The sceptical report is one who keeps a furrowed brow but an open mind. The cynical one keeps a straight face and a closed mind. Democracy needs sceptical reporters to probe and question politicians; it does not need cynical reporters whose only question is to ask himself, as a leading BBC interviewer once said: "Why is this lying bastard lying to me" (Wells 2003).

Thoroughness: enough is never as good as a feast

Thoroughness can be problematic. At what point should the journalist draw the line? This author, on leaving full-time journalism for academia, was asked what the difference was between journalistic and academic research. He answered by saying that it is unlikely that an academic researcher, on ending a conversation with a source who had suggested an additional interviewee, would never respond, as might a journalist, with: "No thanks, I've got enough for the piece." In a journalistic context absolute thoroughness can never be achieved – time and space limitations are always an issue. But maximum thoroughness within the constraints of budget and time are necessary if the journalist is running an investigation in which allegations of wrong-doing are involved; not only is it editorially necessary but without it, there is little legal cover. (See Welsh et al. 2007: (275-9) for an exposition of the significance of the 'Reynolds Defence' in English law, which has made a demonstration of 'thoroughness' in investigative journalism an important element when mounting a defence against defamation.

Verification: on being ‘sure’

Verification is, in part, another aspect of thoroughness, but it is also an injunction to journalists to only use material from sources they have reason to regard as ‘reliable’, although this raises important issues about the use to be made of material obtained from the internet – Wikipedia extracts representing only the most obvious example of the problems of verification online. Establishing the ideological provenance of, for example, British political blogs, can be straightforward. For instance, Labour List defines itself as “. an independent progressive blog providing a platform for open debate about centre-left issues and the future of the Labour movement.” (Labour List 2016) whilst Guido Fawkes describes his Order-Order BlogSpot as designed to, “... to make mischief at the expense of politicians and for the author’s own self-gratification” (Order-Order 2016) which, whilst it might not fully indicate his blog’s libertarian bent, does at least suggest that it is a long way from ‘Here is the News’. On the other hand, the world’s most popular political BlogSpot the right-wing Drudge Report gives absolutely no indication of its political stance, neither does its opposite number on the blogging left The Huffington Post. But if the blogs are dangerous territory for journalists in pursuit of ‘verification’ do ‘old-fashioned’ websites represent a safer terrain? It seems not: for there has always been an issue of provenance online. For example, the UK website Spiked Online describes itself as standing for “. human endeavour, intellectual risk-taking, exploration, excellence in learning and art, and freedom of speech” (Spiked 2016). What it fails to explain is that the website grew out of the collapse of the magazine of a small Trotskyist sect. But, confusingly, its agenda includes an opposition to environmentalism, multiculturalism, the European Union and all things it would describe as ‘politically correct’. None of this is revealed on its website: indeed, one has to turn to campaigners such as George Monbiot (2003), writing in an old-fashioned newspaper, the *Guardian*, to find this out. So verification is important for both the journalist and his or her audiences, particularly online.

Transparency: through the looking glass

From ‘verification’ to ‘transparency’ is not a great distance. Transparency has two meanings. One relates to the previous discussion about provenance, the other to the journalist’s working methods. In terms of provenance it seems important, and relatively easy (particularly online), to maintain a position of revelation – to provide the information that would enable the audience to make judgments about how any information has been obtained and where more can be found. In terms of methodology it requires journalists, thinking about their working methods, and to have one simple criterion in mind when deciding if a particular course of action would be ‘ethical’ – and that is to ask him or herself: “If, after my story had been published, would I be comfortable if my working methods were also made public, could I justify them in terms of the story’s ‘public interest’?”

Fairness: the new gold standard

This brings us finally to what seems the single most important of the pillars – ‘fairness’ and its close relationship to our starting point, subjectivity. For fairness, unlike impartiality, neutrality and so on, is not something that can be established or experienced ‘objectively’. By its very nature it is literally felt or experienced. For a journalist, even working under extreme time pressure, there is always a sense of ultimately how ‘fair’ or otherwise have I been in compiling a report. Sometimes that awareness only comes to the fore when reading, watching or listening the final product. The overwhelming majority of journalists probably do set out to be fair; but in the rough and tumble of a news story subjective judgements come to be made about ‘good guys’ and ‘bad guys’ or stereo-typical attitudes are unconsciously, or consciously, adopted. Being aware of such judgements is the key to transcending them. This is done by seeking to attain fairness in the editing which sometimes is achieved and sometimes is not – but the important thing is to be aware when it is not. Investigative journalism can complicate matters. Most investigations begin with the journalist having some notion of who the ‘guilty’ man, woman or organisation is. The journalist then seeks to uncover the evidence that will sustain that charge. If, in the course of the investigation, he or she finds material that suggests that the original assumption about guilt was mistaken then, as a critical part of the precept of fairness, he or she either has to cease the investigation, or produce a story vindicating the subject. If, on the other hand, the journalist does find sufficient evidence of ‘guilt’ (sufficient to satisfy him or her plus the editors and lawyers) then the story can proceed. Whilst it is important that the subject is provided with some space to state his or her defence, that does not mean equal time and prominence. Of course, should the journalist make the wrong call, then the consequences legal, professional and personal - have to be faced.

Conclusion

Increasingly journalism educators have had to confront the fact that over the last few years there has been a growing convergence between the practices of 'professional' journalists – those they are training - and their 'amateur' online counterparts (bloggers, twitterers et al) who have ‘barged’ their way into the news and information marketplace. Related to this is the broader question of the journalist as witness – interestingly discussed variously by Zelizer and Stuart Allen (2010) – who all raise the problematics surrounding the notion of the journalist not just as the reporter of events but as the witness. A dilemma highlighted captured by the differing stances journalists have taken when being asked to attend the International Criminal Court in The Hague to act as witnesses to alleged war crimes. This is a dilemma that has always existed, but one now much intensified by advances in technology that make journalists not just instant witnesses but also instant distributors through online outlets and 24-hour news services. At the same time journalists are now obtaining a great deal more material from largely unverifiable, non-journalistic sources, genuine eye-witnesses, able to record and upload video, audio and stills instantaneously from almost anywhere in the world. Even more problematically there has been a flow of ‘news’ from sources (notably but not exclusively linked to acts of terrorism) that seek to exploit the journalists’ access to the mass media. All this in dramatic contradiction to the alternative view of the contemporary journalist, perhaps most elegantly articulated by Geraldine Muhlmann in her conception of the journalist as flaneur (stroller). So the key questions for journalism educators are: Who is, and who is not, a journalist? Do such distinctions still matter? And how should those who still call themselves journalists respond and report events that they and others are, or claim to be, witnessing? The tectonic plates in the world of journalism are still shifting and will, no doubt, continue to do so for the foreseeable future.

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In search of the public sphere or spheres: new challenges for journalism educators

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Abstract

To begin with two truisms: liberal democracies are in flux with the old certainties dissolving (e.g. Trump, Saunders, Podemos, etc.) and political journalism is also in flux with the old certainties similarly dissolving. A number of years ago I established a Master's programme in Political Journalism at City University in London. Life was relatively uncomplicated. Teach the students the basics of journalism, how the political system worked and then introduce them to the mysteries of the Westminster lobby and hey presto, a political journalist was born. The notion of the Habermassian public sphere worked well in this context. We could talk, about politicians, opinion formers, campaigners and the public, interacting in some mythical public sphere with the political journalists 'mediating'. Alas, this was never an accurate characterisation and even less so today. There is still a notional political public sphere – be it at Westminster, Washington or Wellington - often a physical space where journalists, politicians and campaigners interact. But this conceals as much as it reveals, for feeding into this political public sphere are dozens of (mainly electronic) public sphericules (to use Todd Gitlin's term).These sphericules – be they subject-based, regional, ideological or whatever – are the space where electronic citizens interact, argue and develop ideas and polices that then seep into the political public sphere. For journalists, this can be problematic for it requires not just the traditional monitoring of politicians, ministries, NGOs etc. but also keeping track of relevant conversations on the social media (in all its complexities) and, in particular, on the generic activist's websites such as 38 degrees or change.org. These are new challenges for would-be political journalists and even greater challenges for those who would teach them. Citizenship is changing which means we must change as well.

Key Words

Journalism, politics, public sphere, Habermas, journalistic field, political field, Bordieu, social media, blogs, politicians, spin doctors

Introduction

A number of years ago I established a Master's programme in Political Journalism at City University in London. Life then seemed to be relatively uncomplicated. I began by teaching the students the basics of journalism – researching, reporting, interviewing etc. with a focus on political coverage. At the same time they would begin learning about the UK's political system, essentially in terms of Westminster, the main political cockpit and Whitehall, where the government and their civil servants mainly reside; with a nod towards the devolved governments in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, local government and of course the European Union.

With the groundwork done we would then move on to the mysteries of the ‘lobby’, as the group of accredited journalists at Parliament are known; or more colloquially, along with their political sources, the ‘Westminster bubble’ (not unrelated to the DC notion of ‘inside the beltway’). From here we would go onto to discuss the delicate love/hate/love relationship between journalists and politicians at Westminster. Love because most journalists covering politics there were, what we might call, political nerds, they love politics if not politicians. The hate is the formulaic stance journalists are obliged to adopt when undertaking their professional duties. This was characterised by one of the UJK’s leading TV interviewers, Jeremy Paxman who, describing his state of mind when interviewing politicians said , “Why is this lying bastard, lying to me” (Wells 2005) ; and finally love, because once the rituals of combat have been played out, a sense of ‘we’re all in the same club together’ takes over.

The essential currency that enabled journalists and politics at Westminster to ‘trade’ was information (Jackson 2011). Ostensibly, politicians had it and journalists wanted it, but the politicians were, in general, only prepared to deliver it if it was disseminated in the way that they preferred – we’re talking here about spin. However, from the journalists’ point of view he (and we are still talking about an essentially male institution) did want the politicians information but only as far as he could use it in a manner that suited him, his editor or proprietor and preferably all three.

To achieve this sort of nexus a sense of, ‘we’re all in the same business’, grew up in a way that presented, and still does present, journalism educators with real challenges. For example, when in 2009 a major scandal broke around the type and amount of expenses were being claimed by MPs at Westminster, it is noteworthy that the story did not come from the lobby but from reporters outside, who did not feel the same ties of ‘matiness’, or need to protect their sources, which was so much part of the lobby’s dominant ethos at the time, and to a large extent still is. (Gaber 2009 and 2013) There are a number of reasons why this chubbiness is breaking down, but perhaps the most important is a breakdown in the perception of ‘Westminster’ being at the heart of the political journalism narrative.

Central to this notion was a fairly static view of the Habermassian public sphere. Indeed so static has this view been that it has not been uncommon to identify a physical space at Westminster – an atrium of bars restaurants and cafes - where members of the public could peer down from gallery and 'see' the public sphere at work (Davies 2010). We could then talk about politicians, opinion formers, campaigners and the public, interacting in some notional public sphere with the political journalists 'mediating'. Alas, this was never an accurate characterisation and even less so today – what people were watching in the Westminster atrium was simply a mixing of the elites.

There is still a notional political public sphere – be it at Westminster, Washington or Wellington – often indeed a physical space where journalists, politicians and campaigners interact. But this conceals as much as it reveals, for feeding into this political public sphere are dozens of (mainly electronic) public sphericules (to use Todd Gitlin's term).These sphericules – be they issue-based, regional, ideological or whatever – are the space where electronic citizens interact, argue and develop ideas and polices that then seep into the political public sphere. For journalists, tracking these conversations is complex; it requires not just the traditional monitoring of politicians, ministries, NGOs etc. but also keeping track of relevant conversations on the social media (in all its complexities) and, in particular, on generic activist's websites such as 38 degrees or change.org. These are new challenges for would-be political journalists and even greater challenges for those who would teach them. Citizenship is changing which means we must change as well.

One way of usefully approaching this issue is via Bordieu's notion of a journalistic 'field' (1998). He defines a 'field' as a social space encompassing "[p]eople who dominate and others who are dominated. Constant permanent relationships of inequality operate inside this space, which becomes at the same time a space in which various actors struggle for the transformation or preservation of the field." (p.40) Specifically in terms of the journalistic field's relation to the political field: "The journalistic field produces and imposes on the public a very particular vision of the political field, a vision that is grounded in the very structures of the journalistic field and in journalists' specific interests produced in and by that field." (p.2)

Bourdieu provides both a problem and a way forward. The problem is that, almost by definition, the notion of a journalistic field is contradicted by the notion of the citizen journalist, prosumer or whatever we chose to call those who are ‘doing journalism’ but are not ‘journalists’, or at least not recognised as such by those who would see themselves as encamped in the centre ground of the field. And Bordieu, and his followers, have said little about the impact of the digital revolution on the journalistic field. (Benson 2014) But just as the notion of the public sphere has been modified to take into account the new digital spaces so too can the Bourdieusian field be adapted, particularly in the realm of politics. Elsewhere I have written about the way that field theory is a useful way of conceptualising the Westminster lobby with it's real, or imagined, camaraderie, it's shared practices and, most problematic of all, it's largely shared understanding of what constitutes ‘legitimate’ politics, and what is alien and to be if not excluded then at least marginalised. (Curran et al in print)

The new understanding of the journalistic field must take into account the new digital ecology of journalism that includes not just websites but blogs, Facebook, Twitter etc. This new understanding conceptualises the field as a virtual space where there is little, or no, sense of camaraderie, no shared practices and no shared understanding as to what does, and does not, fall into the category of legitimate politics – in this conception there is an almost total lack of a shared Bourdieusian doxas (common understandings within a field).

So in what sense is it useful to talk about a ‘journalistic field’ in any meaningful sense? I would argue that, in this particular case, the field is given its coherence or identity, not by the producers, as such, but by the audience. For they do have a more or less shared understanding of what constitutes the political field and they bring this understanding to their active or passive consumption of politics. Audiences now consume politics everywhere and nowhere. The ‘everywhere’ is on the social media, almost every time they check their Facebook or Twitter feeds they will be ‘seeing’ political news, even if they haven't been looking for it and don't read it – and this is notwithstanding the fact that there are global trends that indicate that audiences in general, and young audiences in particular, are increasingly becoming ‘news avoiders’ (Pew 2016) They long ago stopped buying newspapers and consciously switched channels if news appeared on the television but today with more and more young adults only consuming television via catch-up or subscription services such as Netflix or Prime, they have no need to switch channels as no news is being directly offered to them.

Yet and yet, it is all around them and, perhaps more importantly, if the public sphere is not to be further degraded, they do need to take an interest in the news in general and politics in particular, for how else are they to make the informed choices that a liberal democracy requires of its citizens at regular intervals? It has been argued that ignorance, combined with cleverly spun, but totally misleading, 'information' propelled much of the Leave vote in the UK's recent EU referendum. And here the challenge for journalism educators arises for we are training would-be journalists to enter a field which, as I have just described, barely existed leastwise not in the sort of form that would be recognisable to its recent and current practitioners. What does this new field, or fields (because politics has to be here considered alongside the journalistic field) constitute?

First, it has to be recognised that both fields are now far more fluid both in shape and content than they had been in the past which in itself could be grounds for re-examining, or updating, the mediatization of politics theory (Esser & Strömbäck, 2014 and Mazzoleni & Schulz 1999) but let us begin by examining the basic proposition.

The political field is, on the surface, somewhat easier to delineate compared to the journalistic one. It consists of elected representatives at the local, regional, national and international level; the civil service; the party machines and their activists and non-party campaigning groups. This field is now being transformed by the arrival and influence of the cyber activists, who campaign and discuss politics, both for external and internal consumption using social media. For example, in the UK the activist's site – Conservative Home (http://www.conservativehome.com/) has been playing a key role both in terms of discussions within the Conservative Party about policies, personalities and campaigning but also, externally, promoting the Conservative cause by the media prominence it has gained and providing journalists with insight and understanding.

For example on Thursday 7th July this year, in the midst of a Conservative leadership election this was its front page. Three pieces promoting the candidature of Andrea Leadsom, one promoting Michael Gove and one informational 'horse-race' item – no prizes for guessing which candidate Conservative Home was supporting. For a journalist this is all very useful, if partial information and its success stems from the fact that not just is it well-informed but throughout all the fissures running through the Conservative Party it has tended to be seen as a space open to all points of view, thus increasing its value to journalists (but who often lose sight of the fact that it's essential role is securing the return of a Conservative Government).

There is no direct equivalent for Conservative Home on the Labour side – perhaps indicative of the fact that parties of the left tend to have less internal coherence than parties of the right, but one of the leading blogs is Labour List. It seeks to fulfil a similar role to Conservative Home and although it offers a platform to all views within the Labour Party, it does have a distinct bias towards a more centrist position. This is its front page on July 7th, the day after the publication of the Chilcott Report (into the conduct of the invasion of Iraq in 2003) and at a time when there was great pressure oi the Labour leader, Jeremy Corbyn, to stand down. It consisted of three items about the leadership, two about Chilcott and one about the aftermath of the Brexit vote. This, along with other labour supporting blogs, is a useful source of information for journalists but is far from impartial in terms of national politics.

At this stage, things still look relatively comfortable in that whilst journalists do use these blogs extensively, they essentially emanate from a known position in the political field. However, matters now get a tad more complicated. The most popular political blog in the UK is Order-Order (http://order-order.com/). It is a highly influential right wing/libertarian blogspot which is a toxic, but highly addictive mix of breaking news, gossip, leaks, smears and jokes about Westminster politics from a very particular point of view. The originator of the blog is Paul Staines who uses the pseudonym Guido Fawkes (also known as Guy Fawkes the man who attempted to blow up Parliament in the 1605 ("the only man who entered Parliament with honest intentions" says Staines). Guido, as he is now universally known, claims that during the 2015 election campaign his blogspot had 35 seven million unique– a far greater reach than any of Britain's daily newspapers and he claims to attract between 120,000 and 250,000 unique browsers a day. (Order-Order 2016)

Staines sees himself as a journalist but does not recognise any of the professional or ethical obligations that 'traditional' journalists subscribe to. So how should journalists regard Staines and his site? As a colleague, competitor, political player, agitator or what. Staines represents a classic example of Bordieu's characterisation that "Journalists occupy an ambiguous position in the political world, in which they are very influential actors but not full-fledged members." (P. 4) As for Staine's role in the notional public sphere, that is harder to clarify and more confusing for would-be political journalists. Not that Staines and his blogspot is by any means unique, in terms of it straddling the two fields. The Drudge Report in the US, pre-dates Staines by more than 10 years and occupies very much the same ground – journalist/activist/propagandist.

So are the boundaries between the political and journalistic fields still sufficiently clear for would-be political journalists, and those teaching them, to know where the editorial and ethical boundaries lie? This potential confusion could, in the end, have a positive side. The notion of the mediatization of politics points up the increasing role, not just of the media in the political process but of those who act as intermediaries between the journalist and the politician, the notorious spin doctor who seeks to meld the politicians message and the concomitant media coverage to suit his or her own purposes. As suggested earlier, politicians need journalists as much as journalists need politicians, but what about the spin doctor who looks like a journalist (e.g. Staines) – are they not in an even more powerful position, able to use their ideological allies to get stories that other journalists can't and able to provide the spin doctor with a powerful conduit for his or her stories? Should the political journalist treat them as a 'reliable source' which they often are, or regard their stories as in the same way that they would view press releases from a partisan source and thereby risk losing ground, or being tardy on important stories that other news organisations have already published?

No doubt there are particular issues that are unique to the British situation but as an overall trend, resulting from the digital news environment that has developed over the last two decades, the lines are not as neatly drawn as they once were – Bourdieu's journalistic and political fields are no longer divided by a neat fence (if they ever were). So what should we be teaching our students about political journalism? Here I fall back on the paper that I delivered yesterday 'In Praise of Subjectivity' in which I suggest that today the new guiding light for journalists has to be 'fairness' which, I argued, can only be verified by the reporter him or herself. We all know when we have been fair and when we have not, at least we know it after uploading, publication or broadcast. Fairness is only a shield, a far from perfect defence I admit. But this is what I have to offer my students as they seek to navigate their way through the traps for the unwary, the seductions for the naïve and the false friends who will spin a falsehood as fact. So I tell them, keep your eyes wide open, trust in your own judgement and recognise that no matter how hard you try your version of events can only ever be the best obtainable one that you have been able to achieve in the limited time at your disposal. More than that you cannot do.

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Jaana Hujanen

Renegotiating the journalism profession in(to) the era of the social media. The case of Finnish, Namibian, Tanzanian and Zambian students.

Abstract

Through a case study, this article examines how journalism students (re)define the ideals of journalism (in)to the era of the social media. It relies on theorising journalistic ideals and practices and critical discourse analysis. The data consist of focus group interviews with African and Finnish students who participated in a joint journalism course in Namibia in 2015. The following discourses are discussed: 1) open and collaborative journalism profession, 2) accountable journalism 3) and challenged journalism ethics. Within the discourses, the principles of accountability and transparency of journalism intertwine with the challenge of collaboration with citizen journalists.

Introduction

Journalism education plays a role in the formation of a professional identity and the ideology of journalism. In the current evolution of journalism, students represent an important group. Young people live in an increasingly digitised media environment and are active users of social media. Meanwhile, journalism schools have integrated social media and citizen journalism into their curricula. The blurring of the ideals of journalism can be explored by studying students' perceptions of journalism.

Findings amongst journalists suggest similar processes of professionalisation in different countries (Scholl & Weischenberg, 1998). However, there is too much disagreement concerning professional norms to suggest that there are universal occupational standards in journalism. Journalists speak of similar values in the context of their daily work but apply them in many ways. It is thus possible to speak of a dominant occupational ideology of journalism that is interpreted and applied differently across countries and media (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). Research amongst students also indicates that it is not possible to talk about one overarching identity with cultural and political borders; rather, identity has hybrid forms (Nygren & Stugbrand, 2014; Hovden et al., 2009; Mellado et al., 2012). Accordingly, it can be assumed that the professional identities of journalism students are local and historical.

This article contributes to the research on the evolution of the ideals and integrity of journalism by examining how students make sense of journalism in the era of social media. The conceptual framework relies on theorising journalistic ideals and practices

(Tuchman, 1972; Schudson, 2001; Deuze, 2005; Singer, 2010) and critical discourse analysis (CDA; Fairclough, 1992. Students' perceptions are examined in the context of the Journalism for Change programme, a higher education network programme between the North (Finland) and the South (Namibia, Tanzania, and Zambia).

Six university-level journalism education programmes have cooperated in the programme to develop journalism education in Africa and Europe. The goal of the journalism network is to deepen students' understanding about the values of journalism and to develop their practical journalistic skills. It also aims to educate students to encounter social problems and contradictory phenomena in their societies and fight for democracy, cultural understanding and human rights, especially in the South. Freedom of the press, the ideal of equality and respect for otherness have been integral points of departure, with the assumption that these values open when students are able meet foreign cultures at the grassroots level.

Within the programme, a yearly intensive course and student and teacher exchange was organised in 2004–2015 (the programme was called Journalism Network 2004–2014). The courses brought together around 125 students and 75 teachers from partner countries during the 11-year cooperation. The last course was held in Namibia in 2015. The programme offers a unique case for studying students' negotiation of journalism ideals. The programme was funded by the Finnish ministry for foreign affairs and administrated by the Centre for international mobility CIMO).

Journalism in the era of social media

In this article, students' perceptions of journalistic ideals are understood as part of the professionalisation process – a distinctly ideological development to continuously reproduce a consensus about who is a 'real' journalist or what 'good' journalism entails (Deuze, 2005). Students' perceptions are examined from the CDA viewpoint. CDA deals with the social conditions and consequences of language use. Discourse is defined as 'language use as social practice'; it is considered an essential part of the construction of professionalism (Fairclough, 1992; Fairclough & Wodak, 1997; Wodak, 2001). CDA emphasises the need to study language use as a social phenomenon within specific historical, cultural and interactional contexts.

Regarding the evolution of the ideals of journalism, trends in the media landscape play a central role. Today's students are entering the profession at a moment when new groups of people create, discuss, share, recommend and re-disseminate information online. The majority of journalists have not regarded citizens' contributions as "proper" journalism, and newsrooms have co-opted participatory practices to suit traditional routines (Wardle & Williams 2010; Heinonen, 2011; Örnebring 2013). As a result of social media platforms, which are shared by professional journalists and netizens, it is difficult to draw boundaries between the websites of news organisations and the blogs and collaborative spaces of citizen journalism (Bruns & Highfield, 2012). Shared spaces for professionals and ‘amateurs’ also make it difficult for professional journalists dismiss these platforms.

News media’s use of citizen journalism and dependence on user-generated visibility are also central trends (Singer, 2014). Especially important is whether and how journalism’s ideological commitment to control is giving way to logics of adaptability and openness, resulting in a willingness to appreciate audience’s contributions and find normative purpose for journalism in transparency and participation (Lewis, 2012; Hujanen 2013). Because of this, key questions include whether journalism is seen as an open or a closed profession and how collaboration, transparency and trust are debated amongst students.

The study in context

The case considers the 12-day-long course hold in Windhoek, Namibia in May 2015 and the participating students. The role of the teachers was to lead activities and foster genuine interaction. The teachers shared their knowledge, experiences and abilities with students through lectures, interaction and assignments. The course was attended by 15 BA and MA students and 9 teachers (3 Finnish, 1 Zambian, 1 Tanzanian and 4 Namibian teachers). I participated in the course as a teacher and was able to observe students’ work.

The course started with a get-together party and ended with a closing ceremony. The programme comprised an introduction to the course, lectures, discussions, group assignments, student presentations, visitor presentations and field trips. Visitor presentations included a talk by the media ombudsman of Namibia and a panel with an Editors’ Forum representative and the chair of MISA Namibia. Misa Namibia is a non-governmental organisation whose mission is to realise the ideals and principles espoused in the Windhoek declaration on promoting independent and pluralistic media in Africa. Field trips included an excursion to Swakopmund and a local media outlet there, as well as to two media houses in Windhoek.

The topic for the course was the accountability of the media in the age of social media. The lectures focussed on the following topics: the global media situation and media landscapes of Finland, Namibia, Zambia and Tanzania; media self-regulation and laws; ethics and accountability in the digital era; participation, (community) media and journalism; social media, citizen journalism and professional journalism; journalists and netizens in social media; and fact checking and data verification. Every topic was discussed from the viewpoints of the North and the South. Students' assignments and presentations tackled participatory journalism practices, ethical codes of journalism and verification of information. There was also one pre-course assignment.

The data analysed consisted of three focus group interviews I conducted at the end of the course. Finnish (3) and Namibian (8) students formed country-based groups, while Zambian (2) and Tanzanian (1) students formed a joint group. One Tanzanian student was sick and could not participate in the interview. A written questionnaire structured the interviews. The themes covered students' perceptions about the international course and its working methods, interaction, intellectual and practical outcomes, eye-opening experiences and cultural clashes. The interviews, lasting about one hour each, were taped and transcribed. Participants were requested to give their informed consent and all research ethics were upheld, including anonymity. The students appeared to talk freely and openly about journalism and the course.

The interview data were analysed using the concepts of CDA. For analytical purposes, discourses can be defined as different ways of representing the world. Thus, the discourses occurring in the interview could be seen as ways of representing aspects of journalism from a particular perspective and as assuming and offering particular tasks for journalists and publics. From the perspective of CDA, journalistic ideals are constructed by drawing on discourses that have prior significations and that are socially available (Fairclough, 1992; Fairclough & Wodak, 1997; Wodak, 2001).The idea that discourses are sociocultural constructions means that for students coming from different cultures, the socially available discourses were not the same, and students would likely choose and voice discourses on journalism differently.

Three discourses defining journalism ideals were found, as follows: 1) an open and collaborative journalism profession, 2) accountable journalism and 3) challenged journalism ethics.

The discourse of an open and collaborative journalism profession

This discourse was more evident in the talk of the African students. Within in, it is being considered whether journalism is an open or a closed profession and to what extent journalism education is required for access to the profession. The relationship between professional journalists, citizen journalists and active netizens as well as the relationship between professional and social media are also made sense of. A major difference between African and Finnish journalism was perceived concerning whether the profession is perceived as closed or open one. The following quotation refers to this as a difference in the mindset of journalism:

The major difference I've noticed is the mindset of journalism at large. Which was really different between the North and the African countries. … The idea that Northern people, particularly from Finland, regard journalism as an open profession, this is not common in Africa, especially in Tanzania. I believe everything begins with a mindset. That's the major difference we have. Other things could be more or less the same, but as long that's different, I feel it leads to other differences that exist. (Namibian student)

It [journalism being an open profession] seemed to be quite an acceptable thing in different cultures, particularly in Finland, so that has really … widened my mind, and I was thinking … that in a way when I go back home, we will have intellectual discussions and see how it goes because … it started really to make sense to me. I think that was the biggest thing I acquired. (Tanzanian student)

African students' prior view of journalism as a closed profession was challenged by Finnish teachers and students. Before the course, they perceived citizen journalists negatively, as a threat to the quality of journalism or journalistic jobs. For them, the major intellectual outcome of the course was that journalism can be understood as an open profession: Collaboration with citizen journalists can be useful, and anyone has who has passion and can do it professionally has the right to pursue journalism:

The impression I got from the pre-interview that we had, it is that citizen journalism is a threat. Actually, … I believed that they [citizen journalists] were a threat. After the course, I've learned that they are not a threat; instead, they're helping … the journalist to get the story. Most of time they are the first people to be there. (Namibian student)

Although professional journalists and citizen journalists were seen as potential collaborative partners in the discourse, challenges characterise interaction. Citizen journalists are not bound by the ethical code of journalism; because of this, it was considered easy for them to break the code, for example, by publishing news online without fact checking. However, it is, possible to collaborate: Journalists can learn from citizen journalists, on the one hand, and teach them principles of journalism, on the other, to strengthen the credibility of journalism for the public:

I think it [the course] has made me more open to the idea of working with citizen journalists and learning whatever … I can learn from them and also teaching them a few journalistic principles too to make the whole profession more respectable. (Zambian student)

The discourse of accountable journalism

In this discourse, professional news media and ‘good’ journalists bear accountability to the readers for the quality of the information published. Following the traditional ideals of journalism, quality is connected to objectivity: It is a journalist’s responsibility to transmit ‘correct’, ‘fact-based’ information. As the students expressed, a good journalist takes responsibility by upholding the truth as the first priority and following the professional code of practice also in social media:

Accountability, the word in a way kind of explains itself. We as journalists, journalists to be, we should be accountable for whatever we put out there, so I think … it does make sense, just taking responsibility for your actions. (Namibian student)

Within the discourse, problems related to achieving accountability were partially connected to social media, which are seen to lack ethical guidelines and praxis. As stated by African students, the profession is currently negotiating how to perceive the digital era, and the adaptation to the digital era will require new attitudes and skills. Being accountable was ultimately seen as possible if journalism manages to decide on its principles and implement them in everyday work:

I think I widened my knowledge about accountability to see it is as possible now. Before that I was really worried about whether it was really possible, but after the whole discussion I see the possibility of it being very accountable as well. (Zambian student)

Transparency was represented as a means of building accountability in journalism. This was defined as journalists explaining what they are doing and why to the audience. As expressed by the students., an accountable journalist shows evidence for his/her arguments, making clear what his/her sources are; is critical towards sources; corrects false information (also) in the online context; and apologises for wrong or inaccurate information:

Just like the paper, it would apologise for a wrong story or an inaccurate story on the front page; the same should be done online. For me, the same rules for traditional media … should also apply to online media. Things we do in print … acknowledging, right to reply, present someone an apology, we should apply online. (Namibian student)

Amongst the African students, accountability was defined as a prerequisite for the audience members’ willingness to engage in a communicative relationship with a journalist: Only when people feel safe does it becomes possible for journalists to communicate with them. The challenge of accountability, however, cannot be solved only by the means and practices of journalism; rather, it is dependent on the political and social spheres. Beyond the limitations in the freedom of the press and freedom of expression in Africa, the Finnish students considered the role of journalists’ unions. According to them, because most African countries lack a journalists' union, they also lack an institution that would defend the journalism profession from outside influence and help to implement accountable journalism practices.

The discourse of challenged journalism ethics

This discourse defines good journalism ethics and guides individual journalists in journalism practice. It was seen as an important topic when discussing the outcomes of the course. As a Finnish student commented, 'It's been a good reminder of the code of ethics. It is good to know them but rare to go through them for a week'. It was portrayed as a central ideal of journalism worldwide:

Again it brought up the aspect that wherever you are in the world, we're all fighting for the same thing, we all want to uphold ethical codes, be it in Finland, Tanzania or Namibia, there's no difference. We're all fighting for one thing. (Tanzanian student)

Journalists' integrity and ethics were portrayed as contextual constructions that cannot be separated from the cultural, political and societal spheres. Following this, there emerged profound differences in how journalism ethics has been translated into a code of practice across the countries and how it is applied in the everyday work of journalism. Compared with Tanzania and Zambia, the situation of journalists in Finland and Namibia was perceived to be better: Due to the freedom of the press and autonomy, it is possible for them to pursue journalism of high ethical quality in which people can trust. As the students commented, 'a journalist in Finland or Namibia is free to write about anything'. Namibian journalism was particularly represented as a fair, positive example for African countries:

It shows that if Namibia, an African country, can be at this level, it's a task for us (Zambia） and Tanzania. I think, … if we follow the steps we planned and put them into practice, not just learning them but implementing them when we go back, we can get there as well'. (Zambian student)

The name of the discourse indicates that journalism ethics is challenged. Commercialisation of journalism was portrayed as a problem worldwide, leading to news culture that sells rumours and sensationalism. However, major ethical problems were connected to a society that does not support free media and critical journalism: A lack of the freedom of expression and the political sphere's efforts to influence media and journalism undermine the ethical code of conduct in Tanzania and Zambia. From Tanzania, a 'brown envelope' practice was mentioned, where organisations and other actors pay to have their 'news' published in the media – the money is given to a journalist in a brown envelope. Within the discourse, the violence Tanzanian journalists face was represented as a severe and joint problem that has been normalised and swept under the carpet in this country. This was seen as a difficult task to solve, requiring actions from a global community and not just Tanzanians. At the same time, Finnish students saw it as problematic to try to solve a problem that may cost journalists their lives in another country (the second extract below):

I was thinking … how can we maybe help to develop the situation there [in Tanzania] because they have been independent for 50 years. However, their media is not as independent … and politicians exercise so much power and rule over everything that goes on. I think that's the whole issue where the brown envelope comes in because now I need to sell news. So I think, as journalists, at the end of this course, we should find a way to maybe encourage the people from Tanzania on how they can improve their own [media] landscape. (Namibian student)

I feel like it's intimidating. When we get home we can write about these political themes and … we read about how many journalists have been killed. Like, what we say and encourage people to do might cost lives. Maybe these lives are necessary to change the situation, but still … it's sort of a sensitive matter. (Finnish student)

In addition to the challenges, students talked about new understanding and skills they had gained about ethics. The concept of a media ombudsman, for example, was new for Zambian students. The necessity to put the ethical code into practice was also stressed. Tanzanian and Zambian students portrayed it as a professional and individual challenge to tell others in their home institutions and countries about what they had learned and try to implement new insights related to journalism practice:

For me, this course, when comparing media landscape to the other three countries has made me realise how important it is for us to have an ethical code to put in place. … I think it has been long overdue. (Tanzanian student)

If we have similar codes of ethics to people in Finland and in Namibia, how come Finland is number one in the world and Namibia in Africa, so what are we (Zambia) doing wrong? I think that is something I go back home thinking. … So in that regard, my intellectual capacity has been challenged. I would like to put it in practice when we go back home the new theories we have discovered here. I didn't even know what a media ombudsman was; why don't we have such a person in Zambia, someone you could go to report to? So I think this course has been mentally challenging for me. Something I will be thinking about as we go back home. (Zambian student)

Discussion

Through a case study, I have examined how journalism and media students from Finland, Namibia, Tanzania and Zambia (re)define the ideals of journalism (in)to the era of the social media. Three discourses on the ideals of journalism entering the era of the social media were found and analysed, namely an open and collaborative journalism profession, accountable journalism and the challenged journalism ethics. The discourses showed that journalism profession and its ideals were being (re)negotiated amongst journalism students in ways which partially resonated with the high modern ideals of good journalism, such as objectivity. At the same time, the discourses showed that new dimensions were brought into the (re)definition of the professional ideals.

In the data gathered, the ideals and practices of professional journalism were considered, particularly concerning social media and citizen journalism and the challenges and possibilities they pose for the quality and practice of professional journalism. The debates around participation, citizen journalism, data verification, and transparency were central in the comments of all interviewees. Within the discourses of an open and collaborative journalism profession and accountable journalism, journalistic practices evolved, reflecting the need to both make use of and differ from the social media, moving towards open and transparent journalism practice. 'Good' journalism was perceived as both a collaborative practice between professional journalists and citizen journalists and an accountable practice towards citizens (cf. Lewis, 2012).

It is worth noting that despite a joint discourse on an open and collaborative journalism profession, the students voiced this discourse somewhat differently. African students relied on this discourse only after reflection. For them, the major intellectual outcome of the course was the idea of journalism being an open profession to those who have not completed a journalism education. Moreover, the discourse of challenged journalism ethics indicated a contextual approach to journalism ideals amongst the students. Importantly, it showed how the ideals and practices of journalism are local constructions (Nygren & Stigbrand, 2014) and how students' renegotiations of the ideals of journalism differ across the cultures.

This case study also highlights the need for approaches which take account of the complexity of the contexts of journalism (Wassermann, 2011) and journalism students. The discourses indicated that for Tanzanian and Zambian students the challenges regarding media and journalism only partially related to the 'era of social media'. The political and social spheres – with their restrictions and defects in the freedom of expression and the press – formed essential topical contextual premises in which many ideals or concepts, almost self-evident to Finnish and Namibian students, were far from being familiar, obvious or easy to make sense of or implement. Because of this, future research into journalism students' professional identity and negotiation of the ideals of journalism should examine how the ideals of journalism are made sense of as part of their cultural, political and social circumstances in more depth.

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“Reinvention” through International Journalism Internship
--American Students Reporting for the Chinese Media

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Introduction

It took some leaps of faith to create an international exchange program where undergraduate journalism students from a small college town in rural America would be interning in the newsroom of the China Daily, the only broadsheet English-language national daily newspaper in China. That was the late 1990s when internationalizing the curriculum became the new trend. An exchange program was established between Central Michigan University and the paper in 1999. Since then 12 journalism students interned at the paper with three more participating in the program in the summer of 2016 while 10 senior editorial staff from the paper visited the American university, guest speaking and sitting in classes.

The importance of study abroad can be seen in the amount of research on the topic and early programs like the Fulbright Program created in 1946. In 2008 the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee passed a Study-Abroad Bill, the Senate Paul Simon Study Abroad Foundation Act, which would expand almost five times the number of college students who participate in study-abroad programs. (McMurtrie, 2008) The bill encouraged sending one million American students abroad each year in the next 10 years and authorized $80 million annually for the foundation. It specifically encouraged students to go to developing countries.

There is no lack of research on the topic. However, a review of research on international internships in the database of “communication and mass media complete” revealed that most studies were in the area of business communication across cultures. Some researchers approached internships as opportunities for experiential education and explored the nature, values and evaluation methods of internships by surveying international companies employing interns. (Ryan, 1997) In their study, Richard Katula and Elizabeth Threnhauser (1999) also explored “experiential education in the undergraduate curriculum.”

International internships seem to thrive in the area of business. Melinda Knight (2015) discussed “transformative learning” in business and professional communication through international internships. Laura Nowak and D. Dong (1997) examined the intercultural differences between Chinese and American businesses affecting international internships. Science communication also benefits from international internships (Nohara et al, 2008). Other studies also addressed the cultural dimensions of work and of internships, and the impact of an international context on the selection, training, monitoring of student interns and the evaluation of the internships (Chapel, 1998). More studies emphasized the importance of foreign language in preparing students for international internships (Fryer & Day, 1993; Cibian, 2012; Spring, 2012). The one study most relevant to this research paper analyzed the international journalism internship program in Ghana (Steeves, 2006).

This research paper presents a case study of the international journalism internship program at the China Daily in Beijing even though the whole program includes a two-way exchange of personnel. It explores whether the students, given their American journalism training and education, can adapt to the radically different media, political, social and cultural environment in China, and whether the students can benefit from such an internship experience.

The objectives of this paper is to assess the values and effectiveness of the 17-year internship program in terms of international education and experiential learning informed by relevant theories and previous research on the subject. More specifically, the paper intends to answer the following questions:

1. Did experiential/transformative learning occur during the internship?
2. Did the internship impact students’ professional career in any way?
3. What are the major challenges of the program?

4. What are the suggestions for a stronger program?

To answer those questions, in-depth interviews were conducted with former student interns in the program.

Research on this topic is important because a review of research literature on international internships has revealed that research tends to focus on business communication in an international context and that there needs to be more research on international journalism internship programs. It is important also because the host country, China, is not only a non-western country, but also a communist country, which presents a unique case for studying how American journalism students apply what they have learned in a different media environment and whether/how they benefit from such an internship experience.

Review of theories and research

The most influential and relevant theory concerning international internships was perhaps John Dewey's idea of "experiential education" in the undergraduate curriculum, which sparked a movement toward "expanded classroom" in America, including study abroad programs and professional internships (Katula & Threnhauser, 1999). Dewey's "Theory of Experience" has served as the foundation for an impressive body of work in educational psychology connecting experience to intellectual growth. According to the National Society for Experiential Education (NSEE), "In its purest form experiential education is inductive, beginning with 'raw' experience that is processed through an intentional learning format and transformed into working, useable knowledge." D. A. Kolb (1984) called it "the transformation of experience." To provide guidance for internship programs, NSEE established "principles of good practice," which included intention, authenticity, planning, clarity, training and mentoring, monitoring and assessment, continuous improvement, reflection, evaluation and acknowledgment.

Experiential education was also perceived as “transformative learning,” which could be achieved through short-term international internships and help students become “self-reflective and critical of their beliefs, emotions, and values and those of others.” (Knight, 2015) Transformative learning is the process of recognizing, challenging and revising assumptions to produce new frames of reference in light of new experience or knowledge. Gaining knowledge about oneself is one major theme emerged from the in-depth interviews with student interns.

In his study W.B. Chapel (1998) emphasized the importance of cultural dimensions in international internships and discussed the selecting, training and monitoring of the interns to ensure the success of international internships as did C. Ryan and R. H. Krapels (1997) in their study. L. Nowak and D. Dong (1997) analyzed intercultural differences between Chinese and American business and the role they played in international internships.

In a research paper on international internships as a vehicle for developing a meta-level awareness regarding science communication, K. Nohara, M. Norton, M. Saijo and O. Kussakabe (2008) discussed the value of the internship in helping students acquiring broader perspectives through encountering substantially different systems. They believed that the exposure to different organizational, cultural and social approaches could help students develop a more international outlook, which could also act as a trigger for innovative thinking and help students play an active professional role at the global level. Interviews with the interns showed their increased global awareness and their work and aspirations to make a difference as global citizens.

Other studies underscored the curricular need for foreign language training of students preparing for international internships (Fryer & Day (1993). In-depth interviews with student interns have revealed that language barriers are a major challenge in international internships.

H. L. Steeves' (2006) study on an international journalism internship in Ghana was the most relevant to this study. It noted that journalism lagged behind other professional disciplines in providing international experiential learning opportunities for its majors. The study found that the internship in Ghana changed students' worldviews as their early negative judgments of journalistic practices in Ghana were replaced by a newfound respect for how much Ghanaians had accomplished with few resources. By the end of the program, students acquired a deeper, more nuanced understanding of journalistic conventions in Ghana, as well as an appreciation for press freedom. In China while living standards are rising fast and much higher than those in Ghana, the media environment in the country presents a sharper contrast to that in America.

Methodology: A case study

This research paper adopts the methodology of a case study, which has the essential characteristics of being particularistic, descriptive, heuristic and inductive with the advantages of rich detail and a wide spectrum of evidence to help achieve maximum understanding of the subject under study (Merriam, 1988).

Data for this study are mainly composed of in-depth interviews with former student interns, some of whom are still working for the Chinese media today. As one key advantage of case study research is to investigate an event in its real-life context, the case study method serves this research project well. The context of the internship program will be a prominent aspect of this paper as it not only poses strong challenges, but also provides valuable learning opportunities for the student interns.

The internship program

An idea: Making use of professional connections

It was the 1990s when the university started vigorously promoting international education. The university is located in a rural Midwest region, where the world still seemed far away and some students still needed to be convinced that what had happened around the world impacted them. Out of strong professional connections with a national daily newspaper in China, an idea for an international exchange program was born where journalism students could spend the summer interning at the national English-language daily newspaper in Beijing and journalists from the paper could visit an American university, getting to know the country better as well as guest-lecturing, a win-win proposal for both program partners as cross-cultural understanding is the key to reducing bias in reporting world news.

The memorandum of understanding: Bridging differences

Negotiations on a memorandum of understanding about the exchange program were an exercise in cross-cultural communication as they had to transcend cross-cultural differences. The program was envisioned to be an equitable exchange, but operationalizing the "equitable" concept was a difficult task as there were bigger differences in the value of the currencies then and in their purchasing power. Also the memorandum said that visiting journalists from the paper would sit in classes and not earn a more advanced degree as it was a short-term visit. One university official initially insisted adding the blunt language of "no degree" in the memorandum, which would be perceived as an affront in a different culture. Many Asian cultures value trust and goodwill.

Funding: Sustainability is the key

Perhaps every initiator of an international program knows that it is vitally important to have a strong advocate and supporter in the university administration when launching such a program, but perhaps not as many have realized that it could be a liability as well once the administrator leaves campus. Funding, especially continued funding support, is imperative for the success of the program. This exchange program received a lump sum of allocation from university administration to launch the program. With the change of leadership at the university, funding for the continuation of the program had to be sought from various units on campus and through fundraising.

Recruiting: Slow but steady growth

When the program was recruiting its first intern, there were worries about if any student would apply as study abroad was not necessarily students' top priorities, and China was still a bit too "exotic" compared with Western European countries for study abroad. And practicing journalism in a communist media environment would pose professional challenges. At the time, one column in the school newspaper called China that "backwater" country. But one brave student applied. Her family had adopted children from other countries including Asia. Today 17 years later, top students apply—honor students, students with full-ride scholarships and leaders of student publications. However, elsewhere on American college campuses close to metropolitan areas, it was reported that it could still be difficult to recruit American students for journalism internships in China as there were more options for their students. Statistics show that

American students tend to select western countries as destinations for study abroad while fewer select developing countries in Africa, Asia or South America.

Selecting intern candidates: The balance

As discussed earlier, some research focused on the selection of candidates for international internships, which could determine whether the internship would be a rewarding experience for the interns. Chapel (1998) emphasized motivation and preparation, international communication competence and pre-deployment readiness. He had a “Rating Scale on Successful Expatriate Qualities” at the end of his paper. Ryan and Krapels also discussed selection criteria in their research.

For this program, closer attention has been paid to the objectives and motivations of student applicants and their academic, intellectual and professional preparation for the internship. Emphasis has also been placed on personal traits such as independence, open-mindedness, adaptability, initiative and tolerance. An essay on why applicants want to participate in the internship provides clues to motivations. These criteria for selection are meant to maintain program quality and maximize the benefits of the program for the interns.

Preparing and training student interns: Theory vs. practice

One key aspect of research on international internships focused on the preparations and training of student interns. For this internship at the China Daily, student interns could have been underprepared as all they were told to do for preparation was to follow the paper’s coverage to see what kind of topics were covered, how the topics were covered and what differences in news coverage were comparing with the American news media. Students interested in the program were also encouraged to take the international and cross-cultural communication class in order to have some theoretical grounding regarding world press systems, global information flow and issues in international news reporting.

The underlying thinking is that there could be over-preparation or training, which could blunt "cultural shock." This researcher believes that encountering and adapting to "cultural shock" presents the most intense and rewarding experiential learning moments because when "shocked," students would try to find explanations, which would be the explanations they explored on their own, instead of second-hand ones. Also journalists tend to produce best stories when their senses are the sharpest, especially their sense of curiosity. Other researchers discussed "trained incapacity," which was defined as "that state of affairs by which one's very abilities can function as blindnesses." (Knight, 2015)

Perhaps few scholars would argue against some training in the host country's language. Many educators emphasized the importance of language proficiency for international internships. For this program, mandarin has not been required as it was already difficult to recruit student interns at the beginning of the program. In addition, there was no guarantee that a mandarin class would be offered every semester. More motivated candidates started to learn mandarin on their own. Today some applicants have one semester of mandarin class while others do not even though editors at the paper suggest some mandarin would help. This shows that the program needs to keep adapting to the changing realities of program partners.

Placement of student interns: Changes over time

In addition to government regulations, the gap between a national newspaper and an undergraduate student did present some challenges in placing interns. When the internship was started in the 1990s, there were few foreign reporters hired by Chinese media organizations. All of the foreign staff at the paper were copy-editors or “polishers” who “polished” writing, a term mocked by some western journalists given Chinese media’s tendency then to focus on positive stories. According to government regulations back then, Chinese media organizations could hire expatriates only as copy editors, not reporters. So an undergrad student ended up sitting side by side at the copy desk with other experienced journalists from English-speaking countries. Today, interns go out interviewing Chinese or diplomats alike in Beijing.

Supervising and evaluating interns: Professional feedback

For this program, supervising and evaluating the interns are done by editors in the newsroom according to standard internship procedures and policies set by the academic department. Many researchers addressed the topic as it is the ultimate assessment of the value and effectiveness of not only the internship program, but also of the journalism program. It is important to note that there could be cross-cultural misunderstandings or misinterpretations of behavior based on perceptions of culture, or even the choice of words in evaluations, such as “immature” vs. “inexperienced.”

Experiential learning: The in-depth interviews

On intern preparations

To assess experiential/transformative learning and effectiveness of the program, in-depth interviews were conducted with former student interns at the China Daily. On the issue of getting prepared for the internship, the former interns, now media professionals or graduate students, felt that they could not really fully prepare for a journalism internship in China given all the differences between the two countries, particularly in journalism, but they were prepared to face the unexpected. One intern wrote that the differences and challenges were so overwhelming that it would be almost impossible to prepare:

> I think there's little a person who'd only left the country once (volunteer work in Costa Rica) could prepare for what at first seems such a vastly different culture, dealing with communications in a place where you're essentially deaf, mute and illiterate (and being expected to produce) and dealing with a very alien media system.

Another one agreed and discussed the value of a class on international and cross-cultural communication:

> For context, traveling to China was the first time I had traveled abroad. In fact, it was the first time I had ever boarded an airplane. It was also my first internship. So, it was an intense learning experience across the board. That being said, your Cross Culture Media class, as well as my Mandarin class, helped immensely. Your class offered perspective on China's restrictive, state-run media model and gave me a leg up on other interns, in terms of understanding how to tailor my reporting so it could be published. Was I prepared for the full brunt of it, coupled with the culture shock of everyday life? No, but I think that's the point. You can't prepare for that; that's why you need to experience it for yourself.

One intern felt lost the minute he arrived in Beijing. He said he felt prepared for the internship but unprepared for arriving in China and getting to the paper.

Still another consciously kept his mind free of expectations about the country and talked about challenges without learning the language:

> My mentality going in was to avoid expectations of what China should/would be like. I knew China would be vastly different from any of my previous experiences and, therefore, was prepared to adapt and learn as quickly as possible. That being said - there were some areas where I felt completely unprepared.
>
> Language was a big one. Though I made a feeble attempt to study in the months between when I was granted the internship and when I departed, stepping off the plane I knew only how to say hello. I remember trying to find some basic household goods in my first week and speaking Spanish to the shopkeeper as it was the only other foreign language I knew -- apparently this is not uncommon for people in my situation.
>
> Professionally, I felt simultaneously anxious and confident. Confident because I had studied and worked long enough to understand the basics of journalism and was prepared to do my best to overcome challenges; anxious because I wasn't quite sure what those challenges would be.

One student prepared quite a bit but was still surprised in the newsroom:

> When I arrived I was prepared, in a sense. I'd read copious amount of writing about China's culture, journalism and politics, and I'd previously spent a few months in Shanghai. I was not prepared for the reality of sitting in a Chinese newsroom every day. It was quiet, and it was calm, and there were a lot of things going on around me that I just couldn't understand because I didn't speak Chinese. It was not the kind of newsroom I was used to, and it was not what I expected. I grew to like it though! Much easier to focus on my work.

On professional learning

When asked if professional learning occurred given the completely different media environment, one former intern, who has been working at the paper since 2006 after his graduation, said, “Absolutely. Flexibility and people skills take on a whole new meaning in such an environment. I believed that if I could do this successfully, I could do anything, career-wise.”

Some interns took the differences in the media in stride after experiencing them firsthand in China. One said:

> Actually the environment didn't really seem too different to me in terms of common newsroom practices, with the exception of having to avoid certain sensitive topics. This wasn't really an issue since my internship put me in the features department, where most of the stories are non-political anyway.

Another one compared world news coverage in China and the United States, which best illustrates experiential learning or “transformation of experience”:

> As stated above, the internship gave me hands-on experience with an unconventional media model. Example – I always got a kick out of the stories China Daily would publish regarding the US, e.g. statements made by Beijing or Washington, South China Sea, air pollution, etc… They all painted the US in a negative light and as the aggressor. I thought surely this was because China Daily is state-owned and a perpetuator of state propaganda. While that is true, the biggest US media outlets (NYT, WSJ) do just the same to China. The experience taught me that, state-owned or “independent,” every journalist and every media outlet has someone to answer to, and at the end of the day, every paper is a mouthpiece for somebody. It forced me to step outside the US-centric spectrum of world goings-on, which I think is monumentally important for citizens here, not just journalists.

One intern gave examples of some eye-opening opportunities:

I would say in some ways it provided more than a standard internship, but with limitations as well. Regarding the different media environment - China Daily *is* state-owned media and there are definitely areas that are off-limits. But, during my time there, most involved the type of political issues that a features intern wouldn't be tasked with writing about - no matter where in the world they worked. That being said, the internship did allow me the freedom to pursue stories and interviews that would have likely been handled by someone more senior were it a newspaper in the United States.

This felt particularly true during an interview I arranged with the Rwandan Ambassador to China in 2008. While preparing for Olympics coverage I contacted several embassies in Beijing reaching out for interesting interviews. While I was mostly given tepid offers to be placed on an email listserv, out of a dozen or so attempts I was granted a one-hour interview with Rwandan Ambassador Ben Rugangazi. A key figure in the power-shift following the Rwandan genocide in 1994, Rugangazi was an extremely influential figure in Rwanda and had a fascinating story that involved marching back home with RAF forces to end the genocide after 30 years of exile in Kenya. The interview was a crash course in dealing with diplomats and the basics in political interviews. It also proved to me the importance of persistence when arranging such interviews. I can't say for certain, but it's unlikely I would have had the flexibility to pursue or access to conduct such an interview as an intern in Michigan.

The intern was overwhelmed with the level of autonomy given for the assignment and wished he received more hands-on guidance and direction in completing the assignment even though he was a native English speaker.

Other interns also talked about opportunities and challenges. One wrote:

The internship offered a lot of opportunities for learning. We got to write, copy edit, and conduct interviews. Reporting can be a bit intimidating for anyone, and I think getting the experience of doing the work in China was beneficial. There were cultural and language barriers present that we had to transcend and adapt to. Being able to adapt quickly is a necessary skill for any journalist. Interning at CD definitely helps build that skill.

The intern also gave one example of how to handle newsroom disagreements:

In one case, one of the reporters and I didn't see eye-to-eye on the way a story we collaborated on was written. He left me in charge of editing the story, so I did, and I had a colleague review the edits to make sure I'd not made any unnecessary changes. I submitted the story, and it went to print with few additional changes. The reporter I worked with wasn't happy about it. I learned that sometimes people have disagreements, and that's fine. You just move forward with the task at hand. As long as you're professional, there's nothing wrong with disagreeing.

Another intern appreciated the help he received in the newsroom:

The staff helped me a lot once I was at China Daily and allowed me to work with people in different departments so I could see how the publication was put together from numerous perspectives. The best example of that would be them sending me with reporters to interview people or to go to press events. I did get to go to a press event and see Katie Holmes while I was there. She was there to promote an ice skating championship… And the way China Daily is put together is much different, so that was enlightening.

On personal growth

The interns believed living in China for three months made them grow a lot as a person. When asked if the internship provided opportunities for personal growth, one intern wrote: "Absolutely. Living on your own in another country, especially one that doesn't speak your language, forces you to grow. You have no other option but to submerge yourself in that culture. It made me more confident in myself and more comfortable with those around me."

Another one called the experience as "reinvention" when asked the question:

> More like reinvention than growth. You must transform to adapt. This type of situation is survival of the most flexible. Over time, you absorb certain ideas you perhaps never considered from your host culture into your personality — in China's case, learning to deal with miscommunications (even among Chinese colleagues, not just between Chinese and foreigners), last-minute changes, informal versus formal structures, relationships' importance versus written rules. These facets of thinking stay with you after you leave the country.

Another one focused on learning about oneself:

> I think living in any foreign country is always a great chance to learn more about yourself and others. Putting yourself in a different and occasionally stressful environment forces you to more closely scrutinize your attitudes and beliefs, and that's always a good thing. Some examples might include learning how to network, how to negotiate, how to be more resourceful when you're in a confusing or unfamiliar situation.

One intern elaborated on the topic:

> In hindsight, I can say the moment I stepped off the plane it was imperceptibly changing how I viewed myself and what I thought I was capable of. Traveling to live in a country where you know nobody and don't speak the language requires an enormous fete of courage. I think just arriving for the internship endowed me with a sense of independence I wouldn't get elsewhere.
>
> It also wet my tongue with wanderlust. After living in China several years, I've used it as a base to explore more than 20 countries, visiting some of the world's least developed countries such as Bangladesh and Ethiopia, to some of the more developed such as Dubai (UAE) and Singapore (not to mention a long list of Chinese cities). The thrill of arriving in a new place for the first time never subsides, and the experiences and lessons gained while travelling are priceless. Were it not for that initial step, I highly doubt I would have had the chance or the will to do any such exploring.

> With Beijing being a fairly international city, it also gave me a chance to better interact with and understand people from a variety of cultural backgrounds, not just China's.
>
> The list could go on and on in the ways (the internship) helped with personal growth.

On impact on their professional careers

Three former interns have been working as journalists for the Chinese media in Beijing, one for the paper while the other two for the national Xinhua News Agency. Another one is attending the grad school of the best journalism program in China.

One former intern wrote:

> It gave me my career. I was back at China Daily within a few months and will soon have been here 10 years. Ten amazing years of incredible experiences, of rising through the ranks and of discovering other opportunities, such as writing books and doing consulting work.

The intern has become one of the most senior foreign staff members at the paper today. For a time, he covered the travel beat and travelled all across China and outside China, winning awards for covering major events, including the major earthquake in Sichuan in 2008. After that he started his own NGO in China, trying to improve the lives of those in need.

Another one wrote:

> The effects have been decisive and long lasting. It's now nearly eight years since I arrived in Beijing for the internship (I first arrived January 21st, 2008), I spent five years as a reporter for China Daily accruing some fascinating stories and developing my skills. Now I am working for the country's largest news organization, further developing an understanding of China. And, while China's slowing economy may have diminished the unbounded optimism exhibited by people in the country when I first arrived, China is still a fascinating place to work. My position at Xinhua, though tedious at times, does allow for me to track and understand China in a way that few other positions would offer.

One other intern agreed:

> It had significant impact, largely because it led to several full-time jobs, including working for the Xinhua News Agency. But even if I hadn't decided to stay in China, I think having the internship on my résumé would've been of great help in finding employment in the states.

One intern landed a reporting assignment in northern Iraq through connection made at the internship. Addressing the impact of the internship on his career, the intern wrote:

> It made me aspire to be a foreign correspondent, and perhaps eventually, a human rights lawyer. I know that's a big jump. In China, I befriended the English Online Editor for CD. A year or so later, he emailed me with a job opportunity in northern Iraq, where he was deputy editor of an English/Kurdish news website. So, for six months I reported in Iraq – on the frontlines of the war against ISIS, on the refugee crisis and related issues. It opened my eyes to what is really happening in the world; not what's airing on my TV screen. I'm currently looking into opportunities for possibly working in human rights law. None of this would have happened if not for the CD internship, and I'm forever grateful for having had the opportunity.

For other interns, the direct benefit is the enhanced résumé that helped with employment. One intern said, "The internship was a big factor in me getting a job right out of college. I think it definitely made my résumé stick out." Another one agreed. He got a job as a copy editor at China Daily's 21st Century publication after the internship. In job-hunting, he said, "… whenever I've made it to the interview stage of the hiring process, the HR representative always remarks that it's impressive that I interned at a Chinese newspaper. I think it's impressive too. It is a rare and precious advantage that makes my résumé stand out in a competitive job market."

Discussions: For a new generation of globally aware journalists

In their own words, the former interns described the amazing transformative and experiential learning, personal growth and impact on their careers by doing the international journalism internship in China. What is most impressive about what the interns had to say is that despite the fact that they knew they could not be fully prepared for the internship or the fact that they did not know what to expect, they were convinced of the value of the internship and willing to give it a try. They were determined to take advantage of the opportunity and never looked back. Many researchers discussed the selection, preparation and training of the interns; it seems clear that motivation and drive is the key.

It also seems clear that international journalism internships like this one are invaluable in providing opportunities for experiential and transformative learning, which led to intellectual growth and self-discovery.

Even though the values and benefits of such programs to students are clear, there are many challenges in keeping programs like this one strong. One of them is to keep professional connections updated and strong especially when such connections depend on prior employment ties. The task can be difficult due to geographical distance. It is also important to include the programs in the budget process so that funding support for them can be institutionalized. To guarantee the long-term success of these programs, coordinators should not be expected to keep volunteering; their service should be built into their workload so that they would not be burned out.

Major world events also posed challenges to the program. After the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, one journalist from the China Daily was denied visa to the United States as America tightened visa policies. The outbreak of SARS in China in 2003 prevented a highly motivated intern candidate from heading to Beijing due to U.S. State Department's travel advisory not to visit China. The student said, "we should not let fear stop us from doing what we want."

Despite these challenges along the way, this researcher believes that international journalism internships provide unique opportunities for students to create knowledge through the transformation of experience and to connect experience to intellectual growth. With success, more students can participate in and benefit from such opportunities. Overtime such exchanges can not only advance journalism education and careers, but also lead to greater cross-cultural understanding and peace journalism led by new generations of globally aware journalists.

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Deliberative Talk or Emotional Discharge:

Examine How Citizens Respond to the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands Dispute

in the “Below the Line” Comment Fields

Abstract

This study analyzes the nature of debate on “below the line” comment fields at an online news website publication The Diplomat, and discusses how such debates are impacting journalism practice. This study content analyzed 139 comments posted on articles about the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands dispute. The results suggest that the comments are mostly deliberative rather than emotional by frequently providing reasoned arguments, contributing facts and knowledge and focusing on the topic under discussion. Therefore, comment fields can be a good platform for participatory journalism and enrich the debate needed for a democratic society.

Keywords

Comment fields, the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands dispute, The Diplomat, readers’ comments, UGC, journalism practice, public sphere

Introduction

It is a well-established notion that traditional news consumption has a positive effect on both political knowledge and participation (Norris, 2000). And there has been a longstanding emphasis on participatory media formats, and media organizations' interest in audience participation is not a new phenomenon, but as old as the media themselves (Williams, Wardel & Wahl-Jorgensen, 2011). In fact, news media across western democracies have been historically adopting new participatory forms of journalism that have the potential to enhance citizen participation in the news-making process. For instance, the practice of publishing letters to editors were integral to early newspapers (Nord, 2001), and radio phone-ins (Loviglio, 2002) and television talk shows (Livingstone and Lunt, 1994) were other means of involving citizens in news-making. Also in the early 1990s, newspapers experimented with the idea of civic journalism by seeking participation from community members in the form of focus groups, polls and reaction to daily news stories. These ways of engaging citizens were encouraging, but very limiting and inconvenient because these traditional media per se are by nature not meant for citizen participation but for gatekeeping and filtering news and information to public.

However, the development of online journalism brought an entirely different medium on which forms of participatory journalism abound such as newsgroups, blogs, Wikipedia, forums etc. Among others, one form, "below the line" comment fields, is especially interesting and promising.

The rising practice of opening up “below the line” comment fields, as one type of UGC (user generated content), is changing the journalism landscape significantly (Graham & Wright, 2015) though journalists hold a mixed view of “below the line” comment fields. While some believe the practice may make a positive impact in journalism due to its capacity of adding perspectives and contributing to public discourse (Reich, 2011), others think the poor quality of comments can only tarnish journalism organizations’ reputation (Reich, 2011).

This mixed view has been reflected in research findings by scholars and researchers even though the line of research is still short of empirical evidence solidifying the findings. Moreover, the “below the line” comment fields are not archived well by databases of news stories which make research on comment fields more difficult. Lastly, the theories to guide the research on the newly emerged content are still under development and old theoretical frameworks directing traditional media content research must be updated.

Despite these obstacles and difficulties, research into “below the line” comment fields will be very meaningful and significant because it not only addresses journalists’ concern on the quality of user generated content but also facilitates the understanding of the contributions of “below the line” comment fields to the net-public sphere of deliberation on issues. As is known, one of the key functions of journalism is to act as a facilitator for public debates

(Habermas, 1989).

This study selects to examine how citizens responded to the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands dispute[1] articles published in The Diplomat online news website for two reasons. One is because the online publication has firmly established itself as a leading voice on Asia affairs with robust content from respected writers. Second reason is the issue of Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands is very thorny and complicated due to its sovereignty controversy. For instance, one single article entitled *Getting Senkaku History Right* on the news publication has generated a huge number of comments and made a historical-high record in terms of the number of comments for the publication.

Literature Review

User Generated Content (UGC)

Though online discussion forums of the 1980s and 1990s dropped off in popularity, its core principle of **sharing** takes root in other forms (Hopp & Santana, 2012). There are online companies that relied on UGC exclusively for existence such as Facebook, twitter and Youtube, but there are online news media that incorporated UGC to engage loyal readers (Hopp & Santana, 2012). Many news sites have provided a mechanism—either through Web-based forms or e-mail— to collect content from the audience and redistribute it. Such

[1] Although disputes over the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands or Diaoyu Islands or Diaoyutai Islands have been recurring for many decades, it is in April 2012 that the conflict involving Japan, China, Taiwan reached its climax because Tokyo Governor Shintaro Ishihara proposed to purchase these islands by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government. The proposal yielded a series of political and even physical clashes among the three sides.

content can be a full-length article, advice or tips, useful links, calendar events or reviews (Bowman and Willis,2003). Another category of UGC is the ranking system provided to users to rank a news story, a reporter or other users (Bowman and Willis, 2003). The third type may be the feedback systems, such as polls or mini-forums attached to story pages. Polls sometimes support comment submissions (Bowman and Willis, 2003). And of course, “below the line” comment fields are another type of the feedback systems.

“Below the Line” Comment Fields

“Below the line” comment fields are debate spaces opened up underneath news articles and blogs that allow audiences to discuss news content with each other and with journalists (Graham and Wright, 2015). Unlike news stories, which can live on newspaper websites for months, years and even indefinitely in online archives, reader comments are usually an ephemeral part of a newspaper’s content; they can appear and disappear while the original story remains on a newspaper’s site (Santana, 2014). While the moderation of comments varies by newspaper, comments often post immediately, though auto filters generally disallow vulgar language (Santana, 2014). Seen as demarking a clear separation between formal outputs and UGC, comment fields potentially provide opportunities for journalists to reflect on their writing, test arguments in the case of commentary pieces, receive feedback on stories, and can be a source for new leads (Graham and Wright, 2015). Graham and Wright (2015) also noted that from the business perspective, comment fields may produce an important source of revenue by building a loyal and engaged community and increase visibility in search engines by keeping the website “hot.” In the United States, the *Rocky Mountain News* was one of the first online newspapers to begin inviting same-page comments following movie and restaurant reviews (Santana, 2011). In June 2006, *The Washington Post* began allowing comments on sports stories (Hirschman, 2006), and in November 2007, *The New York Times* began to allow comments on select articles (Staff, 2007). By then, other newspapers around the country had begun adopting the forums. Today, 92% of the top 150 U.S. newspapers feature comment forums (Santana, 2011). A 2005 poll of nine newspaper websites in the UK also found online publications used a range of features such as message boards, reader comments, polls (Thurman, 2007). A study of 12 Australian online newspapers found that all of the papers adopted interactive functionality for expressing opinions, blogging, contests and polls (Hashim, Hasan, & Sinnapan, 2007).

Integration of user generated content within professional journalism space creates a new platform for citizens to get engaged with news, affect public agenda, and contribute to public discourse and opinions (Tumber, 2001; UGC, 2012). Graham and Wright (2015) found that comment fields are deliberative because the discussions are typically rational, critical, coherent, reciprocal, and civil even though the interactions between journalists and participants are very limited. Gao and Koo (2014) pointed out online users have more freedom to express themselves and discuss issues raised by the media. Liu and Fahmy (2011) found that due to the anonymous nature of posted comments, the online setting may reduce the effect of the spiral of silence, or decrease users' fear of social isolation. However UGC has created a range of tensions and problems that need journalists to rethink of traditional values of quality, impartiality and balance with audience participation (Harrison, 2010). While news organizations are slow in adopting new things believing in "innate conservatism" meaning big media companies don't take initiatives in pushing boundaries when having conversations with audience (Gillmor, 2004, p. 112), they are quick to give up. Several online publications, in recent years, closed comment fields such as CNN and Bloomberg (Finley, 2015). The reasons are mainstream media generally hold the view that they are the professionals who know the ins and outs of how to practice the business of news gathering (Thurman, 2016). Second, the pains and difficulties of moderating reader comments are not worthy of the time and efforts invested (Finley, 2015).

Participatory Journalism

Bowman and Willis (2003) defined participatory journalism as "the act of a citizen, or group of citizens, playing an active role in the process of collecting, reporting, analyzing and disseminating news and information" (p. 9). As a bottom-up phenomenon, participatory journalism yielded many simultaneous conversations and there is little or no editorial oversight or formal journalistic workflow dictating the process (Bowman and Willis, 2003). As a matter of fact, conversation is a defining characteristic of participatory journalism which turns the tables on the traditional roles of journalism and creates a dynamic, egalitarian give-and-take ethic (Bowman and Willis, 2003). Conversations produced in such a form are available for all community members to see, and the corresponding debates are open to public scrutiny and involvement, which is significantly different from traditional news media that are set up to filter information before public can see it.

Normative Criteria of the Process of Deliberation

The western idea or ideal of deliberation may be one of the core values of democracy. While it has been tested and utilized as a means of evaluating real-world practices, there has been an increase in applying the model to the internet setting. Researchers have been asking whether the Internet, as the public sphere, offers an opportunity for free, equal, and open deliberation among citizens (Graham, 2008).

Based on deliberative democrats such as Schneider (1997) and Jensen (2003) and Dahlberg (2004), in defining normative criteria of the public sphere, in particular, of the process of deliberation, Graham (2008) proposed six normative conditions: the process of achieving understanding; structural equality; discursive equality; structural autonomy; discursive freedom; and sincerity. According to Graham (2008), the process of achieving understanding is composed of four components: rational-critical discussion, reciprocity, reflexivity, and empathy. While rational-critical discussion constitutes the basic foundation for understanding, reciprocity, reflectivity and empathy are dispositional requirements or conditions to reach the highest level of understanding (Graham, 2008). Structural equality emphasizes equal access to the deliberation space and to the necessary skills, but discursive equality requires all participants in the deliberation process be treated as equal members (Graham, 2008). The normative condition of freedom is conceptualized at two levels: structural autonomy and discursive freedom. While structural autonomy means the deliberation space free from all outside forms of force and influence such as state and commercial control, discursive freedom indicates that participants are able to share freely information, opinions, and arguments, with only one force permitted, the force of a better argument (Graham, 2008). Lastly, sincerity implies that all strive to make all information, relevant to the discussion, known to other participants, which includes their intentions, motives, desires, needs, and interests. Graham's model of normative criteria of process of deliberation not only laid out the structural necessity for deliberation but also highlighted content dimensions of deliberation. Graham (2008) has applied his model of normative criteria of process of deliberation in content analyzing a fan-based discussion forum on a reality television program *Wife Swap* and concluded that such a methodological approach using two phases of coding to political talking points online turned out to be an effective tool. Graham (2008) suggests that even though the methodological approach presented here seeks to identify, describe, and assess political discussions in non-political spaces, the method can be applied to most informal (political or not) discursive setting, places where daily political talk emerges (p. 33).

Graham and Wright (2015) believe that comment fields is changing the practice of journalism in the following ways: comment fields provide deliberation spaces for readers with each other and with journalists; comment fields are alternative news and sources; comment fields enhance critical reflection on stories and influence what and how journalists write (p. 320). Many news outlets have invested significant resources to enhance comment fields, including improving the commenting infrastructure, moderation, and the regulatory frameworks that govern debates with a view to enhancing deliberation and minimizing legal risk (Graham and Wright, 2015). Furthermore, as users gain more experience (e.g., on how to respond to trolling) and become mature, comment fields would serve as better places for public debates and deliberation (Graham and Wright, 2015). Some researchers have already been optimistic in their findings that journalists' own relationship with comment fields has begun to change (Robinson, 2010; Loke, 2012).

This study focuses on scrutinizing the quality of comment fields by examining to what extent comment fields have enhanced the public discussion of important issues. Specifically, the study selects to examine how citizens responded to the articles on the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands dispute published in The Diplomat online news website from April, 2012 when Tokyo Governor Shintaro Ishihara proposed to purchase the islands from the private owner to Dec. 2013 when Japan decided to increase defense budget amid tensions with China. Adopting

Graham (2008)'s theoretical perspective of normative criteria of the process of deliberation, the study aims to address research questions on deliberative talk versus emotional discharge of comment fields. Modelling after Graham and Wright's (2015) approach to investigating the UN Climate Change Summit and taking the suggestion from Jönsson and Örnebring (2011) that it is important to apply a taxonomy to user-generated content (UGC), this study will content analyze comment fields from the following aspects: interactions, reasoning, emotions, thematic coherence, information contribution, call to actions and sources (abbreviated as IRETICS). Specifically, the following seven research questions are to be addressed.

RQ1. What kinds of interactions do comment fields make?

RQ2. What kinds of reasoning do comment fields serve?

RQ3. To what extent do comment fields reveal emotions?

RQ4. To what extent do comment fields go with thematic coherence?

RQ5. To what extent do comment fields contribute to information and knowledge of the issue under discussion?

RQ6. To what extent do comment fields made a call to take political actions?

RQ7. To what extent do comment fields use sources in the same way as journalists?

Method

Population The online publication *The Diplomat* is this study's research target. *The*

Diplomat, headquartered in Japan, provides analysis and commentary on events occurring in Asia and around the world (Diplomat, n.d.). According to Real Clear Politics (2010), *The Diplomat* has firmly established itself as a leading voice on Asia affairs with robust content from respected writers. Its editor Jason Miks noted that the news website embraced four dedicated blogs on China, India, Japan and Southeast Asia (Real Clear Politics, 2010), which makes an attempt to appeal to the broad Asian readers. For example, Tadashi Ikeda, former chief representative of the Japan Interchange Association Taipei Office (Tsai, 2014), published one article in The Diplomat on Nov. 16, 2012, *Getting Senkaku History Straight*, and solicited 139 comments from readers of various nationalities.

Sample. The study selects to examine how citizens responded to the articles on the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands dispute published on The Diplomat online news website from April, 2012 when Tokyo Governor Shintaro Ishihara proposed to purchase the islands from the private owner to Dec. 2013 when Japan decided to increase defense budget amid tensions with China. However, when the researcher emailed the online publication The Diplomat for the options to access the comments posted on the related articles, the publisher of The Diplomat, J. Pach (personal communication, May 21, 2016) replied, "…we no longer have reader comments on the site -- precisely because like many other sites we found that readers' comments made no useful contribution to the public debate. The comments for that particular article are no longer accessible." The researcher has to resort to the Wayback Machine, a digital archive of World Wide Web and other information on the Internet by a non-profit organization named the Internet Archive[2] to access reader comments. The service enables users to see archived versions of web pages across time, which the archive calls a "three dimensional index" (Wayback Machine, n.d.). The problem with relying on the Wayback Machine to access reader comments is that only certain dates' reader comments can be analyzed because the researcher didn't know how long The Diplomat had kept the article alive and open on the site and allowed readers to post comments. Therefore, not all reader comments posted on a particular article can be secured and analyzed because the researcher didn't know when was the last date the article was still available for readers to make comments on. The researcher followed these following steps and successfully secured 103 comments. First, the researcher compiled a list of Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands dispute articles within the specified time frame on The Diplomat online publication. Second, the researcher eliminated those articles without reader comments and kept those with reader comments. Third, based on this list, the researcher used the Wayback Machine to enter the date for the Wayback Machine to retrieve that date's page. However, in order to maximize the number of reader comments, the researcher purposefully entered a date that was several days later than the publication date of the article assuming that after several days the article was still kept alive and open. This technique found that some articles were kept alive for four days, some

[2] The Internet Archive is a 501(c)(3) non-profit that was founded to build an Internet library. Its purposes include offering permanent access for researchers, historians, scholars, people with disabilities, and the general public to historical collections that exist in digital format (About the Internet Archive, n.d.).

for two days. Forth, by clicking the URL to the articles on The Diplomat's home page, the researcher accessed the article and its comment fields. The researcher saved the page in the pdf file and printed it for analysis.

Intercode reliability. To increase confidence in the findings, an inter-coder reliability test was conducted. Three rounds of coding were administered until intercoder reliabilities on all the variables reached .80 agreement. The first round used 30 comments, the second round 15 comments and third round 15 comments.

Measurements. This study borrowed the measurements of Graham and Wright (2015) who analyzed the nature of debate on "below the line" comment fields from eight-five articles on the topic of the UN Climate Change Summit on the United Kingdom's Guardian, but made some adaptions and changes.

Interaction is about the type of interaction operationalized at three levels: with the news article content, with the journalist and with participants (Graham & Wright, 2015). Behavior functions in Graham and Wright (2015) include seven categories of reasoned claims, assertions, provide information, request information, degrading comments, acknowledgements, and call to action (Graham & Wright, 2015). The study divided this variable of behavior function into four variables: **reasoning**, **emotional discharge**, **thematic coherence**, **information contribution** and **call to action**. Reasoning, the process of thinking about something in a logical way in order to form a conclusion or judgment, facilitates making sense of things, establishing facts and justifying practices. R**easoning** is operationalized with four levels: criticizing argument (challenging the point made in the article), alternative argument (providing an alternative view to the point), supporting argument (supporting the point) and no reasoning offered at all. The study operationalized **emotional discharge** as whether or not the comment revealed strong feelings such as anger, irrationality and frustrations with two levels of measurements: emotional and neutral. **Thematic adherence** examines whether or not the comment posted went with the theme or talking point under discussion. **Information contribution** is about whether or not the comments add new information, new knowledge or facts about the topic under the discussion with three levels: provide new knowledge and information, request knowledge and information and offer no knowledge and information. And the **call to action** is operationalized as whether or not the comment has made an immediate and explicit and concrete call to take political action with two levels of yes or not. Lastly, the study examined how sources are used by commenters, and **sources** are operationalized as whether or not the comment includes references by experts, scholars, websites or historical documents. The simple count was taken for this variable.

Results

The study analyzed 103 comments in the sample, and the average number of words per comment is 88 with the minimum of 4 words and the maximum of 636 words. While 72% of the comments are independent posts, 28% are replies to posts. There are two peaks of reader comments in the time frame: Nov. 24, 2013 (with 30 comments) when the article was about the establishment of ADIZ on the East China Seas and Nov. 28, 2013 (with 28 comments) when the published article *Getting Senkaku History Right* solicited the most reader response.

RQ1 asks what kinds of interactions comment fields make. The study found that 56% of the interactions were with the article, four percent with the author and 40% with fellow commenters. Comments tended to interact with the article itself or responding to the article point most of the time, followed by the interaction with fellow commenters. The least interaction was with journalists accounting for 4% only. **RQ2** asks what kinds of reasoning comment fields serve. The findings suggest while three quarters of the comments did incorporate the reasoning, one quarter didn't have any reasoning at all. Among those comments that did incorporated reasoning, 58% belonged to criticizing reasoning, 27% alternative reasoning and 16% supporting reasoning. (See Table 1 for details).

Table 1. Reasoning of the Comment Fields (N=103).					
		Post Count		%	
Reasoning		77		75%	
	Criticizing		44		58%
	Alternative		21		27%
	Supporting		12		16%
No Reasoning		26		25%	
Total		103		100	

RQ3 asks to what extent comment fields reveal emotions. The study found that around 73% contained no emotional wordings, and around 27% did have emotional wordings. **RQ4**

examined to what extent comment fields go with thematic coherence. The study found that the majority, i.e. 87%, of the comments were related to the main theme of the article while 13% were not related to the theme. **RQ5** was about whether comment fields made any contribution to information and knowledge of the issue under discussion. The findings indicated that 71% of the comments made the contribution but the rest 29% did not. **RQ6** was about the call to action. The study found that the large majority of the comments did not make a call to actions and only 10% made such a call. Lastly, **RQ7** was about sources use in the comment fields and the findings indicate that 89% did not use any sources and only 11% did use some sources.

Conclusion and Discussion

This study examined comment fields from the normative criteria of the process of deliberation or IRETICS seven operationalized variables. It found that comments fields are mostly deliberative rather than emotional, which is in line with the findings from Graham and Wright (2008) and Manosevitch and Walker (2009). Most of the commenters are adhering to the theme or the topic under discussion, interacting with the point made in the article, providing critical reasoning and adding new information. While they are not very professional in terms of citing sources and using sources as journalists do, they are not using the comment fields to make a call for political actions. One common criticism of comment fields is that they tend to be poor in quality and irrational (Richardson & Stanyer, 2011; Reich, 2011). Interestingly, the Diplomat publisher’s email correspondence with the researcher seems to suggest that the online publication did encounter difficulties in dealing with comment fields and lost confidence in readers making contributions to public debate, which added another footnote to the negative perception of comment fields. However, this study found that 75 percent of comments provided reasoning and only 25% nonreasoned claims. Interesting is the finding that the majority of reasoning is critical reasoning followed by alternative reasoning. Critical reasoning indicates comment fields publicly criticize news coverage and try to hold journalists accountable while alternative reasoning put forward competing ideas and sources, thereby exposing participants, readers, and journalists to new ideas and arguments and helping to create a more inclusive news product. The study didn’t collect commenters’ background and political views, but it appeared from the posted comments that participants held a wide range of political views and discussed across these views—a very critical aspect of participation and deliberation. There are also about 11% of the comment fields where commenters referred to some outside sources which either offered alternative points of views, opposing arguments or supporting evidence. In discussing the normative criteria of the process of deliberation, Graham (2008) specified that the process of achieving understanding, as one of the six conditions for deliberation, must have rational or critical discussion as its foundation and the other three elements of reciprocity, reflectivity and empathy are more of dispositional requirements to reach the highest level of understanding (Graham, 2008). Rational discussions with critical reasoning as its base, coupled with new information, contribute to the depth and details of debates and bring momentum and dynamic to the net-public sphere of debate, which may help to build a loyal reader community. What is surprising is that there found a lack of interactions between commenters and authors of the article. And even for those comments featuring interactions with journalists, it is a one-way interaction because the journalist or the author who wrote the article never participated in the discussion. Similar findings were identified by Graham and Wright (2008) who speculated that this was largely explained by a lack of time, but in some cases it was personal inclination or a fear of personal attacks. Lastly, comment fields had an average of 88 words per comment, and one comment wrote 636 words, equivalent to a short essay suggesting that readers cared about the issue and were willing to spend time participate in the discussion. Overall, the findings support the view that comment fields were deliberative contributing to public debate and issue discussion. Though news organizations may find it difficult to maintain and manage comment fields and some researchers (such as Richardson and Stanyer, 2011) argued that the deliberative democratic potential of online discussion is a long way from the deliberative, this study concludes that there is value in keeping the net space for engaging readers and encouraging participations.

Limitations and Suggestions

This study only analyzed one online publication with 103 comments. Such a small and convenient sample didn't intend to make generalizations about other online publications. The exploratory nature of the study relying mostly on descriptive statistics didn't investigate relationships between variables or make any meaningful comparisons. Moreover, the study didn't collect information on commenters' background or political views which prevent an accurate account on why commenters made the comments as they were. All the variables such as interaction, reasoning, thematic coherence, knowledge contributions were measured at the lowest level of measurement, nominal, which should be improved and worked on in future research. However, this study did provide a snapshot of what an online news publication had done in terms of incorporating reader comments.

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Abstract

The social media site Twitter has had a dramatic effect on news gathering and reporting. Many stories start on Twitter either because they are announced there by PR representatives or because journalists and the public post the first details of a major story that they witness on Twitter. The story can move from Twitter to the conventional media and then back again through retweets and comments from users. This means that it is possible to analyse the anatomy of a major breaking story from first break through citizen contributions to in depth follow up by conventional media which themselves get tweeted. This research aims to track the movement of major international news stories, such as The Sydney Lindt Café Siege, the Parliament Hill attack in Canada, the Chibok kidnappings in Nigeria and the killing of Osama bin Laden with a view to creating a map of their structure. The resulting map of the progress of the story will be useful to students covering major international news stories or desk editors trying to make sense of what is happening.

Introduction

Writer and social commentator Neil Postman said in a conference speech in 1990: "All technological change is a trade-off. I like to call it a Faustian bargain. Technology giveth and technology taketh away. This means that for every advantage a new technology offers, there is always a corresponding disadvantage. The disadvantage may exceed in importance the advantage, or the advantage may well be worth the cost. "(Postman, 1990 #98)

That is certainly true about the effect of social media on journalism. On the one hand news broadcasts now feature video submitted by views often taken just minutes after an event. Everyone now has access to an audience for their views no matter how repugnant.

This paper seeks to examine the interaction of social media with news reporting when covering massive news events. There is no doubt that social media, in particular Twitter, has had an impact and is shaping news coverage I the time close to a major event. It is also true that the existence of Twitter has forced government and other agencies to take a more proactive approach to giving accurate and timely information about events to the public. In the absence of reliable sources the wider public has been found capable of supplying information ranging from the inaccurate to the downright fabrication with a view to creating social unrest. Of course there are also examples where members of the public have shown bravery and public spirit by sharing accurate information and pictures, often showing the full horror of terrorist events in a way that conventional media do not.

Before going any further it is worth noting what reporting on major incidents was like only a few years ago before social media and smartphones.

David Randall described the situation extremely well and those who have been in the situation will recognise his depiction in *The Universal Journalist*, Chapter 10:

“Major incidents are by their very nature chaotic. Even to the authorities it is often unclear, for many hours or even days, exactly what happened. Disasters can happen in inaccessible places, in countries where communications are poor, or where authorities are badly organized and secretive. They can happen at night, or be the kind of natural disaster like Hurricane Mitch in central America in 1998, where it takes some days for the full enormity to be appreciated. The death toll, which for our professionally ghoulish purposes is often the key indicator of how big the story is, can often be slow to emerge. First reports of it can be particularly misleading.

“Then there are the witnesses, invariably traumatized and confused, and, as a result, sometimes giving highly inaccurate testimony. The authorities too, can often mislead: most commonly because their first priority is saving lives and not assisting journalists: or because they have an interest in promoting one aspect of the incident, or disguising another.”(Randall, 2011, pages 121-122)

Mixed into that mêlée is the journalist trying to make sense of a huge situation from where they are standing while under pressure to file a story and competing not just with other news outlets but with colleagues for the glory of the by-line.

It is the dream of all news editors to be able to sit in a warm and dry office and let witnesses come to them through social media with quotes, pictures and harrowing stories of horror and heroism. And of course a fool proof app that can automatically spot hoaxes and fakes.

Background and Scholarship

Twitter started in 2006 as a group messaging service for Mobile phone SMS users. By 2007 it had migrated onto a web page and Twitter.com became known as a “micro blogging” service (Zhao, Jiang et al. 2011). The actual term was coined by an earlier service called Tumblelogs. Posts were limited to 140 characters; users could be contacted directly using the @ label and messages of a similar nature would be threaded using hashtag #. This labelling allows for ad hoc communities to form around and discuss a topic, a political development, a TV show or a football match (Bruns and Burgess 2011)

Users can follow accounts they like and get every Tweet from that user, and can in turn be followed. The Retweet feature allows users to send a Tweet from someone they are following to their own followers. This created a propagation model for information known as Social contagion (Lerman and Ghosh 2010). This pattern can give Twitter items similar properties to broadcast news.

Twitter Users were initially posed the question: “What are you doing?” since changed to “What’s happening?” The service was soon appropriated by a number of other usage classes (Mischaud 2007, Honey and Herring 2009). In particular public figures from the worlds of entertainment, sport and politics discovered that this was a novel way to communicate directly with their fans and supporters bypassing the conventional media gatekeepers (Marwick 2011).

Journalists joked that celebrity Tweets simply consisted of telling fans what they had for breakfast but when the number of followers for key celebrities such as Katy Perry (88.4 million followers), Justin Bieber (81.5million followers), Taylor Swift &5million) and Barack Obama (75million) followers it soon became a platform for broadcast which news desks could not ignore (Follower figures from twitterholic.com accessed 18/5/2016). News is being distributed through Twitter. CNN breaking News has 36.6million followers according to the same source. The NY Times has 23.5 million and the BBC News 22 million. Organisations such as Kensington Palace have Twitter accounts which have announced the birth of new members of the British Royal Family. Belgian Prime Minister Charles Michel announced an agreement in Talks between the Eurozone Countries and the Government of Greece

Figure 1 Kensington Palace announces Royal Birth

Figure 2 EU Leaders announce Greek Deal

Recently Twitter has been joined in importance to news organisations by a similar service called Instagram, which is driven by pictures and does not have the 140 character limit. However so far it seems that Instagram has a higher demographic in the younger end of the market and is not showing importance during major breaking news stories.

Twitter, Citizen Journalism and Breaking News

The principle of Citizen Journalism is that every person can be a journalist, in an analogous way to Martin Luther's claim that "every man is a Priest" (Bentley 2011). Professor Stuart Allen describes the history of the subject based on the idea that journalists and large media concerns control what is exposed to the world through the media. The availability of distribution at nearly zero cost through the Internet began a new wave. Blogging emerged a format for a one person publication (Hermida 2010).

News outlets had always distributed content contributed by members of the public. A one minute film taken by Abraham Zapruder of the Assassination of President Kennedy in Dallas in 1963, the rights to which were eventually sold to Life Inc. for $150,000 (Cosgrove 2014). Dramatic contributions depended on members of the public carrying a camera and knowing the value of what they had.

From the late 1990s electronic devices were becoming highly functional and inexpensive. In 2004 a Tsunami hit the Indian Ocean Rim and many video recordings of the events ended up on news broadcasts later, taken by holidaymakers with cheap camcorders – at the time not connected to a mobile phone or the Internet. In 2005 the 7/7 bombings of London came at a time when many mobile phone had digital cameras. The BBC, ITN and other news outlets invited the public to send in pictures and video which was edited for broadcast (Allan 2007). The mobile networks were overloaded and networks around the scene were shut down for four hours by the City Police (BBC News, 1 December 2005) so anyone submitting material had to rely on fixed line internet connections.

YouTube had only launched in 2005 but it represented a distinct change in that the creators of a video text could broadcast it without any help from conventional media. YouTube's slogan is "Broadcast Yourself". This site proved popular for posting video from many events in many countries, most notably the Middle East, where state broadcasters might not have full coverage of demonstrations. Similarly TV stations such as Al Jazeera as well as Western broadcasters were able to broadcast footage first posted online to Facebook or YouTube, albeit sometimes of uncertain origin (Howard, Duffy et al. 2011).

YouTube has had a significant effect on broadcast journalism as it has allowed amateur footage of live events to be available to mainstream media although there is concern about the veracity of much footage being posted.

When Twitter Launched in 2007 it too offered the chance to broadcast information without the intervention of an editor or mainstream media organisation, although only 140 characters at a time. Twitter allowed the world to speak out (Bruns and Burgess 2011, Murthy 2011). By this time media that was open to its users without moderation became known as Social Media and could be accessed through wireless networks using smartphones. The first iPhone was launched in 2007. Although a video cannot be fitted into 140 characters people discovered that they could post a truncated link to a YouTube video to a Tweet, making instant broadcast television.

Use of Twitter by Journalists

There has been extensive research into the use of Twitter by journalists, both news published on Twitter and use of Twitter to find and research stories. Notably Lasorsa et al (Lasorsa, Lewis et al. 2012) concluded that journalists mainly publish on Twitter as a way of publicising their stories and their publications. There are many other studies indicating how Twitter can be used to find stories (Ahmad 2010, Hermida 2010, Kwak, Lee et al. 2010, Zhao, Jiang et al. 2011, Doan, Vo et al. 2012, Vis 2012, Broersma and Graham 2013). Dan Gilmor has described Twitter as the "collective intelligence system" (Gillmor 2009). Much research has focussed on the notion of the public Tweeting what they are seeing and journalists then following this up which brings in the notion of "validation". Who is Tweeting and why? Validation was traditionally just part of a regular journalist's daily work and the strength of the professional journalist is that their sources have some integrity, with notably few exceptions. It is now emerging as a cottage industry of its own. Many of the leading agents in verification are member of the Firstdraft Coalition www.firstdraftnews.org.

When it comes to a breaking news situation there is likely to be a lot of chaff in the wheat. The Boston Marathon bombing in 2013 has been extensively studied notably by (Giordano 2014) and (Gupta, Lamba et al. 2013) who found that most Twitter traffic around the time of the bombing was people saying how they feel. A large amount of traffic was disinformation which included identifying an innocent person as a bomber (Giordano, 2014; Gupta, 2013). The innocent bomber was named on mainstream media which had become caught up in the Twitter frenzy. False information was also a key feature of Twitter coverage of Hurricane Sandy (Gupta, Lamba et al. 2013). Another world story where Twitter played a role is the Westgate Shopping Centre Siege in Kenya in September 2013. As in many news situations the volume of Tweets was counterproductive to the work of emergency services in distributing information and some information on Social Media proved useful to the terrorist gang as it revealed details of police operations(Simon, Goldberg et al. 2014).

However it is clear that news organisations and public order agencies have learned from these experiences. Police have discovered that Twitter is a good way to distributing accurate information to the general population more quickly than traditional public affairs work. Good information is the only known means of counteracting misinformation (Davis, 2014)

Research outline and methodology

This researcher does not have access to the "Big Data" technology of other researchers, but is grateful to them for their detailed work which deserves the attention of journalism scholars rather than those in the IT world where most of their excellent research is published. This paper will in many instances stand of the shoulders of these giants.

This is a qualitative study. The methodology employed for this research is based on a grounded approach. Each incident is different but may have some features in common with other incidents. In particular each incident may show more or less impact from social media vs. mainstream media. With each incident a profile is built up. These profiles are highly subjective. The profile is built up from examining the tweets sent out in the early period after the incident to see how the story "broke". This is combined with references to quantitative and other previous studies and interviews with experienced journalists and editors. Comparing the incidents is not comparing apples with apples for obvious reasons, not least because the growth of smartphone ownership as well as the awareness and importance of social media, and the awareness of its shortcomings, has increased over the last ten years, and over the last three years in particular.

The tool used to track back through the Twitter stream is Twitter Advanced Search (https://Twitter.com/search-advanced) which allows selection of Tweets from a particular date; the day before the event works best. Careful choice of keywords was also important. To reduce the number of redundant returns, use the switch –RT in the search line to cut out Retweets.

Chosen News Stories

1. Miracle on the Hudson (USA January 2009)
2. Osama Bin Laden's assassination (Pakistan/USA May 2011)
3. Boston Marathon bombing (USA April 2013)
4. Westgate Mall attack in Kenya (September 2013)
5. Mass Kidnap in Chibok (Nigeria April 2014)

6. Terror attack in Ottawa (Canada October 2014)
7. Siege in Sydney (Australia December 2014)
8. Brussels terror attack (March 2016)

   [There are several stories which might have been very interesting to have been included but were not for the following reasons. The Charlie Hebdo attack is an ideal candidate but the author cannot speak French. MH 370 and MH17 crashes would have produced interesting results for someone speaking Chinese, including Malaysian dialects, Russian and Ukrainian. Language limitations would also have prevented the use of stories such as the Earthquakes in Haiti (2010) and Nepal (2015). Would stories such as the collapse of Lehman Brothers (September 2008) have broken first on Twitter these days? Very likely I would say]

   The research question is: "what role did social media, particularly Twitter, play in the early reporting of major news stories and how did it relate to the output of major media brands?"

The Miracle on the Hudson

On January 15, 2009, US Airways Flight 1549 experienced a double engine failure on take-off from New York's LaGuardia airport then it flew through a flock of Canada Geese. Having lost all power the Captain Chesley Sullenberger opted to land the plane on the Hudson River. The Miracle was that all 155 occupants, the passengers and crew, successfully evacuated from the partially submerged aircraft as it sank into the river; they were rescued by nearby boats including the MidTown Ferry.

Murthy (2011) and others credited Janis Krums , a passenger on the Midtown Ferry, as breaking the story through his posting on Twitter service Twitpic which included this dramatic picture of passengers clinging to the sinking airframe awaiting rescue. Krums's picture was sent around the world and is still one of the news pictures of the decade. He has no known connection to any media organisation until this point. His post was only shared with 170 followers however it was redistributed around the world within minutes

Subsequent to his Tweet Krums was interviewed by journalists from all over the world as the ferry he was on was taking rescue passengers aboard to safety.

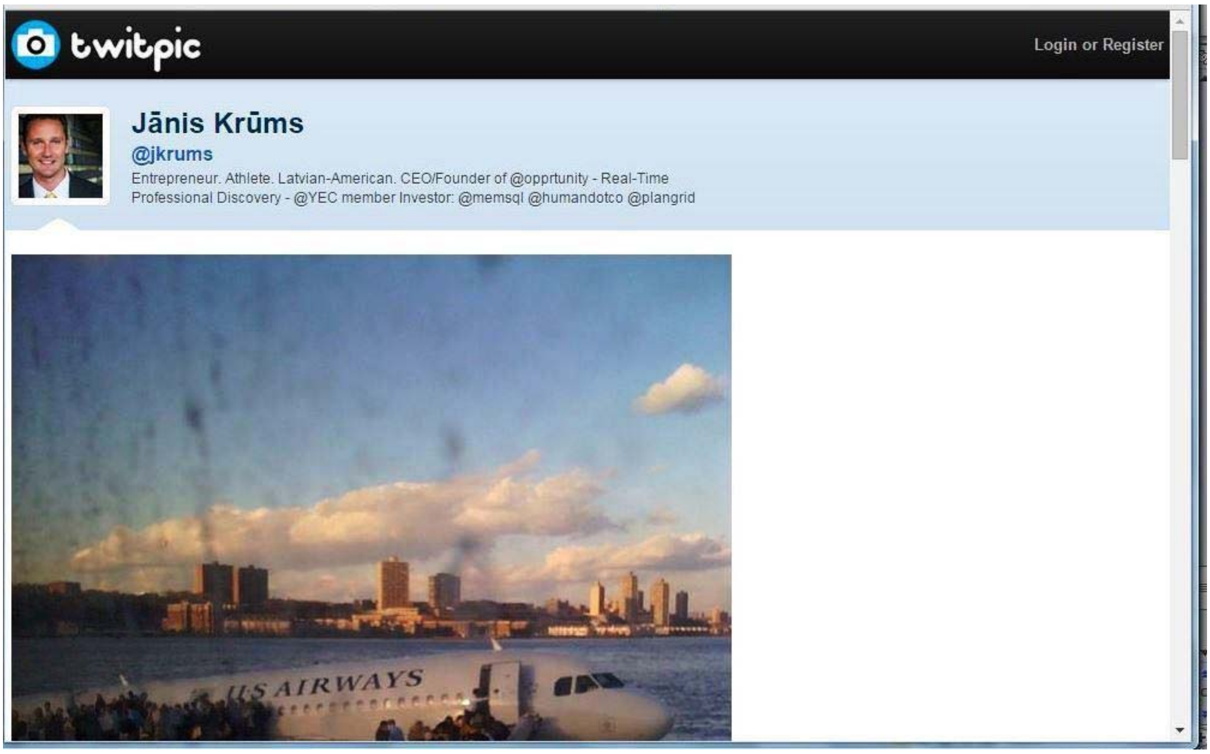


Figure 3 "Miracle on the Hudson 1: Plane in the Water

Picture© Janis Krums

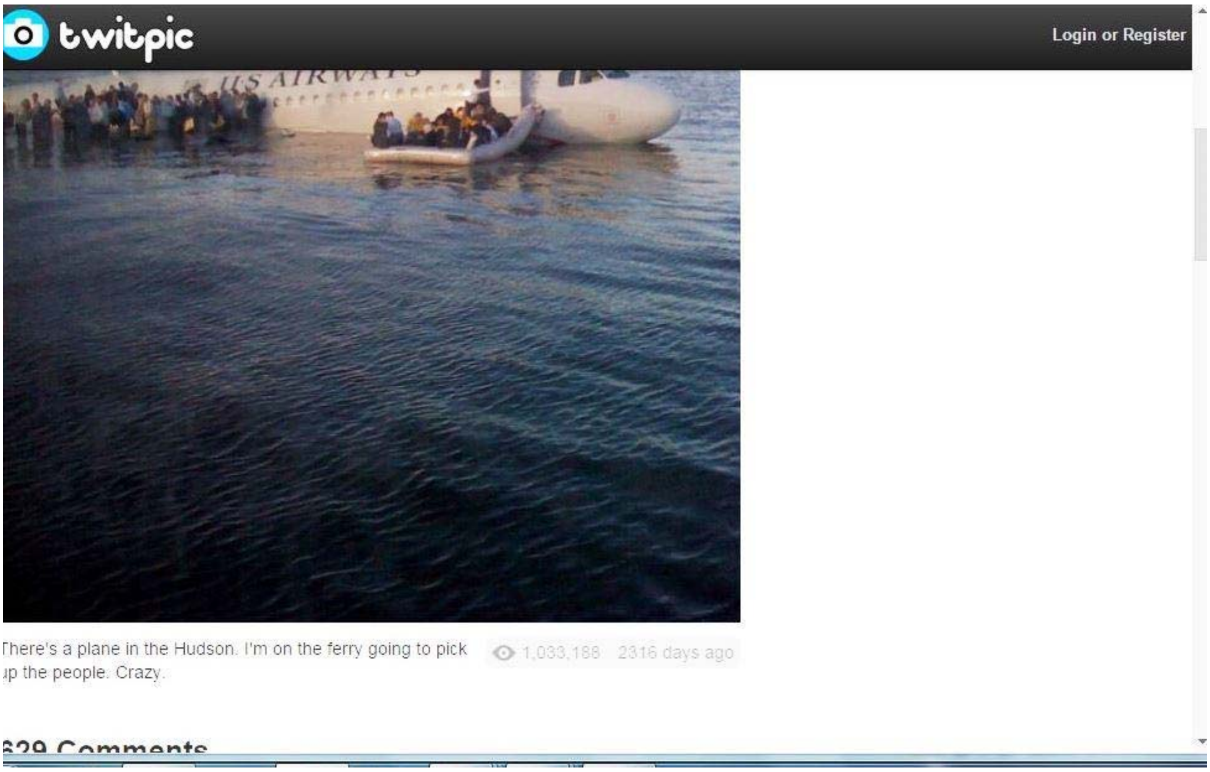


Figure 4: Miracle on the Hudson Passengers being rescued

Figure 5: Miracle on the Hudson, the Forgotten Tweet

Jim Hanrahan actually beat him by a minute or so with a text only message, note the low number of Retweets. Clearly the picture is what grabbed attention.

Krums said in an interview with CNN ("Miracle on the Hudson Pic changed his life", CNN.com 15 January 2014) that he simply tweeted his 170 followers. That is a lot of followers. A report in the UK Daily Telegraph ("New York plane crash: Twitter breaks the news, again", telegraph.co.uk, 16 Jan 2009) said that the mainstream media were reporting the incident within 15 minutes. Although Krums was later called by reporters from mainstream media and gave interviews there is no evidence that the tweet actually caused the first reports in mainstream media. However the picture he sent through TwitPic had a dramatic effect and was circulated around the world, allegedly causing TwitPic server to crash.   Although Twitter was first with the news it cannot be said to have broken the story.

Bin Laden's death in US attack on Abbottabad

Sohaib Athar became famous for giving the world a "live" commentary on the helicopter raid by US Navy Seals Team 6 on 2 May 2011 just before 1am PKT (Walsh 2011)

In fact he is just complaining about the noise the helicopters are making(Allan 2013), like so many others in that town he had no idea that he had a famous neighbour and no idea that one day such heavy handed visitors would come calling and kill him.

Figure 9 Seal attack or just can't get to sleep?

1am in Pakistan is actually 4pm in Washington DC and total secrecy had to be maintained until Seal Team 6 had cleared Pakistan Airspace. It was 9.45 pm when While House Press office called the resident press corps to say that the President was making an important statement. Dan Pfeiffer, the White House communications director put out on Twitter "POTUS to address the nation to tonight at 10:30 p.m. Eastern Time," He actually did not address the nation until 11.30pm. (Stelter 2011). In the meantime a Tweet was put out by Keith Urbahn, an associate of Donald Rumsfeld at 10.25pm. This circulated around the White House insiders and made it onto network news by 10.45pm. Various authors have described what happened including a detailed data mining study (Hu, Liu et al. 2012, King, Glascock et al. 2014)

Figure 10: the first leak1

As this tweet was circulated to the Washington press corps in this case the news was broken on twitter, scooping the President of the United States by more than an hour. The press corps wasted no time in circulating this story as it was tweeted by a reliable source and the story started to feature in that evening's news broadcasts before the President got to say it. As far as most of the world's population was concerned they got the news from the President as only 14 people retweeted Urbahn's tweet.

What is notable about this story is that Twitter was able to provide possibly the first contemporaneous retrospective eyewitness quotes. The story had already been validated all that was needed was an advanced search on Twitter to find tweets mentioning Abbottabad at about 1am Pakistan Time.

Boston Marathon Bombing

April 15, 2013, two pressure cooker bombs exploded during the Boston Marathon at 2:49 pm EDT, killing 3 people and injuring an estimated 264 others

Dan Lampariello Tweeted this picture little more than a minute later, the picture was taken while the blast was in progress.

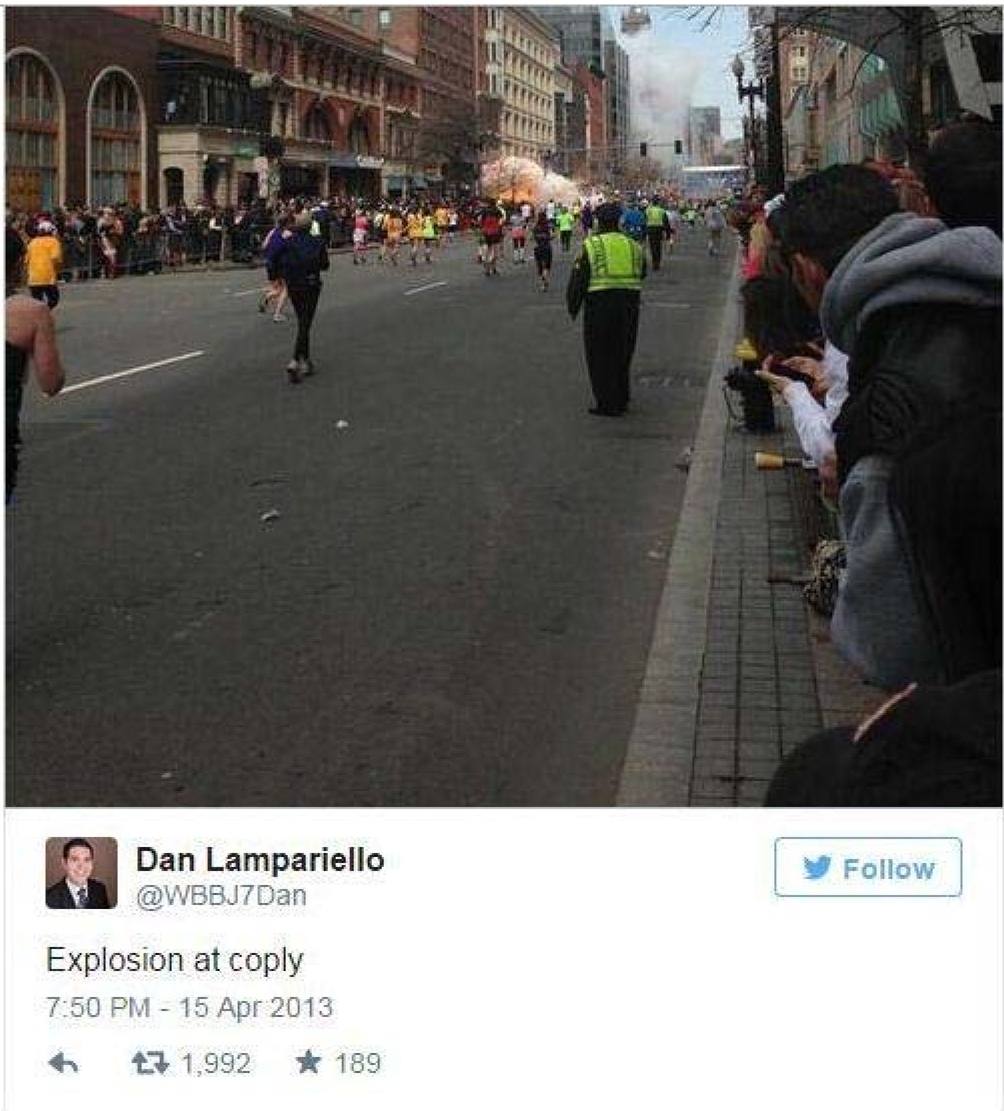

Dan Lampariello
@WBBJ7Dan
Follow
Explosion at coply
7:50 PM - 15 Apr 2013
1,992
189

Figure 7: A less specific Tweet

Actually a website called "The Skeptical Libertarian" found this Tweet about a minute earlier, This Tweeter has no known connection to the media but as you can see there was just one Tweet and the context of the story is missing from the Tweet.

***Figure* 8 Boston Globe just 7 minutes behind**

Legacy media was just 7 minutes behind, a verified account and cautious wording.

(Giordano 2014)(Gupta, Lamba et al. 2013) and others credit Lampariello with the first Tweet but make no mention of the fact that he is a journalist He is a native of Boston but works for a local TV news station in Tennessee, and was there on a weekend off(WBBJ 2015).

Gupta, Lamba et al 2013 is a superb analysis of the estimated 7.9million tweets that were sent in the aftermath of the bombing. It found that some 29 percent were fakes or hoaxes, while 51 percent were people expressing their feelings and the final 20 percent were passing on information. Some 2000 new Twitter accounts were opened just after the bombing, 2 out of three being on mobile devices, so that misinformation could be sent through the system. Most of these were closed by Twitter management soon after. One Tweet office a $1 donation to a fund for the victims for each retweet attracted 52,000 retweets, but sadly was a fake.

The most notorious fake was a claim that a young boy running to raise money for the victims of the Sandy Hook school massacre had been killed. Fakers even circulated a photograph alleged to be the boy which was picked up by mainstream media.. Another named the alleged perpetrator even though there was no evidence. The person named was later found dead. Several large mainstream news organisations repeated this faked identity of the bomber.

There were several positive outcomes. Firstly the Boston Globe(which won a Pulitzer Prize for its coverage of the Marathon Bombing was only 7 minutes behind the first tweet with confirmation of an explosion (8 minutes after it happened). Giordano, 2014 traced the retweets from different sources and discovered that tweets from recognised media brands were many times more likely to be retweeted that false rumours.

This clearly suggests that the consumers know the difference between reliable information and other information.

The second good outcome is that the Boston Police Department learned the benefit of using Twitter to spread accurate information and fight the fakers, and by doing this were able to engage with the public to give them information. It was a member of the public, using old technology, which supplied the information that eventually led to the apprehension of the second bomber.

The biggest lesson was probably learned by the mainstream media which had started with a love affair with User Generated Content (on the grounds of potential cost saving) but over the last three years has seen a concentration on the notion of validation rather than taking everything at face value.

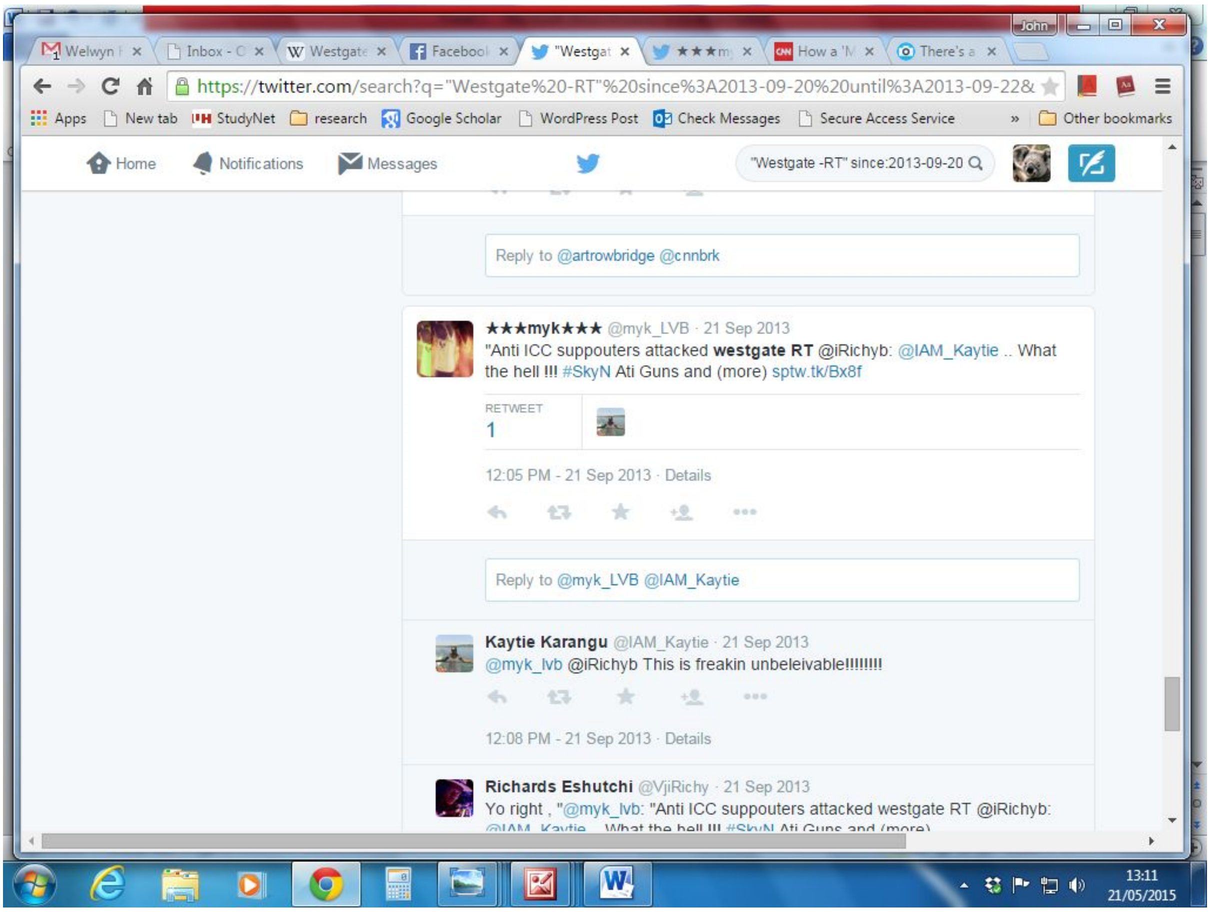
Evidence supporting that lessons were learned include a fictional depiction of the issues facing mainstream media brands during this event in the HBO TV series The Newsroom, written by

Aaron Sorkin (Series 3 Episode 1, originally aired 9/11/2014). The fictional journalists have to sit by while other networks take unconfirmed information from Twitter and end the week at the bottom of the ratings despite having "held the line".

There is no doubt that thousands of people were helped through the crisis, especially those living in the relevant areas of Boston, by the constant flow of information. Clearly they know the difference between reliable and unreliable sources because they were mostly retweeting reliable sources. One Boston Globe report was retweeted over 2000 times according to Giordano. However many hundreds of thousands of Bostonians were relying on local TV stations and newspapers to provide accurate information and millions of people watching the TV news networks. Twitter could be characterised as a sideshow in terms of number of people using it as an information source, although a highly disruptive sideshow.

Westgate Mall terror attack

On Saturday 21 September 2013 terrorists attacked shopper at the Westgate Mall near Nairobi in Kenya. Following a siege lasting 48 hours with running battles between the attackers and security forces 67 people were dead, including 4 attackers, and 175 people had significant injuries.



An excellent account and analysis of the attacks is given in the paper *Twitter in the Cross Fire—The Use of Social Media in the Westgate Mall Terror Attack in Kenya* (Simon et al, 2014).

When the siege began there was a great deal of confusing as the police at first thought it was a simple robbery. As time when on they realised it was more. One good thing about the use of social media is that responders were able to put out public safety information. People were also urged to tweet any details they had about people who had survived so that this information could reach their relatives.

However three were several problems mentioned. Firstly security forces became concerned about tweets concerning their operations and both the police and the army had to repeatedly send out their own messages telling people not to reveal details of police operations. Twitter was not the only culprit as TV news organisations were also showing video of army helicopters preparing an assault. The attackers themselves were also tweeting from within the siege. It is not known if the locations of any hostages hiding within the Mall was revealed on any social platform but it was noted as a potential risk in reports at the time.

Misinformation was also being distributed and the Kenyan Police were not managing the situation well. By the third day Twitter Inc executives got involved and helped the police set up a verified account.

Although the Kenyan emergency services were not prepared for the information war that would break out they did learn quickly. Many other emergency response organisations have noted the events here.

Kidnappings in Chibok, Nigeria #Bringbackourgirls

On the night of 14–15 April 2014, 276 female students were kidnapped from the Government Secondary School in the town of Chibok in Borno State, Nigeria. Responsibility for the kidnappings was claimed by Boko Haram, an Islamic Jihadist and terrorist organization based in northeast Nigeria (Hall 2014, Zenn 2014). The early hours of the police and Army investigation are mired in confusion and allegations. Some believed the kidnappings never happened and were part of some political plot against the then President Goodluck Jonathan who was soon to face an election which he would lose, partly because of the Chibok affair (Owen and Usman 2015). There was confusion as to whether the school was even open at the time and no registers of those present could be found.

Months later Boko Haram released pictures claiming to be of the missing girls and in May 2016 a girl was found by police who said she was one of the kidnapped girls, she was in the company of a man claiming to be her husband.

The first Tweet about the attack on Chibok was on the 15 April. However it was only some time later when a global campaign to raise awareness and stimulate more government action was launched using the hashtag #bringbackourgirls(Trending 2014)

By March 2016 some 6.1 million Tweets had been sent with this hashtag, those sending included Michelle Obama (The Guardian, 9/5/2014 retrieved 22/05/2015)(Lamb, 2016)

The first Tweet mentioning the girls' abduction appeared 24 hours after the event:

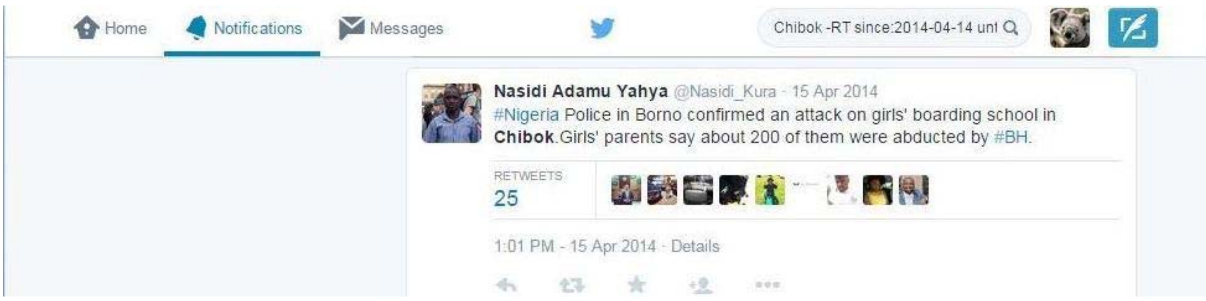


Figure 13: The first Tweet 24 hours later

And who Tweeted it?

Figure 14: Tweeter revealed as another journalist

You have to wonder if it had not been Tweeted by someone as high profile as a correspondent for the BBC Hausa Service it would probably not have gone much further. As it is the hashtag too many weeks to pick up any momentum but by the beginning of May President Goodluck Jonathan made his first public comments about the situation possibly reflecting the power of the campaign.

While it is fair for the people of Nigeria to resent the interference in their affairs which this particular Twitter conversation has caused, it demonstrates the point that now that we are all journalists and have access to a platform to broadcast ourselves those in authority can expect to sometimes face a challenge. Some may regards those who tweeted #bringbackourgirls as Western meddlers; others may say they were simply human being showing compassion in a fashionable way. But maybe the families of the girls are just glad someone

Parliament Hill Attack Ottawa

A series of shootings occurred on October 22, 2014, at Parliament Hill in Ottawa. At the Canadian National War Memorial, Michael Zehaf-Bibeau fatally shot Corporal Nathan Cirillo, a Canadian soldier on ceremonial sentry duty.

He then entered the nearby Centre Block parliament building. After wrestling with a security guard at the entrance, Zehaf-Bibeau ran inside and was cornered and killed by the Commons Sergeant-at-Arms, Kevin Vickers, after a shootout with parliament security personnel.

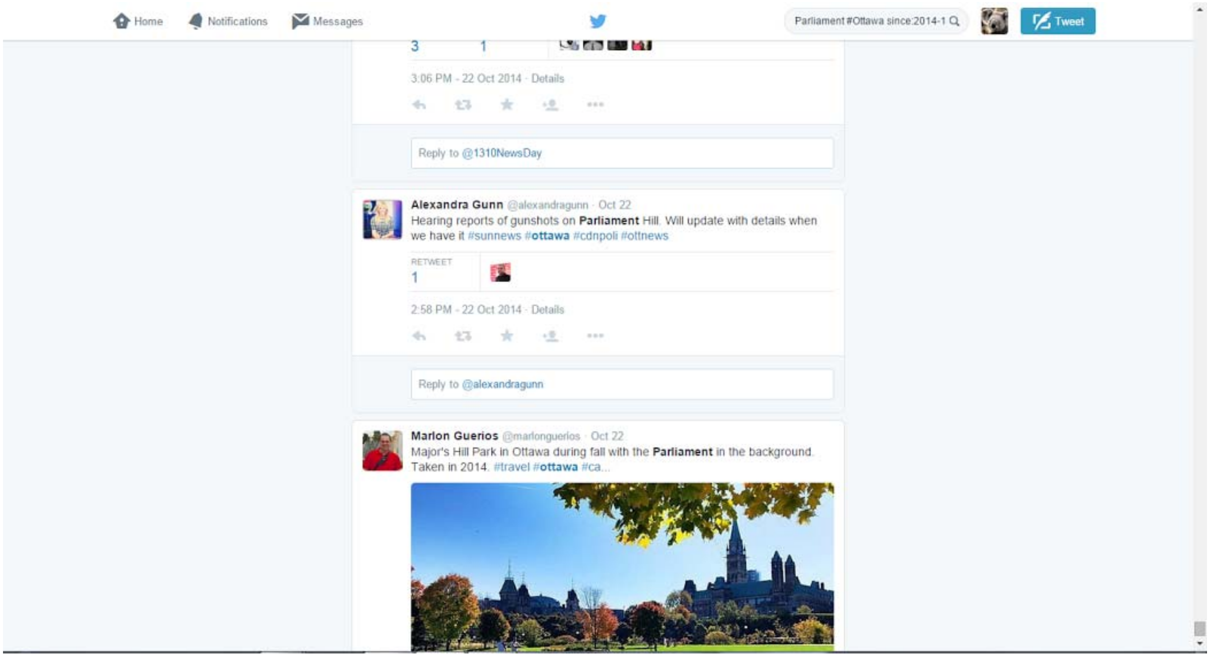


Figure 17 Dramatic pix of attack soon follow

The first tweet about the incident was from local TV and magazine journalist Alexandra Gunn. She sent her Tweet just six minutes after the incident began and three minutes after it ended with the gunman being shot dead.

Deserves a lot more than one Retweet

Figure 18: And once again the Tweeter is a journalist

What is interesting here is that it is such a short incident there is no running commentary or misinformation. There is plenty of speculation as to the attacker's motives but nothing that interferes with the police investigation or in any way endangers public safety. In fact many tweeters were urging people to stay away from the area and even stay at home. What distinguishes this incident is the large number of shocking pictures that were taken by people passing by and posted on Twitter. Several incidents like this have resulted in an outcry because it looks like the person taking the pictures does not care enough to help the poor wounded soldier and is just concerned with temporary notoriety. Two notable incidents happened in the UK. The murder of Fusilier Lee Rigby in Woolwich near London on 22/5/2013 when member of the public took a video of the murder waving around a machete while the soldier's severed head was seen separated from his body on the road. The video was heavily pixelated before being shown on TV. A similar case happed on 5 December 2015 when a man was filmed after an attack on three passengers at Leytonstone Underground railway station near London. The attacker was threatening others and while some people did film him on their mobile phones other bystanders tried to keep him at bay by throwing bottles at him. In the Canadian in incident many people are trying to help the poor soldier but could do nothing. Looking at the sequence of pictures is extremely distressing as the natural instinct is to try and so something to help, as well as the shock and revulsion.

It begs the question “Do we really need this coverage?”

The Sydney Siege

On 15–16 December 2014, a lone gunman, Man Haron Monis, held 18 hostages, ten customers and eight employees of a Lindt chocolate café located at Martin Place in Sydney, Australia.

When police raided the café two hostages and Monis were killed. The first Tweet does not identify it as a siege but is typical of the messages received by news desks when such things begin. Why so many police in a peaceful place like Sydney, must be something big going down.

Figure 15: Tweeter spots a story

The first Tweet is from a journalist who spotted a lot of police activity in Martin Place, colleagues Tweeted back that she should not reveal details of police operations in case that gave information to those responsible remembering Westgate.

Figure 16: Once again the first Tweeter is a journalist

What distinguishes this story is that rather than social media being criticised for its coverage by the mainstream media, it was the mainstream media that was criticised on social media. In particular Media Tycoon Rupert Murdoch was attacked directly when he posted a Tweet at the end of the event which sounded in bad taste (Muller, 2014). Those familiar with newsroom culture will understand the context of the Tweet but it is not something that should be shared in the community at large, although that is not an excuse.

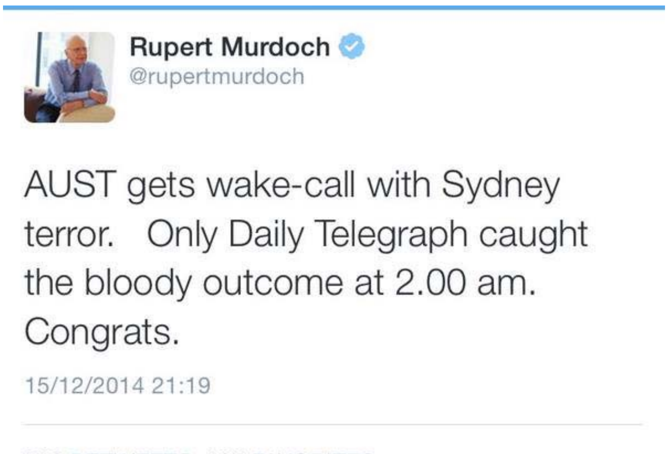


Figure 18: The Tweet that got the head of News Corporation into so much trouble

There were the usual false rumours, some of which were picked up by mainstream media desperately competing with each other. These included a false report that the Sydney Harbour Bridge was being closed and that mobile phone signals would be switched off. What cause more concern was the fact that the hostage taker was forcing hostage to display the ISIL Shahada flag against the shop window in full sight of the TV cameras which had taken up position inside the Channel 7 offices opposite the café in Martin Place (Hermida, 2014). Also the hostage taker was trying to get his messages out by forcing hostage to post them on their social media accounts. Following police appeals the mainstream media did not report the contents of these messages (Archie, 2016)

Benjamin Archie from the University of Newcastle, NSW, give an excellent analysis of the role played by social media pointing out that the terrorists have cottoned on to it, even if the authorities had not, by 2014 (Archie, 2016). He goes on to point out that tradition media effectively censored the information it passed to the public, some argue with good reasons for political reasons. Censorship by newsrooms was also for ethical and taste reasons e.g. not printing pictures of untreated casualties, withholding all details of kidnappings and listening to police appeals not to distribute details of police operations. He argues that the unfiltered stream of information through Twitter is giving the terrorists an unparalleled Situational Awareness that is helping them to maximise the impact of what they are doing.

In Sydney the police appealed to the mainstream organisations not to help the hostage taker but lacked any means to restrain those broadcasting details on social media and they complied. Before the incident several meetings had taken place between news executives and the police in order to discuss such situations should they arise and these paid dividends. However Archie points out that they could have tried explaining the situation more fully to social media users. In particular explaining the damage they could do with false information and danger created by reporting police activity. Those familiar with using Twitter in particular know that it has a certain “self-policing” power and someone identified as helping a terrorist would receive a lot of negative tweets – as Rupert Murdoch discovered (Dann, 2010)

Brussels Terror Attack this year

Without going into any details the last years has seen terrible tragedies in both Paris and Brussels on a previously unknown scale. Discussions with news executives and journalists reveal that many lessons have been learned. They report that the social media side of the operation is now integrated into normal news gathering rather than a set of “geeks” on a far off desk. They report that trained journalists with skills also in social media are rare.

One senior executive said: “There is no difference between news reporting for print or social media. Except the speed with which it has to be done. You have minutes to check stories which means you have to learn quick ways to establish validity. That means you make mistakes sometimes but if you are honest with the audience and tell them that some information is unconfirmed then you will survived”

Another said: “You know that if someone has set up their Twitter account and hour ago that their information is not very credible. If you look back and see they have been using the account for years then they might be valid.”

Other executives pointed out that in the UK the print media in particular has faced many years of attack for its ethical stances. This has led to the management of media operations being less pressured and more concerned about protecting the validity of the brand. Mainstream brans are also aware of the possible liability from using pictures and video sourced on social media. Big corporations have big pockets as AFP discovered then they were sued for $1.2million for using pictures from the Haiti earthquake (Estrin, 2013).

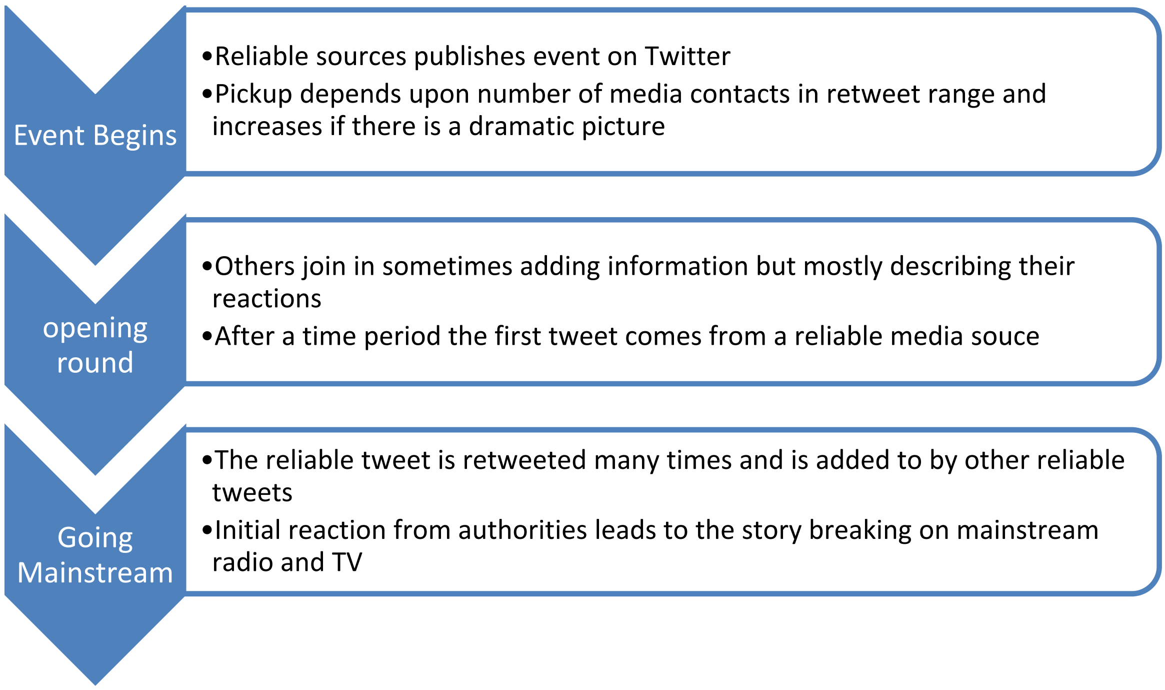
There were the usual fake videos and hoax stories, but no evidence that the mainstream media were getting fooled and people were relying on familiar news brands for information. However the volume of information was huge with the French Newspapers getting their reporters to Tweet regularly to keep readers up to date.

What emerged from Brussels was a different problem. Many hundreds, if not thousands of news outlets were finding witnesses with video footage on social media and were contacting them for comment and interviews as well as permission to use the video. One witness claimed to have had 10,000 contacts to his phone in one hour, not all were calls and some were pro-jihadi messages sending him abuse. He wrote a blog about his experience which was translated and published by Eyewitness Media Hub, a leading player in verification (Crunelle, 2016)

Figure 19: Crunelle’s tweet that set off a busy day for him.

Mapping the story

Without access to Big Data tools it is impossible to accurate map the way news flows in a major event, so what follows is an entirely qualitative map. It should be treated at best as a theory or even a working hypothesis. It is based on the notions that people retweet information from a reliable source more than an unreliable source, and secondly that nature abhors a vacuum and thirdly that on social media you can never win.:



Event Climax

- Reaction escalates as more people go on Twitter to look for news
- Most of the discussion is about news from mainstream media, pictures from reliable sources and expressions of emotion

The Vacuum

- The lack of fresh news creates and information vacuum.
- The Vacuum starts to be filled by speculation, followed by fabrication and conspiracy theories

Speculation climaxes

- Later those who have tome to the scene to get a better look and those watching on TV start to report police and other activity as part of their speculation game.

Dangerous bit

- Fabrication and conspiracy theories enter the mainstream media
- Public authorites try to stem the flow of misinformation and, fabrication and information about police activity

The Turn

- The Twitter community turns on the mainstream media for publicising and repeating speculatin and false information
- Everyone turns on the authorities for not giving enough information to the public

The Inquest

- After the event: police are criticised by everyone for not giving enough information, Mainstream media are criticised for bad behaviour and Social media is hailed as the Great Informer of the

Discussion of results

There is still much to learn about the role of social media in newsgathering, but for the moment it is clear that is has positive and negative impacts. Neil Postman may well concur.

Positive impacts:

Mainstream news outlets get access to eyewitness information very quickly after an incident. Similarly broadcasters have never had so much dramatic footage to broadcast so close to an actual incident.

Professional journalists have an important role in the social media age.

The public is being better informed about major incidents, both because police and other responders have learned the benefits of using social media and the public has mostly worked out what information can be relied upon.

Any government which seeks to censor or otherwise restrict the coverage of a major incident in its country for political reasons can forget about that idea

Positive for terrorists anyway, they are gaining an increased situational awareness during mass attacks. A big negative for the rest of us.

Negative results

People with negative motives are given a platform.

People who do not think about the consequences of their actions also have a platform.

People who think they are helping the situation by tweeting messages, pictures or videos and being deluged with media inquiries.

What can be done to mitigate the negatives? Well clearly freedom of speech is not up for debate although US Justice Frank Murphy said in Chaplinsky v. New Hampshire, 315 U.S. 568 (1942) said there were legitimate limits and exceptions to free speech in a democratic society.

In a unanimous judgement Murphy wrote: “There are certain well-defined and narrowly limited classes of speech, the prevention and punishment of which have never been thought to raise any constitutional problem. These include the lewd and obscene, the profane, the libellous, and the insulting or "fighting" words those which by their very utterance inflict injury or tend to incite an immediate breach of the peace. It has been well observed that such utterances are no essential part of any exposition of ideas, and are of such slight social value as a step to truth that any benefit that may be derived from them is clearly outweighed by the social interest in order and morality."

Those who put the public in danger, hostages in danger or obstruct the police in their legitimate duty should be prosecuted. In the meantime it may be for educators to start telling their students about the personal responsibility carried by someone who posts on social media, that they too, and not just the mainstream media have a moral duty.

ends

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Table of Figures

Figure 18: The Tweet that got the head of News Corporation into so much trouble
Figure 19: Crunelle's tweet that set off a busy day for him.

Mindful Communication For A Re-Emerging Asia: Building A New Asian Journalism Curriculum

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(Paper prepared for the Word Journalism Education Conference, Auckland, New Zealand, July 2016)

The ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) has come into force at the beginning of this year (2016) that would transform ASEAN into a region with free movement of goods, services, investment, skilled labour and freer flow of capital. The AEC envisages a single market and production base, a highly competitive economic region, a region of equitable economic development, and a region fully integrated into the global economy.

Meanwhile, a re-emerging China is investing heavily in building new connectivity across the Asian and Eurasian regions to rekindle the great trade and cultural routes of the past. The building of the Silk Route Economic Belt and 21st century Maritime Silk Route, a multi-trillion dollar project which China calls 'One Belt, One Road' (OBOR) is bound to change the world and transfer the center of gravity of the world economic system back to Asia.

To achieve these goals the media in Asia needs to play an important role in facilitating and promoting regional integration, and not promote conflict and war games. It needs to look at the region not as a collection of economic entities but as societies with a great cultural heritage and a long history of cultural and economic interaction. Thus, it needs to be mindful of peoples' need for social harmony and their longing for heritage protection after centuries of European cultural repression. This may also need a new look at aspects of training journalists to look at issues from a regional perspective with less emphasis on conflicts and greater efforts to build community harmony. In doing so, there may need to be new thinking on how to report on economic, business, environment and development issues, where Asia's needs, its priorities and its historical experiences are taken into account.

Mass Communication courses taught in universities across Asia are usually based on Euro-centric concepts of communication with a heavy focus on individual rights, freedom of expression and dissent - the so-called "fourth estate" principle. In the Asian region where the protection and promotion of community and social harmony plays an important role in political and social discourse, media practitioners' focusing on individual rights over community harmony sometimes creates unnecessary conflicts that could be avoided by more sensitive and mindful communication strategies, that would have the same result of opening up public and community space for more freedom of expression.

Focusing on an UNESCO-IPDC funded project at Bangkok's Chulalongkorn University titled "Mindful Communication for ASEAN Integration" this paper will discuss curriculum we have developed for training journalists from an-Asia focused perspective and its practical aspects, not only to Asia, but to other parts of the world including the West.

The project incorporates Asian philosophical ideas and communication theories emanating from Buddhist, Hindu, Taoist and Confucius teachings that cover areas such as social harmony, protecting nature and environment, respecting cultural diversity and encouraging sufficiency economic models.

Asia's Historic Contributions to Mass Communication

People across the globe believe that democracy and the mass media were European innovations. It is supposed to be common knowledge that democracy originated in ancient Greece in the 5th century BCE, but, we are kept in ignorance of the peoples' assemblies that existed in Vedic societies in India much before that, known as 'samitis' and 'sabhas' (Misra, 2000).

The Vedic period (1500-500 BCE) were the earliest period where Hindu scriptures the 'Vedas' were composed. It was the time Indo-Aryans settled into northern India and societies (tribes) were formed along with the formation of Hindu religious traditions. The societies formed had a chief called 'rajan' whose powers were restricted by peoples' councils called 'sabha' and 'samiti', which were responsible for the governance of the societies. The 'rajan' was actually elected or approved by these bodies. The 'sabha' are believed to be meetings of the community leaders/elders while the 'samiti' was more like a peoples' village council. Singh (1998) notes that the two assemblies formed an essential feature of the government in the ancient Vedic societies as described in ancient Hindu texts the Vedas.

> *Although it is difficult to distinguish between a 'sabha' and 'samiti' it appears that 'samiti' was the august assembly of a larger group of people for the discharge of tribal (ie. political) business and was presided over by the king, while the 'sabha', a more select body, was less popular and political in character than a 'samiti'. Although the functions and the powers of 'sabha' and 'samiti' cannot be exactly defined, numerous passages referring to them clearly indicates that both these Assemblies exercised considerable authority and must have acted as healthy checks on the power of the king* (Singh, 1998:8)

Isn't it what we today assign as the role of National Assemblies, City Halls and Village Councils in modern democracies?

And when it comes to mass media, we teach in universities across the world – including Asia - that it originated with the Gutenberg Bibles printed in movable type in the 15th century in Germany. Again, we ignore the fact that 6 centuries earlier the Chinese have printed the Buddhist Diamond Sutra on the block type (Morgon, 2012). In fact, it was the Chinese who invented paper and printing, and after the Tripitaka[1] was written at Aluvihare in Sri Lanka in the 1st century BC, it was the printed word that spread Buddhism across Asia.

Buddhist role in the development of print technology across Asia, especially in China and Korea between 1st and 7th century CE is well documented. As Mair (1994) notes Buddhism was probably the most important factor in the development of printing in China as the demand for its texts increased. Not only Buddhism influenced the spread of printing, but also, as a result the printed word helped to influence the society at large in adopting the norms of Buddhist thought. In the last two decades of the 11th century CE more Korean Tripitaka woodblocks have been carved than for Chinese texts, and Korea's zealous attempt to acquire Buddhists texts has inspired a printing boom.

If the origins of the mass media are about spreading knowledge via the printed text, shouldn't this be the beginning of the mass media? Why is Asia's role in these developments not acknowledged in our mass communication textbooks?

Balancing of Communication Theory

In the past two decades, as mass communication departments and schools across Asia grew there has been an increasing debate about de-westernizing communication theory - at least that taught in Asian institutions. We would prefer to call this "balancing" rather than "de-westernization". Accompanying this has also been a debate on "Asian Values" in journalism.

What makes a theory 'Asian'? As Dissanayaka (1988:6) noted:

> *If Asian scholars are to come up with models of communication which bear the imprint of their own cultures and which will enable them to comprehend better and conceptualize more clearly the complexity of human communication, it is indeed imperative that they shake off the influence of the mechanistic Aristotelian model. They need to address their mind to the task of finding out how best they can draw upon the cumulative wisdom of Asian human sciences as a means of formulating theories and models of communication that reflect the cultural ethos of the people, and for that very reason, are more pertinent and heuristically useful.*

Asian human sciences are predominantly based on Hindu, Buddhist, Confucius and Daoist philosophical teachings and ideas. The question here is whether contemporary Asian communication scholars are well versed in these philosophies?

Wang and Shen (2000) notes that even though there is a growing community of Asian communication scholars and journals dedicated to the study of

[1] Tripitaka are three categories of Buddhist texts what are called the Buddhist cannon. It consists of Buddha's sermons (sutra), codes of conduct for monks (vinaya) and Buddhist psychology (abidhamma).

communications in Asia, Asian communication researchers are yet to accomplish its mission to come up with Asian communication theories. While Dissanayake's 1998 book on Asian Communication Theory helped to shed some light on Asian philosophical thinking and traditions of communication to guide the researchers, there is a need of conducting authentic research and theory construction, which is still lacking.

> *Until today there have been few communication theories that can be labeled undoubtedly 'Asian'. This is serious because theories have a specific role to play in social scientific research: they are not just demonstration of original thinking, but determine the direction and the structure of inquiry. Every time 'Western' theories were shown to be inadequate in explaining changes in Asia, and every time Asian values and traditions were mentioned to suggest theoretical development, those in the Asian academic community are confronted with the question" where is 'Asian' communication theory? The inability to come up with a satisfactory answer indicates 'mission unaccomplished', thus a lack of substantial contribution to the field of communication from the part of the Asian researcher* (Wang and Shen, 2000:15)

Though this observation was done 15 years ago, nothing much has changed. One major impediment may be to change the mindset of Asian communication researchers who look up to Western researchers and institutions for guidance and recognition. Changing mindsets does not imply outright rejection of western theories, but examining these critically with a good understanding of your own socio-cultural context and its application to such circumstances. The age of globalization and ranking system for both journals and mass communication programs has been extensively skewed towards North America in particular, and this does not provide scholars the freedom and the encouragement to challenge the Western "norms" because their promotions and recognition depends on fitting into the western norms to get their papers published in so-called "first-tier" journals. If Asian scholars are to de-westernize communication theory they will also have to challenge this ranking system and proceed to set up one of their own as well.

Most of the contemporary media theory were first developed in Europe in the 19th and early 20th century, and later further developed and amplified in the United States. Despite its claims to be universal, these theories were marked by their own cultural context and circumstances of time and place. As McQuail (2000) observes these theories had a Christian bias, particularly towards the Protestant forms of Christianity, which was associated with capitalism and modernity. Thus, with its predominant attitude of superiority that justified the wonders of industrialism, power of capitalism, benefits of bureaucracy and the rule of law, they were able to communicate the idea that the Western world global project of colonialism was legitimate.

Even today, what we call the "global media" which is basically the Anglo-American media, reflects such communication systems of invoking legitimacy on Western dominated systems and ideas/ideologies.

For example, the Bretton Wood systems consisting of the World Bank (WB) and the IMF was always seen as working for the good of the world by regulating, monitoring and guiding the world financial system, even though it was heavily slanted to serve western economic interest and their domination. Thus, when China announced plans to launch the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) in 2015 western media focus was on how the new bank may dilute good governance and anti-corruption criteria practiced by the WD and the Japan-West controlled Asian Development Bank, even though the latter has had accusation of corruption leveled against it for years. McChesney and Herman (1998) describe the Anglo-American global media as "missionaries of global capitalism" for promoting a neo-liberal economic agenda.

Another area of obvious bias is in reporting human rights and global conflicts. Today this global media acts in unison in promoting a gospel of human rights with international human rights organisations that are mainly funded by western "donor" agencies. They accuse non-western governments of war crimes, especially in Africa and Asia, but turn a blind eye to worse war crimes in the Middle East and in Afghanistan / Pakistan by the West, often using the term "collateral damage" to describe these acts. There is that psychology that the West always acts in the common good of humanity. This is also the reason why when President Obama visited Hiroshima in May 2016 there were no questions asked on why he did not apologize to the Japanese for the horrendous war crime of dropping the atomic bomb over 50 years ago. The same media often harps on the need for the Japanese to apologize to Asian countries for war crimes they were involved during the second world war, even though the Japanese have done so indirectly many times.

Recently when the Islamic terror group ISIS started using sophisticated social media digital technology to reach western youth, attempts by western governments to block their websites and pressure Facebook and other new media technology providers to take off their postings were hailed as measures to fight terrorism and protect social harmony. However, when the Chinese (or any other non-western government) do the same to block youth groups using social media to bring social chaos (which is also a form of terrorism) to the country it is condemned as infringing on the freedom of expression.

Asian scholars need to come up with theories to explain the psychology of such thinking by the western media. It is also imperative that Asian scholars take a fresh look at the freedom of expression theories in the context of recent developments globally where the West fund and use non-governmental organization (NGOs) to create chaos in countries whose government is not subservient to western interests, using human rights as a cover. Communication theories need to be formulated using Asian philosophical principles of communicating mindfully to promote harmony.

McQuail (2000) argues that to expose Eurocentric bias in western media communication researchers need to come up with a set of sub-questions, such as, tracing the sources of western media bias and forms and levels of expression and solutions to solving such bias. “It is hard to ignore the fact that most media theorizing has been done by ‘Western’ scholars, living in and observing the media of their own countries and inevitably influenced by their own familiar social cultural context and its typical values” (McQuail, 2000:6).

Ever since the New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) debates of the 1970s there have been much material produced about the bias of western media news reports, but, hardly much theory to explain or dissect the practice, especially coming from an Asian perspective. Is the “fourth estate” theory of journalism to blame for this negative reporting? If so can Asia offer a better theory of journalistic practices that could promote cooperation and harmony rather than focus on conflict?

Gunaratne (2015:5) espouses a ‘mindful journalism’ path based on Buddhist principles to overcome this negativity and bias. “The aim of mindful journalism is not profit making,” he argues, “but truthful reporting without institutional restraints that might defile the clarity of the trained journalist’s mind.”

In their book ‘Mindful Journalism and News Ethics in the Digital Age’ Gunaratne, Pearson and Senarath (2015:18) described the theory of mindful journalism based on the Buddhist Four Noble Truths thus:

> *Mindful Journalism requires the journalist to understand the reasons for sorrow/unhappiness, and to desist from using his/her craft to increase desire(tanha) and clinging(upadana). We extracted this principle from the first and the second truths. The mindful journalist must distinguish between pleasure and happiness to understand the reality that cyclic existence (samsara) means suffering (dukkha) that one can avoid only by attaining Nibbana or enlightenment. Pleasure is physical and short-lived whereas happiness is mental and long-lasting. The mindful journalist must not mislead the people that lasting happiness is attainable without purifying their minds from defilements. Enlightenment means eradication of all fetters – the mental state of supreme bliss or Nibbana. S/he should understand the reasons for the existence of unhappiness (dukkha), and desist from using journalism to knowingly promote attachment (upadana) and desire (tanha).*

Gunaratne makes the point that a Western approach to journalism is more concerned with a negative rather than a positive approach, and generally means the immunity of the communication outlets from government control or censorship either directly through laws and regulation or indirectly through economics and political pressures.

Park (2015) expresses a similar view and argues that we should change the adversary style of journalism to a more cooperative and active problem-solving style of journalism. In order to do this, a journalist should enhance their views broadly and deeply. He quotes Taoist philosopher Chuangtzu parable of a well-frog: “you cannot speak of ocean to a well-frog, which is limited by his abode”. Thus, if we cling to a narrow sphere such as a well-frog, we will not able to see the great ocean. In the same way, it is necessary for a journalist to keep a non-biased view when reporting on social issues as well as actively solving problems. A journalist need not be hostile to government, the role of the journalists could extend to reporting on social problems in our communities in cooperation with government officials and non-government specialists based upon clear and concise analyses of contemporary social issues.

'Four Theories of the Press' (Seibert et al, 1956 cited in Nordenstreng1997) has for more than half a century defined the role of journalism and the media across the world with its all-encompassing media function theories of Libertarian, Authoritarian, Social Responsibility and Communist models. The Libertarian theory has underpinned the western "free" media model of the privately owned media being the "watchdog" of governments' abuse of power. What is known as the "fourth estate" principle. But, lately, with the mainstream media across the world becoming excessively commercial Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky's Propaganda Model and Manufacturing Consent of the news media theories have been gathering traction. They argue:

> *The mass media serve as a system for communicating messages and symbols to the general populace. It is their function to amuse, entertain, and inform, and to inculcate individuals with the values, beliefs, and codes of behavior that will integrate them into the institutional structures of the larger society. In a world of concentrated wealth and major conflicts of class interest, to fulfill this role requires systematic propaganda. In countries where the levers of power are in the hands of a state bureaucracy, the monopolistic control over the media, often supplemented by official censorship, makes it clear that the media serve the ends of a dominant elite. It is much more difficult to see a propaganda system at work where the media are private and formal censorship is absent. This is especially true where the media actively compete, periodically attack and expose corporate and governmental malfeasance, and aggressively portray themselves as spokesmen for free speech and the general community interest. What is not evident (and remains undiscussed in the media) is the limited nature of such critiques, as well as the huge inequality in command of resources, and its effect both on access to a private media system and on its behavior and performance. A propaganda model focuses on this inequality of wealth and power and its multilevel effects on mass-media interests and choices. It traces the routes by which money and power are able to filter out the news fit to print, marginalize dissent, and allow the government and dominant private interests to get their messages across to the public. The elite domination of the media and marginalization of dissidents that results from the operation of these filters occurs so naturally that media news people, frequently operating with complete integrity and goodwill, are able to convince themselves that they choose and interpret the news "objectively" and on the basis of professional news values. Within the limits of the filter constraints they often are objective; the constraints are so powerful, and are built into the system*

in such a fundamental way, that alternative bases of news choices are hardly imaginable[2].

There are two principles based on Asian traditional thinking that an Asian theory of media function could offer an alternative. That is taking into account the idea that things are impermamnent and subject to change, thus being mindful of this change and been able to understand, acknowledge and analyze it to assist people and society to adjust to these changes. The other, which naturally leads from the first, is that social harmony is paramount and journalism should play a more positive role rather than an adversarial role.

A harmonious interdependent relationship is the cardinal idea of Chinese culture and Confucianism could give some guidance in formulating an alternative media function theory. Confucianism, which is at the heart of traditional Chinese culture, the cosmology of *yang/yin*, originally used to explain the origin of the universe in Daoism, is the metaphysical basis of the philosophy as Liu (2008) explains:

> *Yang and yin are considered as the two forces that regulate the universe. Yang represents masculinity, power, warmth, light, dryness and hardness; while yin represents femininity, passivity, cold, darkness, moisture and softness. Everything in the world carries yang and embraces yin and achieves harmony by balancing these two forces. Following this cosmology of yang/yin, Confucianism emphasizes a harmonious society and the appropriate arrangement of social relationships (Hwang, 1999). In contrast to the western individualistic ideology of individual rights, equality and independence, in Confucian ideology, the harmony of society is based on hierarchical and asymmetrical relations between superior and subordinate; and social life is marked by a fundamental relatedness between the self and others, and between the individual and society. Such opposite but complementary forces as superior/subordinate, self/others and individual/society are dialogically interdependent in the process of communication and persuasion. The process of communication and persuasion, in turn, is the key to achieving harmony and to resolving conflicts in everyday interaction.*

Referring to Confucius's advice to his students, Dan (2006:22) quotes: "Everybody hopes to live a happy life, but, happiness is only a feeling, which has nothing to do with wealth or poverty, but with inner heart". Thus, the essence of Confucius thinking she argues is that you have to be yourself, but at the same time you have to think about others.

Ranade (2015) argues that Rasa is central to Indian communication. It is the nature of how an Indian interprets what is communicated to you. It invokes emotions to which you react and hopefully make life better for you. Information or news is like a performance, you absorbs and react to it. An understanding and application of Indian communication design can bring about a change in an individual's ability to live a good life.

[2] http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com/Herman%20/Manufac_Consent_Prop_Model.html

Adhikari (2008) in a comparative study of Aristotlelian model that underlies the western communication theory and S*adharanikarn* model which she presents as a Hindu communication model argues that the former is linear while the latter is non-linear. The mechanistic linear views of communication stem from rational, mathematical formulas, and Aristotelian models of persuasion and rhetorical analysis. The linear model seeks to represent communication in oversimplified way. In Aristotle's model the communicator is actively transmitting messages to a passive audience, who are not communicators, at least at present. The *Sadharanikaran* model, being a non-linear model, incorporates the notion of two-way communication process resulting in mutual understanding of the *Sahridayas*. Thus the interrelationship between those communicating becomes unique. Its non-linear structure and inclusion of elements such as context has profound consequences.

> *Although the purpose of Sadharanikaran is to achieve commonness or oneness the process itself is an asymmetrical one. There is unequal sharing between communicator and receiver; there is a greater flow of communication from the former to the later. ... they are not equal. The source is viewed as 'higher' and the receiver as 'lower'. The relationship is hierarchical and that of 'dominance' and 'subordination'. However, the source is held in high esteem by the receiver of communication, a relationship, idealized and romanticized in guru-chela relationship. Although the source and the receiver are unequal but they are Sahridayas, which makes even unequal relationship/communication satisfying and pleasurable to both the parties involved* (Adhikari, 2008:281).

With the advent of social media and community broadcasting across Asia, especially in the Indian sub-continent, it would be the best time to theorize the new communication models that are developing in very localized, rather than national, setting. Perhaps the traditional communication models what Adhikari and Ranade describes could be what is called Participatory Communication today.

Asia's philosophies are very much focused on how you guide the mind in the communication process, to be mindful of what you are doing. UNESCO's own preamble can give us some food for thought. It declares that ***"since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed"***.

Mindful Communication

Developing mindfulness is at the very heart of Buddhist teachings. Known as 'Vipassana', which means to see things as they really are, it is one of India's most ancient techniques of meditation. It was rediscovered by Gautama Buddha more than 2500 years ago and was taught by him as a universal remedy for universal ills (art of living). Vipassana (Mindfulness) is a way of self-transformation through self-observation.

Developing mindfulness has become a global movement today. This is a practice that could be cultivated to train our minds to practice Mindful Journalism in a secular setting. However, we need to be careful about this secularizing of mindfulness. As Venerable Phuwadol Piyasilo, a Thai forest monk and a graduate of mass communications from Chulalongkorn University warned in a keynote address to a seminar organized as part of this project:

> *Mindfulness practices in the West usually are found to be secular. They try to practice it without adding any religious value into it. This has become problematic because it could manifest itself with the wrong intentions. When you apply Buddhist teachings it is accompanied by panna - wisdom. Without this moral framework the practice itself would not be enough to fast-track us into the right direction. We need to bundle up panna into the practice itself. In the path itself, you need to develop this by accompanying this to make it successful* (Piyasilo, 2015).

Indian-Burmese meditation master S.N Goenka, who introduced Vipassana Meditation to the West in the 1980s also warned about the same attitude:

> *A life without wisdom is a life of illusion …. Being sensitive to the suffering of others does not mean that you must become sad yourself. Instead you should remain calm and balanced, so that you could act to alleviate their suffering* (Hart, 2012:19).

It is this principle we have applied throughout the process of developing our curricula – how to bring the practice of gathering panna (wisdom) into the practice while we try to focus our minds through the learning of skills and techniques to be mindful of what we are doing.

As discussed earlier, role of journalism can be defined today not as an adversarial model but a communication model that helps people to achieve harmony and happiness in life. Mindfulness training for journalists should be seen in the context of training oneself to gather knowledge and wisdom to gain a deeper understanding of the issues you are reporting about and how to communicate with (rather than to) the society/community to improve their lives. One may argue that investigative journalism does that. Yes, but, can we offer a more philosophical and ethical guide for that practice?

Let me now focus on the project we are involved at Chulalongkorn University. I would like to emphasize that this is still a work in progress, though we have compiled 6 pilot curricula under the UNESCO-IPDC project. In coming years we will dialogue, consult, cooperate and network among Asian journalism scholars and practitioners to develop an Asian approach to teaching and practicing of journalism, which we hope would become globalized in the future. We are also aware that de-colonizing the minds of Asian scholars is our biggest challenge.

We have composed 6 curricula, one of which is a research and workshop oriented module, while the others are for semester-long adaptation at university undergraduate level. The modules are,

- Media and Society
- Human-Centred Journalism

- Climatic Change and Sustainable Development
- Development Journalism
- People-Focused Story Telling
- Communication Theory (seminar/research module)

I will now discuss briefly each of the curricula.

Media and Society

The Media and Society curriculum was basically modelled on the curriculum that was designed for UNESCO's 'Model Curricula for Journalism Education for Developing Countries and Emerging Democracies' (in 2007), but, challenging some of the Euro-centric concepts in it. Also whereas UNESCO has recommended it for adoption in the second or third year of a journalism course we are recommending it for the first year because it is important for mass communication students to understand the role of the media in the society before they embark on learning the technical skills to produce news and information to serve that society.

The course is designed for a 12-week semester with 1 hour of lectures and 3 hours of tutorial each week.

In the very first week we will be introducing the Asian philosophical approach to interaction and governance, drawing heavily from Buddhist and Confucius ideas, and comparing them with contemporary Euro-centric ideas of good governance. In the second week we will explore the development of mass communication from Asia and the West, challenging the Gutenberg theory of the origins of mass media. We will look at how the printed word played a great role in the development of Asian societies from around the 1st century CE onwards. Third week will examine communication theories from the East and West and its application to different societies.

Week 4 will focus on democracy and human rights and examine closely the western-centric notion of individual rights and the Asian version of social, economic and development rights. This will be examined in the context of the role freedom of expression (in the media) should play in the development of human society as a harmonious entity. In week 5 looking at the economy of the media, we will examine media function theories in the context of media ownership structures including public service broadcasting and community broadcasting. In week 6 we will zoom in on the issues dealt in the previous 2 weeks and explore the idea of the freedom of the press with Asian philosophical approaches to social responsibility and the art of living harmoniously. What role media could play in achieving such a balance and where does human rights non-governmental organisations (NGOs) fit in.

Weeks 7, 8 and 9 will take a critical look at the news production process, its propaganda role and shaping of mindsets. Week 7 using communication theories such as agenda setting, hegemony theory, propaganda model, manufacturing consent, media framing and spiral of silence, we will examine how news could colonize your mind (both from an international and domestic context) and shape your perspectives and values. We will draw extensively from material on the subject written by Asian communication scholars. Week 8 will focus on arts and entertainment looking at reporting of cultural diversity and defining concepts of modernity and contemporary cultural tastes and expressions. Week 9 will explore the process and role the media plays in promoting and developing certain economic models such as the heavy emphasis on neo-liberal economic model. Compare this with alternative models such as sufficiency economics, gross national happiness, micro-credit and social business.

Week 10 examine the role media could play in making the society more aware about the environmental crisis the world is facing and how to promote sustainable economic models in harmony with nature. What are the different philosophical ideas that the media could utilize in this task? Week 11 focus on internet and new media impact on society, while in the final week we look at reporting conflicts with special emphasize in examining socio-economic issues in Asia that lead to ethnic and religious conflicts.

As this course is designed to be used predominantly in Asia, there is an extensive list of resource material including research papers, articles, you tube and other audio-visual resources drawn from Asian sources. Yet, western perspectives are not ignored in this course design. We are trying to arrive at a balance between eastern and western ways of thinking, and how modern societies could benefit with exposure to both.

Human-Centred Journalism

Human-Centred Journalism course is recommended for offering in the 1st year of a 3-year Bachelor Course in mass communication / journalism. This course takes a humanistic approach to train students in investigative journalism. The main objective is to help them to develop thinking and skills in mindful conceptualizing, researching and writing human-centred journalistic stories. The course will focus on the roles of humanity in the analysis and the practice of complex storytelling. Students will be familiarized with the framework of deep listening and dialogical interviewing techniques, mindful investigative research methods and humanistic interpretation of surveys, as well as different forms of narrative techniques for human-centred journalism.

This is a 12-week course with 4 hours (two 2-hour classes per week) of a combination of lectures, contemplative workshops and dialogues, seminars, extensive fieldworks, individual assignments and tutorial.

In the first week of the course students will be trained to listen to one's inner voice and engaging with the mind and body based on mindful meditation techniques. In week 2 students will be introduced to traditional Asian and Western philosophical approaches to humanity, and they will also be introduced to the art of listening to others with contradicting points of view, with compassion. In week 3 students will be guided to interpret data from a humanistic perspective as a journalistic exercise.

Week 4 will include a practical exercise with a series of field trips to a site of potential final assignment reporting. Students will be advised to observe the situation and human interaction on site, as well as to talk to as many people as possible. In week 5, students will view a movie and followed by a discussion of their emotions, insights and experience after seeing the movie. Then, they will be guided to discuss different ways in which human-centred storytelling can be combined with data journalism.

Weeks 6 to 8 will focus on anatomy of human-centred story telling with a lecture followed by class exercises of read and critique of stories, as well as pitching a story idea to the lecturer for approval for final exercise. Weeks 9 to 11 will include fieldwork, writing of first and final draft. In week 12 final copy will be presented to class in seminar style with discussion of the exercise. The grading for the final assignment will include submitting a reflective essay on the exercise as well.

Climatic Change and Sustainable Development

Offered as a final year elective, this course is designed to develop deep and broad understanding of sustainable development and climate change as well as its interconnection with institutions especially media. On top of the understanding, the students will be able to cover a story about sustainable development and climate change in compelling and educational fashion. It will consist of weekly sessions of 1 hour lecture and 2 hour tutorial. Ideas from Asian philosophy on nature, environment and mental well-being will be incorporated to the curriculum.

This 12-weeks course will begin with the first 3 weeks devoted to understanding concepts of development, climate change, environmentalism and an examination of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the UN. In week 4 we look at specific issues in terms of SDGs that are applicable to Asian countries in both Southeast Asia and South Asia. Next week will be devoted to understanding the scientific basis of climate change followed in week 6 with a specific look at its impact in Asia, particularly ASEAN countries.

In weeks 7 and 8 students will examine specific issues in respect to climatic change and sustainable development that is applicable to their region, and draft story ideas for specific stories from their own country. This would be a major term assignment to be done individually or as a group.

Week 9 will explore and make a critical assessment of the role of international organization, governments and NGOS in dealing with sustainable development and climate change issues. In weeks 10 and 11 we will look at how the craft of journalism could assist communities and individuals to deal with the impact of climatic change and promote sustainable development. And in the final week the students will present their feature stories to class in a seminar style exercise.

Development Journalism

To be offered as a final year elective, this course is designed to develop specialized reporting skills of a journalism student in reporting issues dealing with various aspects of development. The traditional concept of development itself would be challenged in this course and new ideas examined and explored that are specific to the Asian environment. Traditional Asian wisdom will be considered in the context of developing new paradigms of development reporting. Lecturers are encouraged to source sample story ideas for each week from their own country or the immediate neighbourhood. The semester long 12-week course will be presented in 3 hour weekly blocks of workshop style lectures and class exercises.

The week 1 lecture will examine contemporary news values in reporting development issues and give an overview of the construction of news values, function of news agencies and the global flow of news and its role in shaping development news. In weeks 2 and 3 we will look at the definitions and philosophies of development, its historical context and what is development journalism and how it should be structured.

In week 4 we will explore the challenges development journalism faces due to commercialization and globalization of the media, which makes sensationalism and dramatization important aspects of news reporting, and why development journalism should be about reporting a process. Reporting of the 2004 Asian Tsunami will be closely examined as a case study. Week 5 will be devoted to looking at the craft of doing development features both for print and broadcast.

Weeks 6 to 8 will cover different genres of development reporting. In week 6 we will look at economic reporting and examine Asian concepts such as sufficiency economics and gross national happiness, while in week 7 we look at arts and entertainment as a development issues especially in the Asian context where cultural identity and protecting cultural heritage have socio-economic connotations. In week 8 we examine the role of the Development Journalist in covering environmental issues and supporting sustainable development goals.

In week 10 we look at the issue of cross-border development reporting in the age of globalization such as labour migration, human trafficking, asylum seeking and money laundering. In the final two weeks students will also examine new paradigms of development reporting using new media technology, social media and community media avenues, as well as the role of the citizen journalist in development reporting with examples drawn from across Asia.

People-Focused Story Telling

This is a curriculum, which will incorporate both Human-Centred Journalism and Development Journalism, but, offered as a final year elective to specialize in telling stories that are focused on peoples' wellbeing.

It would be offered more as a seminar styles teaching module with a lot of practical work in the field to develop the students' skills in listening intensely to peoples' perspective as well as methodology to canvass and encourage people to speak out. Knowledge of the concepts of loving kindness and compassion to humans as well as animals will be imparted to students in order to develop empathy with the people and other living beings in gathering and composing stories.

Communication Theory

This curriculum is somewhat different to the other 5 in that it is designed not for a 12 week course but seminar style presentations to be offered as either a final year special project for a Bachelor Level mass communications student or to be offered at Master level in mass communication / journalism courses.

As explained earlier, mass communication theories we use in tertiary institutions across Asia is heavily, if not exclusively, drawn from western sources, especially American. Most Asian scholars believe that they need to master these theories to be considered as experts in the field. Thus, to breed a new generation of Asian communication scholars who are willing to challenge this notion, they need to be gradually weaned away from that mindset.

It is for this reason that we need to present an advanced level communication theory curriculum that will critique the existing communication theories and examine and explore traditional Asian philosophical thinking to develop new communication theories. To do this, it is necessary to encourage field research rather than mere literacy surveys and philosophical discussions.

There may not be weekly sessions, but the course will extend through the semester with regular seminars and fieldwork. The seminars would be of 3-4 hours duration and may consist of a panel of speakers or the lecture presenting a short lecture and followed by screening of videos such as 'Ted Talks'. First two weeks will be a critique of existing communication theories followed by two more weeks of examining Asian philosophical ideas and traditional methods of communication. Two more weeks will be devoted to discuss, compose and present ideas for research to develop possible Asia-focused communication theories. Second half of the semester will be spent in researching and compiling a research report on Asian communication theory to be presented to a seminar in the final week of semester. This module will have no exam and the student will be graded on this final presentation of a research paper to given specifications.

What is Different – East vs West Battle?

One is entitled to ask what would differentiate these curricula from the existing ones. Is this an exercise in East versus the West battle? It is certainly not and challenging the West is not trying to create conflict. Using an eastern metaphor – this is an exercise in developing panna (wisdom) to gain insights and be enlightened to the diversity of perspectives available for communicating in todays information rich society.

Today, we are at an age where the West is going gaga in adopting mindfulness to improving its health services and stressful lifestyles. Mindfulness is at the root of the ancient Asian philosophical approach to a healthy enlightened lifestyle, which the Buddha taught over 2500 years ago. But, the Asians have forgotten it, perhaps as a result of 500 years of European colonization and indoctrination that makes them feel inferior in the face of panna (wisdom) from the West.

Petras (1993) said over 2 decades ago, that western "cultural imperialism plays a major role in disassociating people from their cultural roots and traditions of solidarity, replacing them with media created 'needs' which change with every public campaign". He went on to discuss the role CNN, Hollywood, Disney, etc play in shaping peoples' perspectives and tastes.

Be it Asian communication scholars uncritically adopting theories of communication that have been framed and developed in a western social context; or Thai media reporting uncritically in their front page how local football fans turned up in their thousands to welcome the British football champions Leicester City to Bangkok because it is owned by a Thai tycoon; or Asian media carrying pictures and reports from western media sources of President Obama being mobbed by Vietnamese youth in Hi Chi Minh City without asking the question "why couldn't Obama apologise for American war crimes in Vietnam such as using napalm bombs" dropped not that far from the city; all these point to what one may call the impact of cultural imperialism on the Asian mindset.

What Asia needs today is a new journalism for an emerging Asia that is able to rid Asians of this hangover of cultural imperialism and critically examine and assess itself as well as the outside world, especially the news and information coming from the West.

New Journalism for an Emerging Asia

What this curriculum aim to do is to develop journalism training programs in the region where Asians draw inspiration from their own traditional wisdom and feel proud and confident to adopt these to craft a model of journalism, which while not been overly adversarial, yet, will not be overtly uncritically supporting the status-quo in order to protect social harmony. The Buddha proposed a Middle Way to guide your lives, and that is what we hope we will be able to achieve in developing a system of news journalism for an emerging Asia. He attributed peoples' unhappiness (dukkha) to three defilements – desire (tanha) and clinging (upadana) fostered by ignorance (avijja). If you take any topic for reporting, these three elements are there, especially so in economic or developmental reporting.

One must also note that the emerging Asia we talk about has many crucial issues that journalism must tackle and report critically with mindfulness, insight and wisdom to create just and harmonious societies. Let us look at some of these issues.

Reporting Economics – GNP or GNH?: When journalists report about economics it is often tempered with data or statistics on economic growth, stock market fluctuations and the like. Rarely do they talk about how this data filter down to the people to impact on their lives. On May 9th 2016 Rodrigo Duterte a mayor from the southernmost island of the Philippines won a landslide victory at the presidential elections where the incumbent President Benigno Aquino's own candidate was a distant second. Aquino, who cannot stand for re-election under the Philippines constitution, has presided over an economy that has recorded the most sustained economic growth in recent history and he has been praised by both the local and international media for economic management. But, the "booming" economy has only benefited at most 1 percent of the population, most of the other 99 percent were living in dukkha and they expressed their feelings at the ballot box, even though Duterte during his campaign threatened to kill criminals without going through the due legal process – which alarmed human rights activists - but not a large segment of the population. For them, the reason for their dukkha was rampant criminality and corruption. Mindful journalism should have picked up on it by investigating the reason for peoples' dukkha.

After the 2008 global financial crisis and its mounting social costs, economists in the West are warming to the Buddhist concept of the "Gross National Happiness" (GNH). Since 1971 the tiny Buddhist Kingdom of Bhutan in the Himalayas, has rejected the GDP based method to measure development and championed the GNH approach to development. In 2015, at the UN Climatic Change conference, the world body adopted Bhutan's call for a holistic approach to development, a move endorsed by 68 countries. A UN panel is now considering ways on how Bhutan's GNH model can be replicated across the globe.

Meanwhile, Thailand's military government is promoting its King's "Sufficiency Economics" model that was mooted at the peak of the 1997 financial meltdown in the kingdom. To this day, his idea has fallen into deaf ears in Asia. But, after taking over the chairmanship of the G77 grouping of developing countries at the UN this year, Thailand organized a "Roundtable on Sufficiency Economics" in Bangkok in February (2016) for G77 members. Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha in an address to the delegates explained that this economic model focus on 3 components – reasonableness, moderation and self-immunity – along with two other conditions – knowledge and morality. "The concept emphasizes community development that strengthens the community to the self-supporting level," he was quoted by Thailand's MCOT News as telling the delegates[3].

It is a lack of mindfulness and insights resulting in a lack of panna that makes the media report about "progress" through data and statistics and not by judging the happiness levels of the people – which is people-centred journalism. This trend is evident also in Europe and the US, and you don't need to be a Buddhist to gain insights into it. It is there in the Catholic Church's teachings on 'Liberation Theology' and Pope Francis has vehemently drawn attention to such economic injustices in the past couple of years.

China's Silk Routes and South China Sea: As pointed out earlier, there is ample evidence of blatant ideological and cultural bias, in the way developments in Asia are reported by the western global media. For example, they focus on the so-called dispute over sparsely-populated islands in the South China Sea and projects

[3] http://thailand.prd.go.th/ewt_news.php?nid=2801&filename=index

a rising China as a threat to its neighbours, ignoring conveniently China's 'One Belt, One Road' initiative to revive the old Silk Routes on land and sea, where China is pouring trillions of dollars into improving road, port, railway and other infrastructure across Southeast, South and Central Asia, and most countries in the region are eagerly cooperating with China to build these infrastructure. On the other hand, when President Obama visits China's neighbours and talks about the South China Sea conflict and offers military "aid" to countries like Philippines and Vietnam, the western media does not raise the issue of whether the US is fanning conflict in the region and if their 'Pivot to Asia' policy is a convenient excuse for Obama to be a salesman for the ailing US arms industry. Sadly the Asian media is also not asking these questions and uncritically reproduce news copy from the western media sources.

Socio-Economics of Religion and Identity Conflicts: Another area where journalists need to thread with mindfulness and insights to develop panna is in reporting conflicts – the so-called ethnic or religious wars. Asia with its multi-religious and multi-ethnic populations and colonial histories of divide and rule, with minorities given educational and economic privileges while the cultural rights of the majorities were repressed, socio-economic issues underlie many of these conflicts like in Myanmar, Malaysia, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India and the Philippines. Buddhist communities in Myanmar, Cambodia and Sri Lanka, Hindus in India and Muslims in Malaysia and Indonesia, even though they constitute a majority within those countries, they are worried about threats to their cultural identity and economic well-being from minorities groups that are international well-connected and funded.

In Asia, the need to protect the rich Hindu-Buddhist cultural heritage from aggressive proselytization by Pentecostal Evangelical Christian and Wahhabi Islam is creating many new religious conflicts across Asia such as in parts of India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Thailand. These also have a socio-economic context because both these groups have superior financial resources from overseas to target poor members of Hindu and Buddhist communities for conversions exploiting their poverty. Reporting these conflicts without being mindful and gaining insights into these socio-economic issues help to fan conflicts and not promote social harmony.

Climate Change and SDGs: Today with increasing frequency of changing weather patterns creating havoc across Asia and the Pacific, there is a lot of reporting about the devastation and the relief and rebuilding processes. While the media does a good job in drawing the attention of the international community to the suffering of the people, there is very little, if any at all, of reporting on how to rebuild resilient communities. Just reporting about the rebuilding of devastated homes, schools, hospitals, bridges and roads is not enough, journalists need to gain insights into the necessary technology and be mindful of the process of obtaining such technology and hardware to rebuilt. They should also be mindful of the unfair trade regimes, which make such technology unaffordable to poor communities or corruption in the disaster relief industry that provides "Band-Aid" relief and also unethical practices of "faith-based" (religious) relief aid groups.

Modern Day Slave Trade: We need to be mindful of the fact that much of our global media networks - as well as local ones - are owned and/or controlled by arms manufacturers, oil companies, and those who benefits from the branding label culture that is promoted by the media. It is in their interest to have a large reservoir of poor living under poverty to be exploited. Thai Buddhist social activist Sulak Sivaraksa (2015) calls this “structural violence” of our economic systems. We rightly condemn slavery practiced by Europeans 300 years ago, but today we have a system of modern day slavery that is practiced mainly by Asians and Arabs. That is called ‘labour migration’ and we see it all over Asia with some countries supplying the cheap labour while the others benefit by employing them without any labour rights or even not been paid at all for their labour.

An extreme case of this was the slavery exposed recently in the Thai fishing industry where many of the boys working in the fishing trawlers have been kidnapped from neighbouring Myanmar. But much worse are the activities of recruitment agencies that operate as legitimate businesses, which treat migrant labourers as commodities to be traded and not humanbeings. Then there is also the human trafficking for the sex industry, which is rampant in many parts of Asia.

Asian journalists have to be not only mindful of these migrant flows and injustices built into the system, but also develop insights into reporting such issues using non-traditional systems of communication such as social and community media, because the traditional media may not be accessible for such investigative people-centric reporting.

These are few of many challenges a journalist face in the modern world – be they in the East or the West. As Gunaratne (2015) hinted in the concluding chapter in his book on Buddhist Journalism, we may need to develop new media function theory to practice a Buddhist – or for that matter an Asian – model of journalism that would need a different economic setting:

> *A Buddhist-oriented journalism cannot depend on revenue from advertising, which is instrumental in creating tanha(craving) and other nidanas (motivations), which are linked to dukkha (suffering/sorrow). Therefore it cannot thrive as a competitive private enterprise. It can succeed only as a community enterprise supported by ordinary people, global civil society, and foundations committed to Buddhist values. In short, Buddhist-oriented journalism must move onto situate itself within the framework of interdependence (or no-self), a vital aspect of Oriental cosmology* (in Gunaratne, Pearson, Senarath 2015:221).

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Current Citation Trends of Journalism and Mass Communication Scholarship and the Role of Total Online Access as a Predictor of Citations

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Abstract

This study is a content analysis of a census of 99 articles of *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly* which were published in 2012-14 and examines the article attributes that predict citations. The results of the study shows that three main factors predict number of citations: publication year, topic related to new media technologies, and amount of online usage of the articles can predict 70% of the variance of citations in Google scholar for articles published in that three year period by November 1, 2015. The amount of online usage is the most dominant direct predictor of citations. Topics that garnered the most citations are review or research trend analysis articles, research articles on internet and technology issues such as digital divide and media uses and adoption. The medium of study also makes a big difference in citations. Articles which study mobile media received the highest citations, followed by social media, and television. Radio and newsletter, magazines received the least citations. We did not find any significance in gender of the senior author, Ph.D. institution and country affiliation which are author-related attributes in predicting citations. Study settings, number of references, originality of data, use of human subjects or funded studies do not boost the number of citations of the articles.

Introduction

Citation counts are increasingly used by University administrators to evaluate the scholarly impact of a faculty member's research. Citations and citation rates in top journals now can strongly influence the decisions of whether a scholar should be employed, promoted, tenured, or even granted a raise in salaries especially in research-intensive universities (Cameron, 2005; Holden, Rosenberg, & Barker, 2005; Toutkoushian, 1994). Hack et al.'s (2010) study purported that citations signified the value of published research and served as a useful instrument to examine researchers' academic performance and to justify the protection of research time for highly cited scholars. There is even a so-called "tyranny of citation impact" on scholars in East Asian countries because higher education institutions in these countries are trying to compete with the Western countries in research productivity and academic impact (Leung, 2007).

In the relatively young field of journalism and mass communication, whose oldest association, the Association of Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, was founded in 1912, scholars establish their academic status less by historical elitist reputation than by research output, which are usually measured by citations. The number of communication journals has drastically increased in the past 20 years. A report by National Communication Association (NCA) shows that the number of Social Science Citation Indexed (SSCI) communication journals doubled from 36 in 1997 to 72 in 2012, then reached its height at 76 in 2015 (NCA, 2015). All the leading scholarly publishers publish journals in communication field.

With the incorporation of digital technologies and digital publishing, many research articles are now accessible online via journal websites and other online databases. Some journals even display their "most read" articles on their websites, which are those with the highest total online usage recorded on the journal's website. However, the figure of the total online usage does not necessarily represent the full readership. It merely represents the online readership of the regular subscribers and the readers who access the articles directly on the website. The readership of print issue and other databases are not included in the online total usage figure. On the one hand, such display of "most read" articles not only show the ranking of the articles in terms of online readership and total downloads, but also shows the most popular articles/topics at the time, thereby potentially promote those "popular" articles as people tend to pay attention to what is "hot" in the field. On the other hand, however, can this "best-seller" type of promotion strategy similar to bookstores regarding journal popularity be translated to citation ultimately? If the answer is positive, then it can be further used as a good proxy and an early indicator of citation impact of specific articles and research topics for scholarly publishers. This study proposes total online usage as a predictor of citations. It also investigates the extent of author-related and content-related attributes of the article in affecting the citations in the field of journalism and mass communication.

Literature Review

Citation Use and Criticism of Citations as an Academic Currency

In academe, the number of citations is commonly viewed as "the reward currency of science" (Merton, 1968; Figa`-Talamanca 2007; Knobloch-Westerwick & Glynn, 2013) because a highly cited article is considered as successful (Letchford, Moat & Preis, 2015) with high academic quality (Turk, 2007). In order to measure citations, various impact factors and citation indexes such as Thomson Reuter's/Institute of Scientific Information (ISI) Journal Citation Impact Factor and Google Scholar's h5-index are used. Such journal impact data are frequently utilized by librarians in making resource decisions on selecting journals or databases and keeping them current (Duy & Vaughan, 2006; Holden, Rosenberg, & Barker 2005).

Yet there are also severe criticisms of using citations solely to measure scholarly impact. For instance, NCA's (2015) report on journal impact factors criticizes the misuse of journal impact factors for incorrectly equating citation practices as intellectual impact or academic quality. In addition, many bibliometric studies have shown that citation is a reciprocal behavior among authors who cite each another. Such behavior is prevalent among academic cohorts, colleagues, friends, and team members (Ibarra, 1992, 1993). Further criticism comes from Moed (2010), who argues that the potentiality of citations varies not only between disciplines or journal subject categories, but also differs between journals within the same subject category. MacRoberts & MacRoberts (1989) also point out the problems in journal citation practice are that researchers do not pay careful attention to the content in the references. Many researchers were suspected of not having read the cited works at all. Similarly, Bollen et al. (2005) contend that impact factors places citation frequencies over other variables, and ignores “a network of relationships” among scholars and totally neglects data generated from readership or usage. The sole emphasis of citations as a measure of scholarly impact has been challenged by other scholars who argue for additional measures such as expert ratings to be taken into account (e.g., Ha et al., 2015).

In addition, Thomson-Reuters/ISI’s two-year impact factor is calculated based on the number of citations of a journal’s articles generated in the previous two years. Such calculations take three years. Hence, there is a call for alternative metrics other than citations to be used in measuring immediate academic impact, such as library’s electronic journal usage data (Duy and Vaughan, 2006), news media coverage (Peters, 2013), the number of tweets or postings in social media (Eysenbach, 2011; Liang et. al 2014), and social network analysis of journal closeness and betweenness based on users and authors (Bollen et al., 2005).

In our opinion, using an article’s online downloads and page views as a measure may be the simplest and most convenient way for a publisher to determine its citation potential. One reason is that data are readily available to the publisher. If the ranking is shown to the public, as some publishers do in listing the “most read” articles, then it can have an effect on citations for users who read the “most read” list and are prompted to read those articles. Further, if the online usage of an article can effectively predict its subsequent citations, it then can be used as a very helpful tool to gauge readers’ interest and use of the articles.

Factors Affecting Citations of a Journal Article

Although it is easy to say that the quality and importance of a journal article will determine its citations, how to evaluate the quality and importance of an article in a specific field can be tricky. Peer review is the initial stage of assessing the quality and significance of an article’s contribution. It will take a long period of time for an article to be considered “seminal” in a discipline, which may or may not be cross disciplines. Thus it will yield much more reliable insights on the specific topics by focusing on one discipline rather than on a broad range of disciplines that are not comparable.

Quite a number of factors can determine the potential of citations to an article. Such factors may range from popular keywords to disciplinary domains. For example, Simkin and Roychowdhury's (2003) study shows that titles of articles containing popular topic keywords, downloads, and citations are highly correlated. They find that about 70% to 90% of scientific citations are copied straightforward from the references of the particular paper without sufficient or intentional reading, sometimes even without reading at all. Letchford et al. (2015) even discovered that the shorter the title of an article, the more likely the article will be cited. Yet they also acknowledge other more significant factors that may affect the number of citations, such as the prestige and popularity of a journal. In addition, Yogatama et al.'s (2011) study shows that the number of citations depends on academic domains, among which some are more highly cited than others. However, it has not been fully explored in the field of journalism and mass communication so we do not know which specific domains are more likely to be cited than others. Similarly, in journalism and mass communication research, what hot topics generate the most citations have not been systematically studied, although Smith's (2004) study on finance journals has revealed that articles published at the early stage on a hot topic are more likely to generate higher citations. In order to address such issues, our current study will also identify the latest trends in journalism and mass communication scholarship through citation analysis.

Our study focuses on factors that are both unrelated and related to the article content by first examining non-content related source factors, such as author and publication attributes, and then content-related factors. We will then compare the strength of these factors versus that of the total online usage factors in predicting the subsequent citations of those articles.

Non-Content-Related Factors: Author and Publication Attributes

The non-content-related factors our research focuses on include country of author(s)'s affiliation, the number of authors, the gender of authors, and Ph.D. program affiliation, which are four commonly identified factors related to the source rather than the article itself. Such significant source-related factors have proven influential on citations. For instance, Foster et al. (2007) discovered that the "citation geography" is dominated by English-speaking countries, such as the UK, the US, and

Canada. As the U.S. is the academic center in the field of journalism and mass communication, scholars from the U.S. tend to have a much larger academic network than non-U.S. scholars. Hence, the U.S. institutional affiliation of the author(s) may possibly affect the citation of the published article. Further, the number of authors is another possible factor. Calver et al. (2010) found that the high citation counts in biology can be attributed to scholars' previous highly cited works, a big group of coauthors, and long length of papers. Based on the advantage of network size, the larger number of authors on an article may also have a higher reciprocal network for citing their works. However, these factors may also be field-specific. Thus Slyder et al. (2011) find no influence of network factors on citations in the fields of geography and forestry. Therefore, it is not clear whether such results hold true for the field of the U.S. journalism and mass communication.

The third factor we focus on is author's gender, which has been shown to be an important factor on citations across disciplines. Studies indicate that female scholars' articles in non-male dominated fields are cited more frequently than in male-dominated fields (Borrego et al., 2010; Long, 1992; Slyder et al., 2011; Symonds et al., 2006). Knobloch-Westerwick et al. (2013) argue for the Matilda effects and used Role Congruity Theory to explain the inequality of academic recognition for female scholars. The Matilda effect indicates that female scientists are systematically under-recognized, while the Role Congruity Theory explains that people are expected and constructed to play the social role that is congruent with their gender. Knobloch-Westerwick and Glynn (2013) showed that male scholars receive more credits for their academic performance: male scholars receive more citations than females in both science and social science fields. Moreover, research topics are found to be stereotyped by gender. Topics such as political communication are pertained to male scholars because males are stereotyped to be competitive and assertive. On the other hand, for female scholars, topics such as children and media seem more interesting to them because females are assumed to be nurturing and caring.

Content-Related Factors in Predicting Citations

Several content-related attributes of research articles may predict citations as well. The topic of the article is probably the most important one. Moed (2010) reviewed factors influencing citations, such as the subject field, topic, and impact factor of the journal, and find that some fields, such as life sciences, have much higher citations than social science fields. In addition, even within the same field, basic research is found to have higher citations than applied research. Further, review articles tend to be cited more frequently than other types of articles.

Still other factors found in our study that may affect citations include length of an article, the total number of footnotes (citations), data originality, use of human subjects, self-citations, study settings, funding support and research approach. Longer articles and more citation references are an indirect measure of rigor of study because article length and citations are perceived to be in proportion to their contribution in the editorial decision process. Data originality may increase the value of the study by offering newer and more customized data to the topic. The use of human subjects and funding support serve as an indicator of a higher investment of resources in the data collection. Besides, similar to the academic power structure discussed earlier, study setting matters. Since the U.S. is the academic center and a political leader in the world, studies conducted in the U.S. may be more likely to be cited than those that are not.

Although subscription-based journals typically do not provide open access to their articles unless authors pay extra fee to obtain an open access, some subscription-based journals offer free access to their journals as a free trial for promotional purposes (sometimes once a year, sometimes several times a year). Some journals also reward the reviewers by offering free access to their journal articles for 30 or 60 days. Brody, Harnad, & Carr (2006) discovered that, in an online self-archived database, the number of downloads is positively correlated with the number of citations of articles in the field of mathematics, physics and computer science. They further found that, although the correlation may vary from discipline to discipline with the growth of open access content, download statistics still serve as an influential indicator of research impact. However, their study neither examines subscription-based journals' websites nor includes other online page views without downloads. In our study, the online usage number includes both the number of downloads and the number of page views due to the fact that some viewers may merely browse over the abstract or read the article without downloading it. Such casual browsing is still of importance for citation purposes as shown in the study of Simkin and Roychowdhury (2003).

Research Questions

Based on the literature review above, we developed the following research questions for this study:

- RQ1.What factors can predict the number of citations of an article in the field of journalism and mass communication?
- RQ2. To what extent does total online usage predict citations in a subscription-based journal?

Apart from source factors and content attributes, it is necessary to identify hot topics in the field represented by citations. As the journalism and mass communication field is about the study of mass media, both topics of study and medium/media on which the article focus may affect its citations. Hence, we ask RQ3.

- RQ3. What topics and medium/media of study generate most citations?

Further, we also examine whether the Matilda effect (i.e., citation preference for male authors) exists in the studied journal.

- RQ4. Are there significant differences between male and female scholars' in choice of topics and citations received?

Method

This study looked at citation patterns to articles published in *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly* (*JMCQ*) in 2012-14. Established in 1924 and as the flagship journal by association for Journalism and mass communication scholars, the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) and the oldest journal in journalism and mass communication, *JMCQ* enjoys a high prestige in the field. It is a double-blind refereed journal.

Covering almost all the interest areas of studies in the field, *JMCQ* serves the 28 divisions and interest groups of the association. It is subscription-based and offers occasional free online access to a limited number of articles in specific promotion time periods. It also rewards reviewers with a 60-day free access of the publisher's journals after completing a review.

We correlated three types of data: the citation data reported by Google Scholar, the total online usage data provided by the publisher of *JMCQ* and a content analysis of all articles published in *JMCQ* between 2012 and 2014. The reason for studying only *JMCQ* is that the journal is broad enough in interest to represent the field. However we are aware of the limitations of only studying one journal and have no access to proprietary log data to do comparison with suitable journals in similar fields. The first author of this article is the current editor of *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*. But during the study period of 2012-4, she was only one of associate editors of the journal in charge of less than 15 percent of the manuscripts' editorial decision. Due to the small sample size the predictive power of certain variables will be limited and readers are cautioned not to generalize the results across other journals.

The study period is selected from when full online web access of the journal articles became available. The period is short enough to minimize the variation of the publishing time between the articles, during which we are able to obtain the citations of the articles at least 12 months after their print publication. Thus the articles' short-term impact can be closely related to their online access, which is the highest when an article is first published online or in print, aside from free access promotion periods.

The work was undertaken by five coders that were all graduate students in the field of Media and Communication. The coders first practiced the coding of eight articles together. After achieving consensus on the category items, they independently coded the articles. Intercoder reliability was conducted for the categories being analyzed. Ten percent of the articles (n=10) were coded for a second time by the first author, to compute the inter-reliability. As expected, those transcribed items such as issue, publication year, and keywords received perfect reliability (100% agreement among coders). The study variables have high inter-coder agreements. A few variables that require substantial judgment have more variation in reliability in terms of percent agreement: Gender of first author 100%, data originality 100%, country of affiliation 100%, institution with Ph.D program 100%, study settings 100%, funding support 100%, medium of study 95%, research method 94%, human subjects involvement 90%, and topic 81%.

Measures

Only the first author was measured in our study for the author's country affiliation, gender and Ph.D. program affiliation. This is because in journalism and mass communication authorship order represents the significance of contribution made by each co-author of the article.

Author Factors

U.S. affiliation. The affiliation listed in the article of the first author was coded as either U.S. or non-U.S. affiliation.

Gender of the first author. Two methods were used to determine the gender of the first author. If the author's first name can be clearly identified as female such as Mary, the author was then coded as female. If the author's first name was not gender-specific, neutral or unclear, coders looked up the faculty web page or conducted a picture search of the author to determine gender.

Ph.D program affiliation. The first author's affiliation was used to determine whether the author enjoys the privilege of a Ph.D program research network. The official web page of the first author's university was examined to determine whether there is a Ph.D program in media or communication of the institution.

Content Attributes

Article length. The number of printed pages of the article.

Topic. We first examined if the coded article has a primary focus on new media technology, which means a focus on social media, mobile media and mobile apps, Internet, or Digital Video Recorder (DVR). Then an article was then categorized into 36 topic categories, which are not mutually exclusive. Hence an article may have several topic designations.

Funding support. Acknowledgment of funding received by the author noted in the funding declaration section of the article. It is a binary variable of yes and no funding support.

Study setting. Two types of settings were identified: U.S. and non-U.S.

Human subject use. The articles were coded by looking whether it involved any type of data collection methods that include human subject responses, such as surveys, experiments, interviews, etc., which typically requires approval from the Human Subjects' Review Board prior to conducting research in the U.S. Other methods without involvement of human subjects, such as content analysis, were considered as non-human subjects.

Data originality. Articles were coded either as having original data or having no original data. Articles that use customized data sets instead of previously collected data sets from third parties were coded as having original data. Articles that used secondary data were coded as non-original data.

National sample. National sample was defined as using a probability sample of national media or population in a country. A national sample is considered to be more representative than a local or regional sample and may be of more reference value to researchers, which may thus enhance citation probability.

Medium. A total of 14 medium choices was listed. The coder checked all the media that were included in the article. If there was no specific medium mentioned, then it was coded as media in general.

Total online usage. The total number of online access includes page views of the abstract or the full article, and the number of downloads of the article from the journal's web site.

The information of publication year, issue number, and article title were all transcribed from the journal issue. The citation style of the journal during the study period was Chicago with endnotes.

Citation Count. Our coders collected citation data, as of November 1, 2015, reported by Google Scholar for citation counts, which are open to public for free and can be verified and replicated. As the study looked at the short-term impact, the prompt availability of data and citation counts reported by Google Scholar is taken as the most appropriate citation metric to use. Our choice is based on several reasons. First, Google Scholar includes many different kinds of publications, which are not limited to certain specific journals as other platforms do (Journal Citation Reports, for example). In addition, Delgado & Repiso's (2013) study which compares the citation counts of Google Scholar

Metrics, Web of Science, and Scopus and indicates that Google Scholar is as reliable a source as the other two in identifying major journals in communication studies. Moreover, as Harzing and van der Wal (2008) demonstrate, the Google Scholar H-index is superior to JCR's Impact Factor specifically for the field of economics, business and communication.

Results

Profile of the Articles

The study data consisted of 30 articles published in 2012, 34 articles in 2013, and 35 articles in 2014. Broken down by issues, 24 articles are published in spring, 25 in summer, 23 in autumn and 27 in winter issues. Among the total 99 articles, the lengths of 63 (63.6%) articles range from 18 to 21 pages. The majority of articles (n=72, 72.7%) have less than three authors. Only 35% of the articles are single-authored. Authors' self-citations are quite common. Only 32 (32.3%) articles appear to have no self-citations in their articles. Most articles (n=88, 88.9%) use primary data.

Among all the senior or sole authors, 58 (58.6%) are male and 41 (41.4%) are female. The majority of the first/sole authors (n=66, 66.7%) are from a university with a Ph.D. program in communication; 22 (22.2%) are from a university with a master's programs in communication; 9 (9.1%) are from a liberal arts college or a university with only undergraduate programs; only 1 author comes from a non-academic affiliation. A majority of the first authors (86%) are affiliated with a U.S. institution. Only 24 (24.2%) of the studies are funded by a research-grant.

Slightly more than half of the articles (n=54, 54.5%) involve human subjects. Among those that employ quantitative methods, 63 (63.6%) use national samples, 5 (5.1%) use regional samples, 20 (20.2%) use local samples, and 11 (11.1%) use international samples. A large majority of the articles (n=78, 78.8%) are conducted in a United States setting.

Regarding medium of study, 36.4% of the articles study newspapers; 29.3% study websites, online media or the Internet in general; 12.1% examine television; 7.1% investigate social media; 5.1% radio; 3% mobile media.

Predictors of Citation Counts

A hierarchical regression analysis shows that non-content related attributes of an article is a more effectively predict citations than the content attributes. The beta weight is a standardized coefficient that describes the predicting power of the independent variable on the dependent variable. A number of 0.30 means that 1 standard deviation change in the independent variable will lead to a 0.30 increase in standard deviation of the citation number (dependent variable). In the first model of the analysis with non-content related factors such as author and publication attributes, the only significant predictor is the publication year (beta=0.30, $p < 0.01$), confirming other previous studies that articles published longer/earlier have an advantage over articles published more recently (see Table 1). Such effect is still prominent within a short period of three years examined in our study. The author attributes do not matter much so much. The simplistic model can explain 22% of the variance in citations. The second model includes the content attributes of the article. In addition to publication year and publication issue, the only significant predictor is the new-media-related topic (beta=0.28, $p < 0.01$). The addition of content attributes only explained a difference of 3% variance of citations over author/publication related attributes. Content attributes such as length of an article, data originality, funding support, use of human subjects, and national sample use have no significant impact on citation count.

Insert Table 1 here

Interestingly, when we added the total online usage of the article to the final model, 66% (R^2=0.66) of the variance of total citations of the articles can be explained. The amount of total online usage appears to be the most dominant and direct predictor of citations. It shows that the more total online usage an article has, the more likely it will receive a larger number of citations. However, it should be noted that the overwhelming dominance of total online usage suppresses the effect of publication year and wipes out the topic effect in the final model. When we further examined the predictors of total online usage, the same publication year (beta = -.23, $p < 0.01$) and new media topic (beta = .37, $p < 0.01$) appear to be the only significant factors.

Topics and Medium Difference in Citation Counts

Among the 99 articles investigated, 26.3% are related to the new media technology topic. The top ten topics that generate the most citation counts include reviews and trends, digital divide, Internet/technology, uses and adoption of media technologies, news, economics, news coverage/reporting, communication theory, message/media content, and audience analysis/media consumption (see Table 2). Specifically, the Internet/technology topic has small variance in its citation mean, suggesting that this type of topic consistently received higher citations. However, topics in public relations, advertising, management, education and health communication in the journal received the least citations.

Insert Table 2 here

The studied medium also makes a big difference in citations. Articles that study mobile media received the highest citations (Mean=19.33, SD=16.56), followed by social media (Mean=16.29, SD=20.58), and television (Mean=9.25, SD=7.1). Radio, newsletter and magazines received the least citations. Interestingly, two out of the top three most cited articles are new media related topics, among which the highest one is "Social Media Research in Advertising, Communication, Marketing, and Public Relations, 1997-2010" (Khang, Ki, & Ye, 2012), which is a review article on social media and received 28,630 total accesses and 57 citations.

Insert Table 3 here

Author Gender Citations and Topics

As indicated in our earlier regression analysis shown in Table 2 (beta = 0.01, n.s.), there is no male gender superiority in the top-cited articles, which are listed in Table 3. Both male and female lead authors equally share citations in the roster. However, a clear evidence of the Matilda effect is shown in the choice of gender-related topics, all of which are authored by female scholars only. None of the male authors selects gender-related issues as their topic, which suggests gender-related topics are considered as feminine or of female interest only. Some examples of gender-related articles are concerned with women's professional development, including career paths and pitfalls of pioneering women (Voss & Speere, 2014), Pulitzer Prize winners (Volz & Lee, 2013), and female columnists (Harp, Bachmann, & Loke, 2014). However, excluding the gender-related topics, we found no significant gender difference on other topic choices.

Total Online Usage vs. Downloads of the Most Cited Articles

Among all the articles, most articles (75.8%) have a range of usage between 1,000 and 5,000. The number of citations varies greatly from none to 57. Ten articles received no citations, 23 articles have only one or two citations. As many as 40 articles get three to ten citations. A total of 26 articles enjoy over ten citations.

The top 10 most-cited articles listed in Table 3 also reveal certain important patterns. Total usage appears to be a more stable predictor of citations than download. Articles with the highest citations tend to have the highest total online usage. Articles with the highest downloads, however, do not usually result in highest citations. In comparison of beta weights, total online access is 0.77 while download is only 0.44 in citation prediction. Only one article is found to have both the highest usage and the highest number of citations (57 counts), which is Khang, Ki, & Ye's (2012) "Social Media Research in Advertising, Communication, Marketing, and Public Relations, 1997-2010." The finding further corroborates our earlier findings that mobile media and social media are the most popular media studied by scholars in recent years and that review/trend articles generate higher citations.

Discussion and Conclusion

Our study shows a strong correlation between online usage and short-term citations, which overshadows other content and non-content variables. Therefore, encouragement of online usage of articles is a good way for publishers to promote and boost citations for articles in their subscription-based journal even if the journal has both print and online versions. Further, publishers can use such partial online reading numbers to predict subsequent citation potential of articles and identify hot topics. However, apart from topic and medium in predicting short-term citations, both content-related and non-content-related attributes indicate a lack of significance in predicting citations, which shares similar results to studies in other fields, such as that conducted by Slyder et al. (2011). This calls for more sophisticated measures of author and content attributes to predict citations.

Among the eight articles on gender-related issues in this research, none of them were coauthored by male authors. Female scholars are encouraged to involve more male scholars in the conversation on gender-related issues. Male scholars should be encouraged to participate in research on gender-related issues and provide their distinctive point of view. However, gender bias in citations is not supported in this study. Female scholars who engage in the new media topics research are as likely as male scholars to receive high citations as shown in the top 10 most-cited list. So the choice of topics made by scholars is of higher significance than their gender in predicting citations.

To identify hot topics of the field immediately, researchers can also use the "most-read" articles as a proxy for the most-cited articles in near future. There are many limitations to using Thomson Reuters' Journal Citation Report two-year Impact Factor and Google Scholar H-Index to evaluate impact of an article or a scholar because the number of short-term citations of a journal article of the same journal is so dependent on the medium type and the topic as well as other non-content related attributes in the field of journalism and mass communication. Administrators, librarians, and scholars are advised to apply additional evaluation measures rather than solely relying on journal impact factor in comparing the impact of journalism and mass communication scholarship among faculty in different research areas. They should take into account the fact that some topics are less likely to generate high number of citations. In addition, when comparing the performance of scholars, comparison of citations as a performance measure should be done among researchers who are studying on the same topic, rather other the overall citations in the journalism and mass communication field in general because topic is an important predictor of citation counts. This will avoid unfair comparison due to the bias of topics, which disadvantages those who study less "popular" topics. It will be disastrous to academe if all researchers only study "popular" topics only for the sake of citation counts.

Researchers are encouraged to expand the scope of analysis in the future by including more subscription-based journals in their research from the field of journalism and mass communication or other fields as most previous studies have focused on open access journals. Further, the number of citations examined in this study is based on the data reported by Google Scholar. Future studies should also use other measures for comparison, such as citations recorded in Journal Citation Report and SCImago.

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Table 1
Predictors of Citation Counts

Variables	Model 1 (author/ publication attributes only) Standardized Coefficient (beta)	Model 2 (content + author/publication attributes) Standardized Coefficient (beta	Model 3 (content+author/publication attributes + total online usage) Standardized Coefficient (beta)
Author/Publication Attributes			
PhD program	.12	.13	.08
Number of Authors	-.02	-.05	-.04
Gender of First Author	.01	.01	.05
US affiliation	.09	.06	.11
Publication issue	-.14	-.20**	.00
Publication year	-.46***	-.46***	-.30**
Content-related attributes			
Human subjects use		-.05	-.04
Data originality		.01	.05
Length of Article		.06	-.05
New media topics		.28**	.01
National Sample		.02	-.03
U.S. Study setting		-.01	-.03
Funding Support		.02	-.04
Total Online Usage			.71
R^2	.22	.25	.66

***p<.001, ** p < 0.01, * p <0.05

Table 2

The top ten topics that generated the most citation counts

Topic	Citation mean	Number of articles	SD
Trends/Review	21.75	4	24.83
Digital Divide	14	3	17.43
Internet/technology	11.42	12	9.63
Uses and Adoption of Media Technology	10.23	13	10.1
News	9.86	37	8.4
Economics	9.17	6	7.8
News coverage/reporting	9.03	40	8.4
Communication Theory	8.83	24	8.1
Message/media content	8.79	43	7.52
Audience Analysis/Media Consumption	8.65	17	9.3

Table 3
Top JMCQ cited articles in Google Scholar

Article [Gender of first author]	Publication Year	Total Online Usage (2012-5)	Total Download Total (2012-5)	Citations reported by Google Scholar (Nov 1, 2015)
[Male] Khang, H., Ki, E., & Ye, L. (2012). Social Media Research in Advertising, Communication, Marketing, and Public Relations, 1997-2010. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 89(2), 279-298.	2012	28,630	11,546	57
[Female] Chan-Olmsted, S., Rim, H., & Zerba, A. (2013). Mobile News Adoption among Young Adults Examining the Roles of Perceptions, News Consumption, and Media Usage. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 90(1), 126-147.	2013	16,117	5,938	35
[Female] Oliver, M. B., Dillard, J. P., Bae, K., & Tamul, D. J. (2012). The Effect of Narrative News Format on Empathy for Stigmatized Groups. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 89(2), 205-224.	2012	6,730	882	35
[Male] Reader, B. (2012). Free press vs. free speech? The rhetoric of “civility” in regard to anonymous online comments. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 89(3), 495-513.	2012	9,965	2,676	34
[Male] Weeks, B. E., & Holbert, R. L. (2013). Predicting Dissemination of News Content in Social Media A Focus on Reception, Friending, and Partisanship. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 90(2), 212-232.	2013	12,596	3,696	31
[Male] Coddington, M. (2012). Defending a Paradigm by Patrolling a Boundary Two Global Newspapers’ Approach to WikiLeaks. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 89(3), 377-396.	2012	6,621	1,345	29
[Female] Cha, J., & Chan-Olmsted, S. M. (2012). Substitutability between Online Video Platforms and Television. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 89(2), 261-278.	2012	5,127	1,469	22
[Male] Houston, J. B., Pfefferbaum, B., & Rosenholtz, C. E. (2012). Disaster News Framing and Frame Changing in Coverage of Major US Natural Disasters, 2000–2010. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 89(4), 606-623.	2012	9,210	3,051	22
[Female] Lecheler, S., & de Vreese, C. H. (2012). News Framing and Public Opinion: A Mediation Analysis of Framing Effects on Political Attitudes. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 89(2), 185-204.	2012	9,888	2,914	22
[Female] Weiss, A. S. (2013). Exploring news apps and location-based services on the smartphone. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 90(3), 435-456.	2013	10,750	2,889	21
[Male] Plaisance, P. L. (2014). Virtue in media: The moral psychology of U.S. exemplars in news and public relations. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 91(2), 308-325.	2014	2,434	543	20

Reaffirming identity and integrity in journalism education through data journalism and data visualisation

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Epitomised in such phrases as ‘the fourth estate’ and ‘the watchdog of democracy’, journalism has long enjoyed an identity framed by a reputation for integrity. Yet, even prior to the so called ‘digital disruption’ of the late twentieth century, that frame had tarnished as the profit motive led news publications and news programming to practices that had little in common with the ideal of quality journalism ("Bottom-line journalism," 1990). The emergence of the ‘click-bait’ era saw a further dilution of the journalism ideal and by 2009 renowned academic John Nerone observed that “the biggest thing to lament about the death of the old order is that it’s not there for us to piss on any more” (Nerone, 2009). Amidst this malaise, worsened by job cuts and closures, enrolments in journalism education programs began to decline. Of those who did enrol, many were uncertain as to whether they really wanted a career in journalism or elsewhere in media and communication (Hanna & Sanders, 2007; Hanusch et al., 2015), further testament to a misshapen identity and dwindling reputation for integrity.

Founded in what Curran (2010) identified as the ‘renaissance’ view of digital disruption, this paper concurs with liberal thought that the sector is in the midst of the “re-invention of journalism in a better form” (p.467). In this paper, ‘better form’ is actually a rejuvenated form, one that previously existed but became lost amidst a plethora of ‘other’ forms, with new technologies now capable of enhancing the original form to make a ‘better form’. This paper argues that journalism can be defined by its adherence to the core tenets of truth and accuracy. In so doing it accords with the view that journalism is primarily a fact-based discourse (Chalaby, 1998) and that in its bid for accuracy, reports in a fair and balanced manner, conforming to the aspiration of objectivity (Schudson, 2001), From this understanding of journalism it is argued that recent trends, including the identification of quality journalism as a distinct form, fact checking and slow journalism, are not inherently new but are merely new expressions of these long-held tenets. Whilst these trends are acknowledged, the paper focuses on a fourth trend, data journalism and visualisation to make its argument. Here it is held that data journalism, with its emphasis on facts, returns journalism to its core role as a reporter of information in the public interest. It agrees with the view that journalistic objectivity can be enhanced through data-driven journalism (Parasie & Dagiral, 2013). From this frame, the paper goes on to outline the development and introduction of data journalism and data visualisation in a journalism degree as a means of reasserting integrity and identity in journalism to undergraduate students. The emphasis however, is on the conceptual context rather than curriculum, after Deuze (2006). Hewett (2016) follows Deuze in his articulation of introducing data journalism into a journalism program, but provides a more immediate social context (students, teaching staff) than the more philosophically oriented journalism and society approach taken here. But this paper does build on Hewett's work in offering an Australian example, albeit to an undergraduate rather than postgraduate cohort, and in furthering knowledge of a pedagogical approach.

The decline of identity and integrity

"There are just two crimes of which a newspaper man may be guilty, — inaccuracy and dullness. And the greater of these is inaccuracy", so claims a 1917 journalism handbook (Spencer, 1917, p. 84). Elsewhere, the text is less threatening in its statement that "*Accuracy First* is the slogan of the modern newspaper" (Spencer, 1917, p. 26). These are just two of more than half a dozen reminders to budding journalists that accuracy is journalism's premier asset. Through this emphasis Spencer, like his contemporaries, was echoing broader journalism ideology that held that journalism had a privileged position in society, earnt through its role as a champion of truth and a monitor of the deeds of church and state (Boyce, Curran, & Wingate, 1978). This concept of journalism as a public service became core to the profession's identity and has maintained a surprising resiliency in the face of an ongoing blurring of journalism's boundaries.

This blurring began in the nineteenth century as profit, rather than public service, became an increasing motive in the ownership and publication of journalism. Yet, amidst the rise of yellow journalism, the penny press and their later transformation into what became known as tabloid journalism, an adherence to the tenets of accuracy and truth did remain. As Örnebring and Jönsson (2004) argue, tabloid journalism has been an alternative form of communicating news, using sensation, emotionalism and simplification to bring socially responsible and information to a wider audience. It should also be remembered that alongside these development was the so called new journalism, which, particularly through publications like *Manchester Guardian*, circulation-increasing techniques in layout and writing were used to increase readership for journalism that overtly upheld a civic role.

Later, when radio and news programs joined the journalism array, many programs also continued the long-held tradition of factual, honest reporting. This was seen not only in news broadcasts but in the development of radio and television current affairs programs, which often mirrored the aims of newspaper exposés. Just as in the print environment such journalism was able to continue alongside other styles of journalism that pandered more to people's self, rather than public, interest. Even the development of such 'softer' genres as fashion journalism and travel journalism saw a maintenance of credibility in many outlets through the commitment of journalists to accuracy and honesty.

If journalistic integrity did withstand these developments, what led to its demise? Alongside the trajectory outlined above, was an ever-expanding industry of news, magazine, radio and television programs that situated themselves within the journalism genre by virtue of their story telling and production styles. However, accuracy and honesty was a lower priority than sales and audience reach. Their success in achieving this latter aim led to a dilution in the public understanding of journalism. Yes, journalism could be an accurate, informative and engaging report but it could also be a product that was engaging alone – entertaining but not necessarily informative or accurate.

By the time journalism arrived on the internet the conception of what journalism was had become so broad it was thought anyone could be a journalist. Form had triumphed over practice. Journalism had become the word on the print or web page or the image or word on the recording. Whether as user-contributed material or on an independently published blog, all such output had become journalism, regardless of the intellectual competency or intent of the person who authored the word or made the recording. As Allan (2010) summarised:

> The apparent subjectivity of the citizen journalist, it follows, warrants condemnation to the extent that it fails to separate out facts from values, let alone opinion. The skill to identify and sustain such differentiations, long associated with the ascendancy of the 'quality' newspaper press, is thereby deemed to be a matter of personal integrity for the common good of the craft – and as such a key factor distinguishing the journalist from the aspirant (p.xxxi).

Of course many citizen journalists have proven to be 'truer' journalists than some professionally paid journalists in their adherence to accurate and fair reporting (Cook, 2014). However, the attributes cited by Allan reinforce the interpretation taken in this paper that journalism's identity is inherently one that is defined by the integrity of the practice. As Curran (2010) identified, the digital disruption was "weakening public understanding" (p.465) of journalism's democratic role and as such obscuring its identity.

Citizen journalism isn't the only form of publication that has used the appendage 'journalism' to imply integrity. For example, 'celebrity journalism' is based more on innuendo and inference than on fact, while the very existence of the term 'media release journalism' reveals the extent to which the values of accuracy and honesty had been lost from journalism's identity. The verbatim republication of a media release is rightly derided but the term, even though an oxymoron, gives a quasi-legitimacy. The most recent incarnation of journalism, 'brand journalism' is similarly at odds with these values. Again, form has overcome intent, as advocates attest to the journalistic techniques used in authoring brand journalism output.

Amidst this plethora of journalistic identities it is perhaps not surprising that by the twenty first century only vestiges of journalistic integrity remained. National surveys rating the perceived trustworthiness of professions invariably placed journalism in the mid to lower percentiles (see for example: Gallup, 2015; MORI, 2016; Research, 2016). Had journalism really lost its integrity or had journalism become so prosaic that the 'Kleenex' had become the 'tissue'?

The authors contend that journalism had never lost its inherent integrity, however, the use of journalism as a descriptor for any publication of information by any person in any form had seen its identity become so diffused that the public (and many within the industry as well) were no longer able to recognise what was journalism amongst other media publications that were either forms of advertising or merely the communication of information. Journalism had become so muddied in the media morass that it had to reassert itself. It has done so by going back to its foundation tenet of accuracy and has sought to 'rebrand' through the creation of new 'journalisms' that highlight age-old practices - the demarcation of quality journalism, fact checking, slow journalism, and data journalism and visualisation. As will now be argued, none of these forms are inherently new but this does not matter. Their value is in their role in allowing journalism to once again be defined by its core characteristics of the accurate reporting of facts.

New journalisms

Although quality has been used as an adjective relating to journalism for most of the profession's history, over the past decade the term' quality journalism' has gained currency as means of isolating a particular style of journalism from other forms. Much has been written in attempts to define exactly what 'quality journalism' is there is not space within this paper to fully canvass these discussions. It suffices here to observe that a primary point of agreement is that quality journalism includes the fair and accurate reporting of information in the public interest (P. J. Anderson, 2014; Merrill, 1968; O'Donnell, McKnight, & Este, 2012; Vehkoo, 2010)

Described in 2011 as an “explosion” (Spivak, 2010, p. 38) in the journalism scene, the ‘re-discovery’ of fact checking as a journalistic technique reveals how far journalism had come from its origins in the critical reporting of facts. Whilst some commentators have argued that fact checking is a “reversal” of traditional journalism (Spivak, 2010, p. 38), in that reporters historically reported the facts as given and the public decided as to their validity, this view belies the role of the reporter in critically appraising information. As John C. Merrill identified almost half a century ago, a key feature of journalism is inclusion of context and interpretation (Merrill, 1968), hence a critical appraisal of facts. The most recent journalistic trend, slow journalism, like its older relative, slow food, is also a recognition of the values of historic practice, refashioned as an antidote to the pace of the digital modernity. In the case of slow journalism, it is an antidote to the 24/7 cycle. As with fact-checking slow journalism emphasises the role of the reporter and in several definitions includes accuracy and balance, or fairness, as key features (Le Masurier, 2016).

Described in 2014 as “the new punk” (Rogers, 2014) and an “explosion” (Vallance-Jones, 2014), data journalism and data visualisation are now widespread in contemporary journalism practice (Karlsson & Sjøvaag, 2016). According to Vallance-Jones (2014), the growth in what is termed data journalism has been the one of the key developments in journalism over the past decade and can't be avoided. As he points out, already in the United States:

> Applicants for many journalism positions are now expected to have a basic knowledge of Google Fusion Tables, HTML, CSS, JavaScript and who knows what else. Some ability to use a more advanced programming language also appears as a requirement for some jobs" (p. 19).

Meanwhile, industry innovators in data journalism and visualisation, such as Dr Jeremy Gilbert, Director of Strategic Initiatives at *The Washington Post*, emphasise that journalists are increasingly required to understand how to present stories based on large and complex amounts of data to audiences in innovative ways (Gilbert, 2015).

Innovative, yet derivative - as with the other trends outlined above, the key attributes of data journalism and visualisation have a much longer history than its contemporary styled appellations reveal. Data reporting and visualisation has been identified as having antecedents even prior to computational journalism in statistical and information based reporting that used graphs, tables and other visual forms (C. W. Anderson, 2015; Howard, 2014; Knight, 2015). Whilst the use of data journalism and visualisation varies between countries, in those where it is used, several commonalities are evident. Several geographic-specific studies have found a high level of reliance on institutional data that is freely available over the internet (Fink & Anderson, 2015; Knight, 2015; Tabary, Provost, & Trottier, 2015). Newsrooms are less likely to work with less accessible data, such as that which would require freedom of information requests. The studies also found data journalism and data visualisation are somewhat synonymous with a strong emphasis on the visualisation of data, especially through mapping. Meanwhile, the quality of visualisation was often unsophisticated, requiring elementary to medium use of software. Data journalism is practised by a range of news staff, depending on the size and resources of the publication. As one study found newsroom layoffs of specialist data journalists due to economic constraints meant general news journalists were liable to take on such roles (Fink & Anderson, 2015).

Such findings support the introduction of data journalism and visualisation into journalism university programs. As J-schools are introducing data journalism, primarily from a technology-driven rationale to prepare students for the digital newsroom (Picard, 2015; Royal, 2014), the level of expertise is required is evidently not too high in order for graduates to be able to take on data reporting roles following graduation or, perhaps more significantly, to integrate data reporting and visualisation into their everyday journalism output.

As this paper argues the reasons for introducing data reporting and visualisation into a journalism program do not need to be solely based on technology. In fact, the authors believe that a purely technological approach would lead to an adverse reaction from journalism students, who are known to fear mathematics, numbers and statistics (Nguyen & Lugo-Ocando, 2015). Rather, data journalism requires an ideological approach that centres the form within a journalistic rather than technological context, with technology becoming a necessary by-product of the journalistic task. As the preceding paragraphs indicate, the ideological framework used in this instance centred on the role of facts and accuracy in journalism. This is particularly important in a tertiary journalism education environment in which students are learning to differentiate opinion and fact.

From CAR to Tableau - introducing data journalism and data visualisation

Beginning with a basic introduction to CAR and databases and culminating in the integration of mapping and coding into an undergraduate journalism subject, the transition from relatively accessible numerical and technical content to much more challenging content took more than a decade. As this section details, the journey from CAR to Tableau was dictated by two primary factors: changes in industry and the competencies of teaching staff.

The subject began in an undergraduate journalism degree more than a decade ago, named Journalism Research. From the outset it has been taught from a standpoint that all journalistic investigation is a form of research. In a series of modules it is shown that journalism is any form of inquiry that involves a proactive role by a journalist in uncovering information in the public interest. Whilst investigative reporting in its strictest sense of solo or team-based long term investigations is acknowledged and discussed, the recognition that graduating journalists rarely walk into such roles, has led to an emphasis on the concept of investigation and research as synonyms and core elements of *all* journalism. Furthermore, investigation and research were taught as the methods by which journalists uncovered facts and assessed the accuracy of facts. This is taught as the raison d'être of journalism. In this way the much feared numerical and technical learning is ameliorated by its inclusion as part of a broader humanities approach. This includes modules on following up of media releases ('Unravelling Spin'), preparing and conducting interviews as fact-finding, interrogating annual reports and other public documents and using social media as a research tool. Working with numbers becomes a natural progression in the journalism research 'toolbox'.

Whilst the approach that all journalistic inquiry is investigation/research has not changed over the subject's history, the term used in the subject for the results of such inquiry has changed. In the earlier years of the course, the term used was 'information'. In these years, from around 2003 to 2008, the term data was restricted for use in modules on Computer Assisted Reporting (CAR) and database journalism, and data carried the connotation of statistical and numerical information. CAR was taught as the use of computer search skills in sourcing information, particularly more hidden information that did not appear at the top of a Google search, particularly in acquiring reports and financial information. From this, database journalism was taught as an extension of learning from these results, particularly through annual reports and financial statements. Having achieved some competence in numerical research, students were then introduced to statistical databases, invariably in accessible fields such as tourism and sport and through which, for example, annual zoo visitor numbers could be copied into an Excel spreadsheet and then manipulated to work out numerical and percentage fluctuations.

From 2009 until 2014, minor subject redevelopments saw the gradual withdrawal of CAR as a teaching module, as the concept of singling out the use of a computer in research had become anachronistic.

At the same time the emphasis on data journalism and data visualisation increased, reflecting industry trends that framed data reporting as an ancestor of CAR (Coddington, 2015). The use of the term 'information' for the result of journalistic inquiry was replaced by 'data' and an introductory module developed that drew together the relationship between journalism, information and data. The intent was once again to lessen the potential gap between literacy based journalism research and numeracy based. If the result of all research is data (taking a social science approach that an interview transcript/recording is data) then the divide between working with words and working with numbers is lessened through familiarity with the overarching purpose – the acquisition of facts and the clarification of their accuracy through research in order to create journalism.

During this same period database reporting using Excel was continued but data visualisation was primarily taught as a form of knowledge, rather than practice and students were familiarised with such sites as the *Guardian*'s datablog as the *Sydney Morning Herald*'s datapoint as well as general news pages (print and online) where graphics were used to illustrate reports involving numerical data, for example: housing trends, government budgets and health stories. While the use of Microsoft word table style images was encouraged in student work, the focus on demonstration rather than practice during this period was primarily due to the fact that the co-author who developed and convened the subject did not have the skills with software to create more complex visualisations.

This changed significantly after a major subject redevelopment for the 2015 academic year. In recognition of the prominence of data journalism and data visualisation in contemporary practice (Howard, 2014), it was decided to further emphasise the data component and the term was introduced into the subject title and it now became known as Data Journalism and Research. Whilst the skill level required for manipulation of statistical data within Excel remained much the same, visualisation was accentuated as a means of communicating data to a general audience. The subject convenor undertook training in Excel in order to be able to create more visually interesting portrayals of data and this was introduced into the curriculum and assessment.

For the 2016 academic year, the data visualisation element of the subject was increased further after it was identified that the second co-author (a teaching colleague) had worked in computer coding prior to embarking on a journalism and then academic career. If still in industry they would be known as part of a small set of practitioners called journalist programmers (Parasie & Dagiral, 2013). However, within the academic environment, the combination of programming, journalism and teaching experience revealed itself as more of a 'serendipitous sweet spot'. At the time the colleague's coding ability was made known, the subject convenor had been considering a collaboration with information technology faculty in order to create a deeper data learning experience for students in order to equip them for an industry hungry for such ability. The convenor was hesitant, however, as it was felt information technology specialists may not find it easy to reduce their knowledge to the elementary level that would be required for undergraduate journalism students, nor fully understand the role of data and visualisation in journalism as opposed to other, more technical, information genres. The availability of an academic with journalism *and* coding experience was a key enabler in the introduction of a more complex learning and assessment design for data journalism and visualisation.

After the second co-author undertook a workshop using Tableau software and following an assessment of the software's use in industry, it was decided to extend the data assessment task from one that involved the collection and distillation of data into a basic visualisation into one that required the use of Tableau, and, importantly, allowed the introduction of elementary coding knowledge. At the same time as these decisions were being made the authors' university joined a nationwide online project to cover the 2016 Australian election ("UniPollWatch," 2016). It was decided to shape the data assessment into a product that would be compatible with the larger project. From this aim emerged the idea of an interactive, chloropleth map that would show, through gradations of colour, the marginal status of an electorate and, through interactivity, a pop out box showing the current member, candidates and the number of enrolled voters.

Based on experience, the second co-author had observed a surprising lack of basic computer coding experience amongst most students, despite their ability to create online media, including websites and blogs. This can be attributed to a reliance on extremely user-friendly interfaces to create media content, without the understanding, or at times even acknowledgement, of the processes going on behind the interface. The role of a data journalism and visualisation educator needs to include introducing 'foreign' concepts, including spreadsheet analysis and elementary coding to journalism students. This can often be to students who excel at working with words and are uncomfortable and intimidated working with numbers. In order to bridge the word/number divide the following points are fundamental in approaching data journalism and visualisation with students:

1. Data journalism is about telling factual stories.
2. Data journalism utilises words, graphics and other elements to tell stories in the best possible way.

3. Stories based on data should effectively communicate information that people want to know, about matters they care about.
4. Stories based on data, and using data visualisations, should engage audiences in complex information easily and unambiguously.
5. Including data on which stories are based improves the credibility of journalism.

Using a TED talk from British journalist David McCandless (2012), that explained how data visualisation combines 'language of the eye with the language of the mind' to design and create graphics that help people to navigate complex information, students were presented with the notions that data visualisations should:

- be both attractive and insightful: one without the other is either nice but uninformative, or interesting but unattractive,
- have clearly highlighted patterns that people can easily comprehend;
- show relationships and patterns within the data that text would not show (or could not show easily), and
- be clutter-free, clear and as simple as they can be.

Furthermore, the success of introducing data journalism and visualisation to students relied on showing how this new trend in presenting news actually connected with the history of journalism and already familiar concepts including accuracy, objectivity and the role of the fourth estate.

It was also essential to convey to journalism students that data visualisations did not have to be complex to be effective. Basic maps, tables, charts can be used to make data easily understood. The interactive choropleth electoral map, developed in class for UniPollWatch, is a perfect example of a simple visualisation concept that easily and immediately engages audiences in a representation of a broad and complex dataset. The map uses federal electoral boundary GIS data from the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC), which is then formatted and manipulated by students, to form distinct electorate maps. Each electorate is then individually colour coded to display the margin the seat is held by (based on redistributed boundaries for the 2016 federal election). This stage of the UniPollWatch mapping was done using industry standard software Tableau.[1] By its own descriptor, Tableau helps people to "see and understand data". This is an appropriate tool for students to understand because as journalists they are not only required to think about the stories they want to tell from data, but also need experience exploring different and innovative ways to represent this data to engage audiences. Within Tableau students were able to easily format and manipulate large

[1] Staff and students applied for and received educational licences for free use of Tableau Desktop.

datasets, including CSV spreadsheet files of more than one million rows of longitude and latitude data coordinates.

The colour coding in the UniPollWatch map represents a new level of information being conveyed to audiences by electoral mapping. Generally, maps of electorates show government or opposition territory without any indication of how safely (or precariously) these seats are held. The margin is very significant information to have overlayed over seats held by the major parties. It also adds an element to stories already in the public sphere around campaigning in marginal seats. Dividing the large mapping project into individual contributions (of two or four electorates) allowed for a collaborative experience between all students undertaking the subject. Through a collaborative environment the journey into the 'unfamiliar' becomes a shared learning experience. Furthermore, it replicates the team approach taken in industry to data projects (Fink & Anderson, 2015).

After completing mapping in Tableau, students were required to search for the most current electoral information and create an interactive pop-up box to display this information using Mozilla's Thimble which, by its own description, is "an online code editor that makes it easy to create and publish your own webpages while learning HTML, CSS and JavaScript". This step was designed to give students an insight into the processes behind the interfaces they use and introduce basics of source coding. Whilst staff input was required to bring the final visualisation together, the work done by the students represented a major advance in mapping and visualisation capability.

Whereas students in the previous year had made pie charts and column graphs from data in Excel, students in 2016 were introduced to specialised software allowing the development of mapping and coding skills appropriate for journalistic output. What this change also meant was that there was a massive shift in the learning and outcomes expected of students. In 2015 students had been taken on a reasonably gentle learning journey as many had used Excel previously with a very small number having created visualisations in Excel prior to the subject. Even those who had no experience of Excel did not find the adjustment too difficult. A year later, that gentle learning curve had steepened formidably and students could have been forgiven for questioning as to whether they were enrolled in a journalism subject or an information technology subject. As has been detailed, the impact of this shift was minimised through the philosophical and pedagogical approach of journalistic inquiry in the quest for facts which tied data journalism to more traditional journalistic elements of the subject. In this way the potential of resistance to change (Hewett, 2016) was also reduced.

Conclusion

This paper has shown how, data journalism and data visualisation have been introduced in an undergraduate journalism subject as a means of reasserting the identity of journalism as a media form which prioritises accuracy and facts. It finds, like Hewett (2016), that data journalism, whilst ostensibly a new trend, can be introduced as a continuation of a much longer history of factual journalistic reporting. As such it affirms journalism's long-held identity as a means through which factual and accurate information and knowledge is uncovered and imparted. For today's students, entering the sector amidst a media environment in which journalism's boundaries are blurred, such an approach enables journalism to be once again defined by its integrity and such pillar concepts as the 'fourth estate' and 'watchdog of democracy' are learnt, not through historical theory romanticising a 'golden age', but through highly relevant practice to contemporary journalism.

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SEARCH TRENDS DECRYPTED THROUGH THE PANORAMA OF JOURNALISM

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ABSTRACTS

The Communication focuses on understanding the effects of journalism in the development of strategies to promote media education (UNESCO) on structures coming within the ambit of a process where it advocates the tandem teaching and research to strengthen its value for students, employers and the public.

Our problematics are related to the fact that Madagascar, the journalism training is facing between several hurdles: -an hand, media bosses accumulate functions (political-economic managers men) and are not proficient the ethical principles in order to perform obligations related to journalism; -on the other hand, some teacher-researcher will not recognize the research carried out by journalism students.

These obstacles do they limit the development and influence of journalism, in the academic field, professionals and society?

We chose a survey methodology: - firstly, according to the research methods developed to establish a structuration of data typologies, selection crosstabs, that is to say, an observation instrument known as *Thémascope* by topic (Lebart Ludovic 1975);

-and then, according to a specific method focuses on automatic text classification based on hierarchies of XML concepts (Kurt Englmeier, G. Hubert, Josiane Mothe 2006), to establish the balance sheet of the UFR activities journalism (1995-2004) on various topics: history, production, co-productions, colloquia, conferences, review, feasibility studies and expertise .

That allowed us to identify, classify and categorize, based on keywords, topics treated through 103 specialized master's theses in journalism from 1995 to 2004. The follow-up continues.

From 2007-2015, a dozen has successfully their MASTER 2, five are preparing their doctorate. On December 3, 2015, one of them has just been awarded its HDR diploma at the University of Nanterre / Paris Ouest.

Keywords: research, journalism, investigation, media, area, thematic, data, education

1. Introduction

The history of journalism education instituted at the University of Antananarivo (1995-2004) challenges us. The problems of recognition and visibility of business development are influenced by various phenomena as journalistic ACTIVITIES BECOME increasingly hybrid (Bougnoux, 1995).

And activities (social activities generated by the communication) also deserve to be better taken into account by researchers who are interested in journalism per se (Schlesinger, 1992): it is by observing from outside its borders traditional that can sometimes approach a better discursive formation (Ringoot and Utard, 2005). Thus, the Malagasy media landscape is also undergoing a reconfiguration (Randriatavy L, 2010) since the outbreak of the private media, she continued, in his report.

So, what methodology to adopt a new reorientation of academic and professional activities to other more efficient and competitive trends including research (WJEC, 2007)?

What theories and approaches should we convene to perform the deciphering trends towards research (Razanamanana, 2013)?

The aim of this study is to provide information and food for thought to the general public with the skills and the power of decision from the teaching-research couple on the Malagasy press and global communication networks in general and the journalism training in particular.

2. THEORETICAL CONTEXT

2.2. Some theories and strategies to be observed for the development of studies and media and journalistic research

2.2.1. PHENOMENOLOGY

The subject we're dealing itself "phenomenological" in that context, the target audience (national and international) remain problematic face of recurrent complications journalist professions and the training and / or to teach.

Being a science of phenomena (G Boutin, 2007), phenomenology is characterized by a return to the experience, the things themselves is to say, the problem, the issue, the issue of a thought- - and a descriptive approach. This approach reveals how the subject is immediate and profound relationship with his own experience. (Dixit Boutin).

Phenomenology lies, in fact, the problem of interface, interactivity often paid to a difficult mixture to separate, to discern and understand. Such RESURGENCE in connection puts all relevant affiliations to better adapt their appropriate strategy. In the case of journalism education, a trend could be paid to research. Besides, Bigando E., F. Tesson, 2011 think: "When looking connects to action and made back to the respondent, an interface condition is established about a process investigation everyday landscapes ".

2.2.2. THE *thémascope*

We chose a methodology of investigation according to the research methods developed for data organization, types, AND SELECTION crosstabs called *Thémascope* by topic (Lebart Ludovic 1975). The method of photo elicitation interview also in part, says the author.

All this brings us back to better monitor and understand the content of the products produced as our alumni, team or individual, be it. In the same vein, other researchers (Gonzales, Pierre, 94) add also the raw material of the journalist is the "given general situation" in which he will compose in terms of publications or not publication, more public update or less critical or CONTENTED in the face of visibility issues, COMMUNICATE of knowledge and participation. Journalist Production therefore calls for reports values and operates a tEeming.

2.2.3. STATISTICAL approach

In general, statistics is the science designed to collect, process and analyze data resulting from the observation of a phenomenon of interest to stakeholders. Like all figures, this needs to be exploited. Statistics, in this case, becomes a tool for the understanding and management of complex phenomena (Lejeune, 2004). The challenges mainly lie in the fact that the objective would be to bring together, to bring together multi-dimensional data.

3-METHODOLOGICAL CONTEXT

To establish multifaceted patterns, multifunctional and multi-dimensions, it is wise to use a variety of approaches, but complementary, to take advantage of activities as part of the data collected, processed, analyzed and offered to become discussion themes studies and analysis?

The following points were specifically discussed:

-Methodology target identification;

-problems related to the type and quality of available resources;

-Support arrangements for operations comply with restraint databases;

-problems related theoretical choices and different approaches appropriate;

-Role institutions affected by the subject.

Processes of the analysis:

-Document analysis in harmony with the object of study bibliographical research to get items that can add to the experiences of projects to analyze.

-Contacts with actors concerned and / or interested, with partners organizations and specialized centers.

4. RESULTS

4.1 INDIVIDUAL EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

Because of to the specific method called Automatic classification of texts based on hierarchies of concepts (Kurt Englmeier, G. Hubert, Josiane Mothe, 2006) describing a field, we were able to classify and categorize, from keywords, themes below processed and identified through the master's theses specialized journalism backed by our students from 1995 to 2004.

RANDRIATAVY Lova
Leading light:
Promo 4: 2000
Doctorate: 2008 Belgium
HDR: 2016 Paris

Recall that the main objective of the training is to train a journalist able to face a situation ever changing,
with the intellectual, technical, methodological,
psychological required.
So of the 125 students comprising the five graduating classes,
-103 were able to support their memory Master[1] Specialized Journalism
Final Result: 103/125, 82% success
These students with intensive training currently working in the various sectors Journalism: newspaper, radio and broadcast media, both in the private sector mostly in the public sector for those who have been recruited in the administration. Some students were enrolled in the communication services of international organizations and / or follow further training outside.
Examples memories of themes co-supervised by students (1995-2004) are below:

The documentary film Madagascar: Contribution to the promotion of culture and the development of societ, by RAMIARINARIVO Mamelasoa
-TVM facing private audiovisual competition in Madagascar: Issues and Challenges, by ANDRIANANDRASANA Maminiaina Fano
-Contribution of rural radio to the development of Isavola region. If the radio Mampita, by ANDRIAMIFIDY Herizo
-Creating a daily Malagasy language: the case of *Gazetiko* from 1998 to 2000, by ANDRIANARISOA Bodo Hanitra Lovasoa

[1] Cf. Annex 1: List of the memory of mastery sustained and their authors

-Treatment of international news in the Malagasy press saw through the daily Midi Madagasikara, by RAKOTOHARIMANANA Harivelo Mpanarivo
-Multilingualism on television seen through analysis of TVM program schedules and MATV, by RANDRIANARIFIDY Rivolala
-The press agency. The Case of ANTA, by RALAIVAOHITA Joël Nantenaina
-Contribution to the diagnosis of the establishment of a community radio station in the Central Menabe, by RANAIVOARISOA RAZAFINIMANANA *Rosa*
Advertising in the radio sector view through a case study KORAIL FM-90, by RAMAHATRA Hanitriniaina

4.2 PRODUCTION TEAM AND / OR IN PARTNERSHIP

Operationality also assumes achievement and creativity. Thus, in addition to training and research, other performances in partnership are also on the list of options. These activities an integral part of production at the end of the land, at the request of an organism or a highly regarded institution.

These activities were mainly carried out in the respect of ethics given their influences and their interrelationships on a wider audience. . Consistent with this, Hutin, Francis Regis (93) - says: "The journalist cannot be justified by two important reasons: a research approach (of the truth) and a spirit of service (community). The ethics of journalist returns to follow the basic rules of democracy: respect for others, honesty, humility. The journalist, ultimately, is one of the key builders of democracy, because it is where it is built every day. "

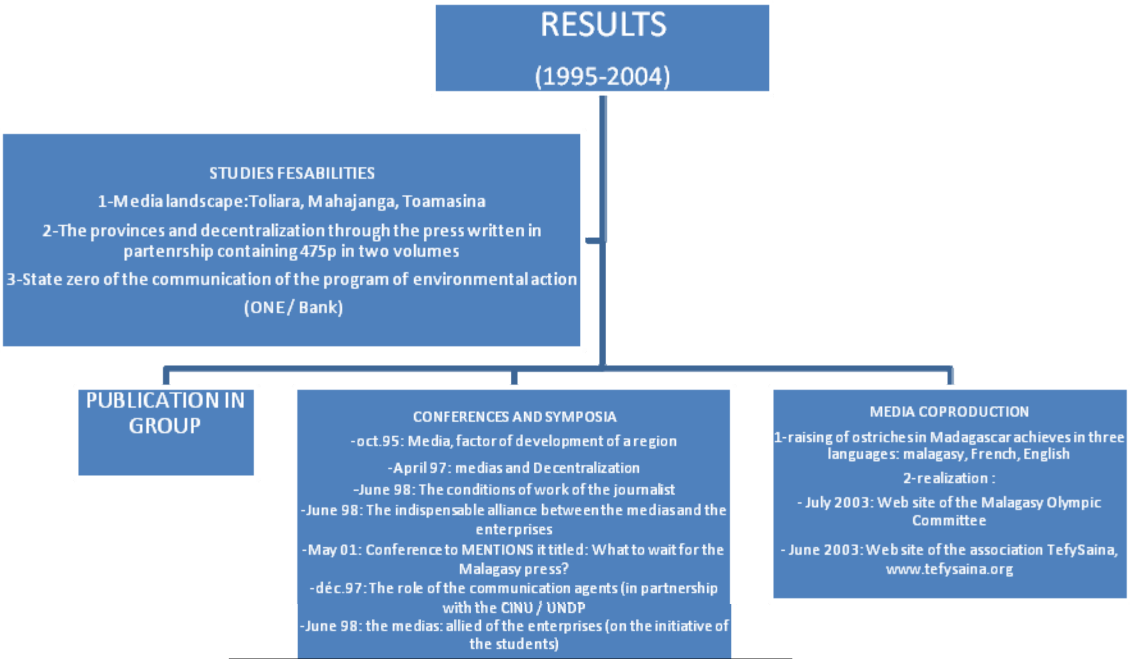


Fig.3: REVIEW of the activities and productions

In this area, each class will see its own specificity and originality:

-First PROMOTION: 95-96: Initiating a quarterly review of REJO called students in partnership with the FFE (Friedrich Ebert Foundation). Figure is the documentary magazine entitled

"ostriches in Madagascar Breeding" reproduced in three languages, in partnership with management Livestock Ministry of Agriculture and the World Bank.
-Second PROMOTION: 96-97: Varanga the appearance of a school newspaper in partnership with Infocom University of Reunion and the launch of the Letter of AUPELF, current AUF in partnership with the said Institution, have marked this promotion
-Third promotion: 97-99: took part in the making of a documentary entitled "Madagascar, a living museum at risk": a film about one of the aspects of the Malagasy Environment in partnership with ONE
-Fourth promotion: 00-01: magazine in partnership with UNDP
-fifth promotion: 02-03: could achieve WEBSITE *tefysaina* www.tefysaina.org
in partnership with ATS (Association tefy saina rural development agency, ESJ-Lille (France) and the Rotary club Lille -Is (France).

5. DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND PERSPECTIVES

5-1 TANDEM TEACHING AND RESEARCH

From my point of view, about media in Madagascar and the political system/current situation in our country, as well as having glanced through newspapers, TV and radio, I would mainly like to find out about political balance of viewpoints in articles.
Concerning analysis in studies, I want to find out, whether the viewpoints done in products are based on analysis and argumentation or on just statements.

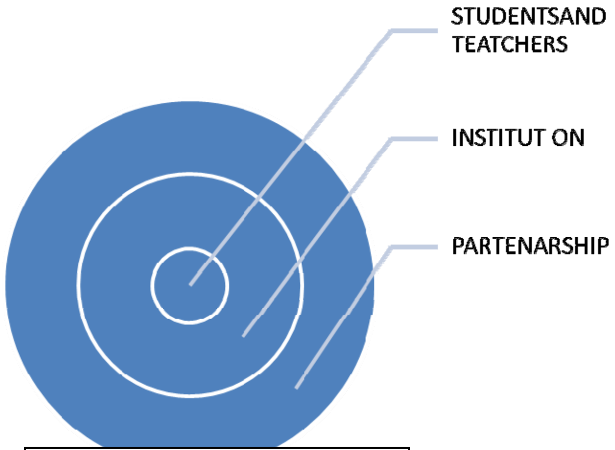


Fig 2 : Parternarship

As for innovation to bring, University public wonder on the ins and outs of the courses facing the contradictory diversification posts occupied former journalism students. They do everything except journalism, say some media owners wishing to hire them. Added to the emergence of private schools and institutes in communication requesting their implications.

Acquired knowledge of their luggage they suffice to ensure these commitments are launching some curious people from the possible quality of education. Furthermore, Métis-business are becoming commonplace. Media owners take every opportunity thereto.

Nevertheless, the various productions: teaching, media, and related were able to verify that all processes started and begin tending towards research.

5.2 PERSPECTIVE, PROJECT SHORT AND MEDIUM TERM: FIELD OF STUDY PRACTICES

Journalism education could be content with a simple knowledge bookish, masterful or computer or "good ideas." The approach field of study or more accurately Class-discovery made part and translates the immersion participants in nature in which they could broaden their thinking to global issues. (Alameddine, 2004) Indeed, the exercise reading a landscape , the surveys, scientific observations conducted by adjusting it with an educational approach encouraging to the creation of new networking, promote the emergence new initiatives as the picture N° 4 showing the experience of our department in 2014.

Educational outing
To the heritage cultural of Antongona

Practicing systematically the field, would be a major asset for the training of journalists.

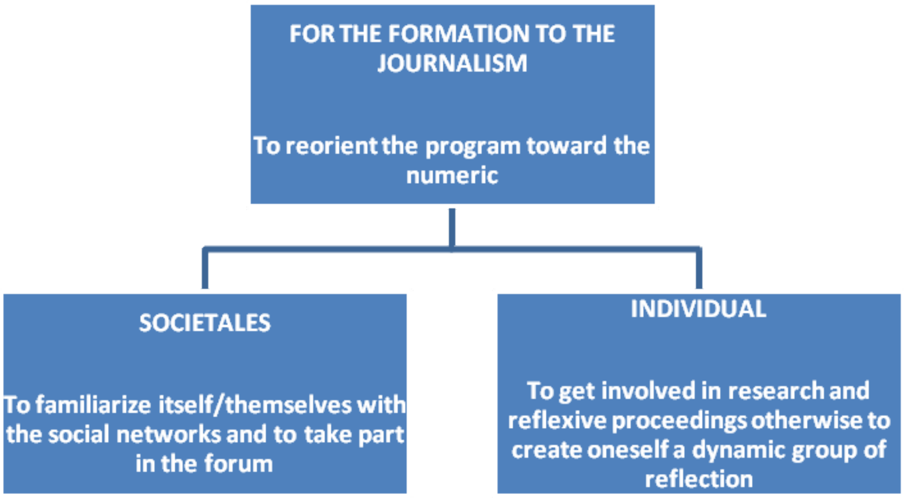
5-3 LONG TERM PERSPECTIVE

5-31 Creation of a training center and research with a regional focus

At the moment Madagascar improves its democratic knowledge. It also adds to the challenge of economic recovery. There is no need to stress the importance of communication in general, and particularly the media, in various political struggles, economic whose goals remain the citizen man (in general), actor / beneficiary otherwise, democracy will remain fragile. The need for a release that its role and remains a serious and topical. Hence the final institution of the plan to create a Center of Formation and Research on Media called (CENFORMEDIA) with a regional focus.

5-32 OPENING FOR RESEARCH.

There is no development without research. This assertion recurring several times can only affect the Malagasy media at the highest point. The research will improve training and says aloud him the necessary adjustments wherever this proves necessary. But, it is the research that will give an impulse more efficient and faster to the dynamics of change in the media set-up. This unit includes both the media themselves as successful and readers, in short the actors of the democracy. It seems, indeed, the current situation of the medias doesn't always come of people from media, both sources (economic, political, cultural ...) and responsibility of readers. So, it also comes from conducts research on the media (emitters, receiver, message, channel). This will be a catalyst in this respect democracy.



So, I would like to know from these perspectives: what are these main issues/questions/concerns regarding the media content quality in Madagascar? What are shortcomings of current media reporting – at least as perceived by students? How to build relationships and collaborations between media industries and to journalism training institutions especially research?

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ANNEXES

ANNEXES 1

PROMO 1

N°	NOM	PRÉNOMS		
1	**ANDRIAMAHAITSIMIAVONA**	*Solomona Harivalona*	The Journal spoke of private radio stations in Antananarivo. Presentation of general characteristics	audiovisual
2	**DESIRE THOMAS**		A case of cultural adjustment through Audiovisual in Madagascar: cattle breeding in ANOSIMBOAHANGY	Rural press
3	**RABARISON RASOLOFOMAHATRATRA**	*Anja*	Contribution to the role of facial communication in the TV show	Communication
4	**RABIALAHY**	*Andriambololona*	Problems of rural communication in a development project	Communication
5	**RAHOELIARIVELO**	*Hajasoa Pauline*	Contribution to the improvement of environmental communication through the daily press	environmental press
6	**RAKOTOARIMANANA**	*Théophile Claude*	Information and communication in rural areas: implementation prospects written support among farmers	Info com (rural)
7	**RAKOTOARISOA** *Chirstian*		Viability of a sports newspaper	Press
8	**RAKOTOMALALA** *Jean Marc Hajaniaina*		Informational and educational role of radios through debates	audiovisual
9	**RAKOTOMALALA**	*Ange Ninà*	PATRONAGE AND SPONSORING: Development Communication Technical News	Communication
10	**RAKOTONINDRAINY** *Iary Tina*		The economic press in Madagascar	Economic Press
11	**RAKOTONIRINA**	*Rivo Christian*	Brief history of the newspaper "Hehy"	Press
12	**RAMAHATRA** *Hanitriniaina* Advertising in the radio sector view through a case study KORAIL FM-90			audiovisual
13	**RAMAMONJISOA**	*Rondro*	Accessibility to administrative sources	Press
14	**RAMBOATIANA**	*Harivelina Maurice*	Media and policy interference. If Madagascar from 1959 to 1996	Press
15	**RANAIVO**	*Harinala*	TV news through a private channel: the case of MA-TV	audiovisual
16	**RANAIVOARISOA RAZAFINIMANANA** *Rosa*		Contribution to the diagnosis of the establishment of a community radio station in the Central Menabe	audiovisual
17	**RASOANIAINA RAKOTONDRATOVO**	*Zoe*	Information Source: Private Audiovisual Communication in Madagascar	audiovisual
18	**RASOLOMANANA ANDRIANJAFITRIMO**	*Guy Mamitiana*	Training Applied Journalism	Journalisme
19	**RATSIMBAZAFY**	*Solo Heriniaina*	INTERNET, universal information	TIC

N°	NOM	PRÉNOMS		
		ERIC		
20	**RATSIMBAZAFY** *ANDRIAMIHAJA MARCELLIN* ETHICS IN JOURNALISM CONSIDERED THROUGH THE MALAGASY TELEVISION			TV
21	**RAZAFIMAMONJY**	*TSIRISOA ALINORO*	THE PROMOTION OF ECOTOURISM THROUGH THE COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA	COMMUNICATION
22	**RAZAFINDRABETSIAVALONA**	*ANDRINTSEHENO RAVOHITRA*	THE IMPORTANCE OF INFORMATION - EDUCATION -COMMUNICATION IN DEVELOPMENT THROUGH THE SUPPLY OF DRINKING WATER. IF THE SOUTHWEST OF MADAGASCAR	IEC
23	**RAZANAMPARANY**	*MARIE IRÈNE*	THE ECOLOGICAL PRESS IN MADAGASCAR	ECOLOGICAL PRESS

PROMO 2

N°	Nom	Prénoms		
1	**ANDRIAMAHEFA**	***Angelo***	Relationship between documentary and system performance editors: If TVM (Malagasy TV)	TV
2	**ANDRIANARIJAONA**	*Herizo Victor*	A new look at the TV report	TV
3	**ANDRIANARIMBOAHANGY**	*Rabotovao Armand Guy Norget*	The education of the citizen from the radio and television programs. If emissions of KMF / ENOC	Communication
4	**ANDRIANJAKA**	*Hariniaina Vonjy*	The roles of the press officer in an organization in Madagascar. Problems and Prospects	Press
5	**BELALAHY**	*Jean Yves Evariste*	Elements for a comparative study of the written press and radio news	Press
6	**LIVANADRASANA**	*Razafindramaro Sehenoarivony*	The confessional press in Madagascar Case marturia Vavolombelona	Press
7	**RABENAIVO**	*Rivolalaina Elmine*	The educational communication for the Environment (Andasibe-Mantadia)	Communication
8	**RAHARINOSY**	*Haja*	women journalists: prejudice and estimated.	Press
9	**RAKOTOARISON** *Alida*, Internet : promotion of research in journalism in Madagascar			TIC
10	**RAKOTOARISON**	*Norohasina*	Flow of information in the field of public health in Antananarivo.	Communication
11	**RAKOTONDRAINIBE**	*Andry Nirina*	Image of Malagasy crafts. Policy, promotion through the communications media.	Communication
12	**RAKOTONDRAMIARANA**	*Herizo KONNIE*	Of sports coverage in Madagascar by the press. The case of Foot-Ball	Press
13	**RAKOTONDRATSIMBA**	*Edouard*	Rural and Community Development Press	Rural Press
14	**RALAIVAOHITA** *Joël Nantenaina* The press agency. ANTA case			press agency
15	**RAMILISON**	*Pelamialy Felandefona*	The educational role of a public television channel, seen through the Televiziona Malagasy.	TV
16	**RANDIMBISON**	*Tiana Ramananirina*	Information and media statistics	Communication
17	**RANDRIAMALALA**	*Simon*	Madagascar cartoon seen through the daily Express de Madagascar, Midi Madagascar and Madagascar Tribune.	Press
18	**RANDRIANARIFIDY** *Rivolala* Multilingualism on television seen through analysis of TVM program schedules and MATV			TV
19	**RATOVOHARINONY**	*Vololomanitra*	Convenient for communication within the home Madagascar tourism 1997	Communication
20	**RATSIAHAROVALA**	*Verohanitra*	Lakroan'i Madagasikara for	Press

N°	Nom	Prénoms		
			censorship: from February 1975 to February 1989	
21	**RAZAFINIMPIASA**	*Hary Lala*	Consideration of political communication through television commercials	Communication
22	**SOAVELO**	*Francine Solange*	objectivity problem in the Malagasy press: For daily Midi Madagascar and Madagascar Tribune (1989-1991)	Press

PROMO 3

N°	Nom	Prénoms		
1	**ANDRIAMAMONJY**	***Tiana***	Catholic church's communication on Blessed Rasoamanarivo V. and J. Berthieu in Antananarivo	Communication
2	**ANDRIANARIMANANA**	*Harilala*	Public Relations Service in private companies: Needs, Roles and Functions	Communication
3	**ANDRIANTSEHENO RAKOTOZANANY**	*Prosper*	Contribution expected from the marketing concept for the landscape radio tananarivien	Audiovisual
4	**RABETOKOTANY**	*Tsiky*	Madagascar's audiovisual production in television stations and production houses	Audiovisual
5	**RAHONIMANDROSO**	*Nirison Lala*	Contribution to the study of the relationship between press and government in the 90 cases of the written press	Press
6	**RAJAONSON**	*Nelly*	The winning strategy of a press entrepreneur. The case of creation of a youth magazine	Magazine
7	**RAKOTOHARIMANANA** *Harivelo Mpanarivo* Treatment of international news in the Malagasy press saw through the daily Midi Madagasikara			Press
8	**RAKOTOMALALA**	*Hery Manda*	Private radio stations in Antananarivo and economic development	audiovisual
9	**RAKOTONANTOANDRO**	*Lalaina*	Using the image to IEC	IEC
10	**RAKOTOVAO**	*Mihaja*	Media promotion in the field of tourism. The case PBZT Tsimbazaza	Communication
11	**RAKOTOZAFY**	*Voahangisaholiari marondraibe*	Contribution to the study of external support to the development of broadcasting in Madagascar	Press
12	**RAMELSON**	*Haingotiana*	creative potential for the production of a magazine for young	Magazine
13	**RAMIANDRARIVO**	*Richard Olivier*	Problems and prospects for rural communications in Madagascar. For a implantationde Vakiniadiana	audiovisual
14	**RANAIVOMANANA**	*Volatahiana*	Operating results of socio-economic surveys in the Malagasy press. The case of project madio	Press
15	**RANDRIAMIHAJA**	*Joseph*	The school newspaper in Madagascar. Inventory of fixtures	Press
16	**RANDRIANARY**	*Alice Marie Jocelyne*	The communication media of the Environmental Education Program W.W.F in Madagascar	Communication
17	**RANDRIANDAPA**	*Holisoa*	Contribution to the study of photojournalism	journalisme

N°	NOM	PRÉNOMS		
18	**RAROJO**	*ANGELO*	STUDY OF A COMMUNICATION MEDIUM IN SENSITIZING VOCATION. THE CASE OF QUARTERLY ECOLOGICAL ORIENTATION VINTSY	EDUCATION
19	**RAVAOSOLONIRINA**	*LUCILE ANDRÉE*	COMMUNICATION SOKAJY FOTOTRA KRISTIANINA (SKF) VAKINANKARATRA	INFOCOM
20	**RAZAFIARIMANITRA**	*ANDRIAMBOLOLONA*	PRIVATE RADIO STATIONS IN MADAGASCAR IN 1999. PROGRAM SCHEDULE STUDY: CASE RDB IVATO	AUDIOVISUAL
21	**RAZANAJATO**	***RAZAFINIMANANA MIRANA***	RUMOR: MEANS OF COMMUNICATION IN MALAGASY SOCIETY	COMMUNICATION
22	**RAZANAKOLONA**	*FELANDZOARY*	THE MEDIA AS A VEHICLE OF CULTURE. FOR DAILY IN URBAN SOCIETY ANTANANARIVO	PRESSE
23	**REALY**	*ONITIANA*	THE ASSOCIATIONS OF PARENTS OF RURAL STUDENTS, COMMUNICATION TOOLS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION	COMMUNICATION

PROMO '4

	NOM	PRÉNOMS		
1	**ANDRIAMIFIDY** HERIZO CONTRIBUTION OF RURAL RADIO TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF ISAVOLA REGION. IF THE RADIO MAMPITA			AUDIOVISUAL
2	**ANDRIANARISOA** *BODO HANITRA LOVASOA* CREATING A DAILY MALAGASY LANGUAGE: THE CASE OF GAZETIKO FROM 1998 TO 2000			PRESSE
3	**MANDRESI**	*IAINA*	DEVELOPMENT JOURNALISM IN MADAGASCAR: THE CASE OF INTERPROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR SOCIAL MEDIA INTERMEDIA	JOURNALISME
4	**RABEMANANORO**	*ERICK*	PUBLIC COMMUNICATION IN MADAGASCAR. PROPOSAL URBAN STRATEGY. THE UN EVENT	COMMUNICATION
5	**RAKOTOARISOA**	*EDGARD*	CULTURAL PROGRAMMING ON NATIONAL RADIO MALAGASY: IMPACTS, PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS	AUDIOVISUAL
6	**RAKOTOMAVO** *ALAIN* THE MALAGASY PRESS FROM 1989 TO 1999. INVENTORY OF FIXTURES			PRESS
7	**RAKOTONDRAZAFY**	*LALATIANA*	FREEDOM OF THE MALAGASY PRESS AND CENSORSHIP: AC JURECO SINCE ITS CREATION UNTIL 1992	PRESS
8	**RALALAHARINIVO**	*ISABELLE*	ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN SECONDARY EDUCATION: ANALYTICAL TESTING AND DEVELOPMENT OF DOCUMENTARY FILMS	DOCUMENTARY
9	**RALIJAONA**	*MISA*	COMMUNICATION WITHIN THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION 31/07/01 RURAL MUNICIPALITY CASE ANKADIKELY ILAFY	COMMUNICATION
10	**RAMANANARIVO**	*ANDRY*	MAGAZINE: EXCELLENCE IN ADVERTISING SUPPORT. THE CASE THE ROI	MAGAZINE
11	**RANARISON**	*VOLAHANTA MALALA*	COMMUNICATION WITHIN THE WORLD BANK	COMMUNICATION
12	**RANDRIANANDRASANA** *MAMINIAINA FANO* TVM FACING PRIVATE AUDIOVISUAL COMPETITION IN MADAGASCAR: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES			AUDIOVISUAL
13	**RANDRIATAVY***LOVAMALALA* ISSUES AND CHALLENGES FOR BROADCASTING REGULATION IN MADAGASCAR			PRESS
14	**RARIVOSON**	*HAINGO WILLIE*	THE EVOLUTION OF MALAGASY WOMEN'S MAGAZINES: FROM THE SERASERA EXPRESS MRS	MAGAZINE
15	**RASOAMANANA** *VANOU* IMPROVED QUALITY OF A PERIODICAL NEWSPAPER WITH A READERSHIP SURVEY: MONTHLY CASE "TSIMIHATSAKA VAOVAO" OF THE PARISH OF AMBONIN 'AMPAMARINANA			PRESS
16	**RASOANAIVO**	*HASINA*	THE TELEVISED DEBATE: ANALYSIS OF THE CORPUS OF THE MATV ANKARIHARY ISSUE OF NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1999	PRESS
17	**RASOLONDRAIBE** *RIJA TAHIANA* PRESENCE AND ROLE OF INFORMATION IN THE CINEMATOGRAPHIC FILMS			CINEMATOGRAPHIC FILMS
18	**RAVELOARIMANANA**	*PAUL-ANDRÉ*	PROCESSING OF ECONOMIC	PRESS

	NOM	PRÉNOMS		
			INFORMATION IN THE WRITTEN PRESS IN MADAGASCAR. IF THE NEWSLETTER JURECO	

PROMO 5

N°	NOM	PRÉNOMS		
1	**ANDRIAMANDIMBY**	*GÉRARD LANDRY*	THE CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESS OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A REGIONAL PRESS TOAMASINA	REGIONAL PRESS
2	**ANDRIANANTENAINA**	*DODA FANOMEZANTSOA*	CINEMATOGRAPHIC CRITIC .CADRE TEST APPLICATION: THE FILM DOBLA FASY	PRESS
3	**FRANCE** .	ANAHYSE VOLATIANA	ROLE OF COMMUNICATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS OF A THIRD WORLD COUNTRY: INTERNATIONAL PROMOTION STRATEGY ELEMENTS FOR A SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF MADAGASCAR	COMMUNICATION
4	**FARALAHY**	DROUOT ANDRY	JOURNALISM FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE OF SOUTH EAST REGION	PRESS
5	**FELANTSOA** *LOVAMANITRA* ROLE OF THE MEDIA ON CIVIC EDUCATION IN MADAGASCAR			PRESS
6	**RABARY** *BODOVOAHANGY MICHELLE LOVASOA* **L'EXPRESS DE MADAGASCAR AND THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS OF DECEMBER 16, 2001 .FROM THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE CANDIDACY OF DIDIER RATSIRAKA TO HIS DEPARTURE FROM THE COUNTRY**			PRESS
7	**RABIAZA** *REYNA MARCELLE* TV FACING INTERNATIONAL NEWS. ISSUES, SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS. THE CASE OF MADAGASCAR.			TV
8	**RAJERISOA**	*ADRIEN*	DIFFUSION OF ENTREPRENEURIAL CULTURE IN THE MEDIA. THE CASE OF ANTANANARIVO	PRESS
9	**RAKOTONDRAVONY**	*ILONIAINA ALAIN*	ELEMENTS FOR THE CREATION OF A WEB OF A MALAGASY NGO WEBSITE	COMMUNICATION
10	**RAMIARINARIVO** *MAMELASOA* THE DOCUMENTARY FILM MADAGASCAR: CONTRIBUTION TO THE PROMOTION OF CULTURE AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIETY			DOCUMENTARY
11	**RANDRIAMIHARISOA**	**SARINDRA**	TV NEWS: A KIND ALWAYS LOOKING FOR TRANSFORMATION. THE CASE OF TVM	TV
12	**RANOROMALALA**	*VONINAVOKO*	EDUCATION- WOMEN AND MEDIA: ACCESS TO INFORMATION "	EDUCATION
13	**RASAMISON**	*NATHALIE*	THE ROLE OF FACILITATORS OF PRIVATE RADIO STATIONS IN COMBATING AGAINST HIV / AIDS. THE CASE OF ANTANANARIVO	EDUCATION
14	**RASOLONDRAIBE**	*JEAN YVES*	ON LIVE TELEVISION: TOWARDS THE TRANSMUTATION OF JOURNALISTIC ORTHODOXY (SEEN THROUGH JOURNALISTS OF ANTANANARIVO)	TV
15	**RATOVELOMANANA**	*HANITRA SOPHIE*	PROFESSIONALIZATION OF JOURNALISM IN MADAGASCAR. THE CASE OF THE WRITTEN PRESS	PRESS
16	**RAZANAKARIVELO**	*HERINANAHARY. ALAIN*	MALAGASY CREATIVITY AND ACCESS TO EDUCATIONAL VIDEO PRODUCTION IN MADAGASCAR	PRESS

Challenges in the Teaching of Environmental Journalism

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Introduction

Little published research has looked broadly at the university-level teaching of environmental journalism, although such courses have appeared in journalism curricula for more than two decades. In a 1994 survey-based study, Friedman reported an increased interest in U.S. environmental communication courses and the establishment of environmental media courses, including health reporting, science reporting, and technical reporting. Her study attributed that trend to growing education about and awareness of environmental topics, coupled with more news coverage of the environment.

Elsewhere globally, a case study examined the challenges in creating and teaching the first environmental journalism course in Uzbekistan (Freedman 2004). That study identified such obstacles as a rigid curriculum mandated by the national government and the reluctance of university administrators to develop and promote innovative course offerings. A case study in New Zealand (Kolandai-Matchett et al., 2009) examined a pilot module on sustainability in an introductory journalism course and found that it significantly improved student understanding of the topic. The module also increased student interest in reporting about related issues, although in a statistically non-significant way. It “did not motivate students to take on environment journalism as a specialization” but led students to realize “that sustainability was an angle that could be incorporated in other areas of reporting” (Ibid, 211).

Other research has looked at specific aspects of environmental journalism course content or curricula. For example, Flannery (2000) wrote about challenges in teaching risk in basic environmental reporting classes, including biases and differences in discipline-related definitions and in perception of risk among different audiences. Dunwoody and Griffin (2013) bemoaned the lack of statistical literacy among journalism students, despite its importance for covering the environment and related topics of health and energy. They cited a 2008 study that found more than three-quarters of journalism administrators surveyed “believed that most of their journalism students would rather avoid such material” (Ibid, 534). The study noted that science journalism courses “likely have focused on issues of evidence far longer than have other courses in their journalism homes,” adding, “[I]t is unlikely that such courses are regarded as ‘leading lights’ in journalism pedagogy, but interest in issues of evidence is increasing among journalism educators, and science journalism courses may indeed be positioned to lead the way on this matter” (Ibid, 535-536). Interestingly, Friedman’s study almost twenty years earlier had identified the same challenge. It is one that still concerns current journalism educators: students’ lack of a background in statistics (Friedman, 1994).

Addressing another aspect of environmental journalism pedagogy, Freedman and Poulson (2015) explored the development and operation of an online Great Lakes regional environmental news service that builds professional skills and student portfolios within a U.S. journalism program. Stories written in the program’s environmental reporting classes provide much of the content for the news service. In the closely related area of science journalism education, Mauldin noted that “[p]ress reports about scientific research play a pivotal role in educating the general public not only about recent developments in scientific research but also regarding important aspects of the philosophy of scientific reasoning” (2012, 284). He then described a seminar course that introduced students to seven typical patterns of scientific reasoning and applied them to analyze press coverage of scientific research. He found “clear value in placing students in the role of judging the quality of the reasoning in the press reports” and said the approach “should work equally as well for a class that has the goal of improving the reasoning and writing skills of students who are being educated as science journalists” (Ibid, 288).

Although published academic studies of environmental journalism education and pedagogy are limited, educators frequently discuss the issue at panels and presentations for professional and scholarly conferences. For example, the 2014 Society of Environmental Journalists’ annual conference included two such panels, “Environmental Journalism Revolution in the Classroom” and “Collaboration: Marrying Environmental Research with Environmental Journalism.” The 2015 International Environmental Communication Association conference included a panel called “Bridging Environmental Journalism Practice, Research, and Education: Current State and Mapping Future Directions.” The results of such discussions are seldom published, however, which tends to limit their usefulness in classroom situations.

Method

The authors solicited current and recently retired full-time and adjunct environmental and science journalism educators for interviews. They used lists from the Society of Environmental Journalists, the Communicating Science, Health, Environment and Risk Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, and the International Environmental Communication Association. They sought additional respondents whom they knew professionally, by email. The study includes science journalism educators because of the close overlap of content, types of stories, and news sources in environmental and science journalism.

Before their interviews, respondents completed a preliminary questionnaire about their professional and academic backgrounds and the environmental courses they have taught (Appendix). The questionnaire included informed consent information that had been approved by the authors' institutional review board. Respondents were given the choice of having their interviews recorded or not and of having their names, universities, or both kept anonymous in any publications based on the study. For the purposes of this conference paper, all the respondents' names have been kept confidential, for consistency's sake.

The authors interviewed 11 respondents in the United States and Mexico primarily by telephone or Skype, plus one face-to-face interview. Interviews lasted about 30 minutes and were recorded and transcribed unless a respondent declined to be recorded and identified by name, university, or both. Interviews were conducted between March and May of 2016. The interviews were analyzed by grouping the answers into categories based on their common content.

Research Question

Journalism and journalism education have changed dramatically in recent years, and continue to do so at a fast pace. That general statement is particularly true for environmental journalism, which began as a reporting specialty in the 1960s (Neuzil, 2008) and for environmental journalism education, which began later. As drivers of that change, Friedman (2015) identified such factors as changing business models including media downsizing, the Internet, media convergence, and mainstreaming of environmental coverage. Another factor is the advent of specialized -- niche -- online, print, social media, and broadcast news outlets focused on the environment. In addition, the field is witnessing more aggressive and direct public outreach by environmental groups, industry organizations, individual corporations, individual politicians, and public agencies, a trend that bypasses the traditional role of journalists and news organizations as gatekeepers and agenda-setters (Shoemaker and Reese, 1996; McCombs and Shaw, 1972).

At the same time, college and university journalism programs face budgetary constraints, periodic curriculum overhauls, changing interests of the student and prospective student marketplace, and continued pressure on faculty to secure grants and publish research.

In light of these developments in journalism and journalism education, our overall Research Question is:

What are the major challenges confronting environmental journalism education and environmental journalism educators?

The Relationship between Technology and Storytelling

A common theme among almost every interview subject was ways in which classroom instruction should deal with new technologies, including smartphones, tablets, social media platforms, and other hardware, software, and media platforms as they relate to the function of environmental journalism. “How do you tell stories in different kinds of channels, including social media?” said one respondent. “New social media makes it harder,” said another. “I’m not on Instagram and I don’t care.” Still, the second respondent said she urges students to explore social media platforms when they develop their professional skills.

Another respondent said that learning ever-changing platforms is challenging, but on balance mastering the new tools are worth it because they support better learning. “It has democratized students’ ability to develop audiences and practice media,” he said. Another said it is an especially difficult hurdle for the increasing number of students whose only exposure to journalism could be her class. “The demands of multi-media are tremendous for journalists, let alone science kids who don’t have any background in it,” she said.

The brevity of the forms of media popular among the students, such as the 140-character limit on Twitter, is reflected in their performance in the classroom. “It is hard to keep them interested in longer forms of writing,” said one faculty member. “Students are not familiar with journalistic forms. They write a lot in the first person.” There also arises the issue of using the latest technology for technologies’ sake: “…how to look at data and present its content in a coherent and attractive way,” said one. “Maybe those are two different classes. It comes to the challenge of how you make room for stats/data in your classes. Anyone can dump data into a website app, but putting it together and understanding what you’re doing with the data is difficult to do.”

Many journalism students show up at college with well-developed video-making (and other social media) skills. Difficulties include faculty keeping up with (and universities’ funding of) new technologies, software and the like. “I can teach environmental journalism, writing, and reporting, but I wish I could have help with Flash and documentary film-making and the other technologies,” said an adjunct instructor. A few of the teachers mentioned film-making as an area of rising student interest, perhaps because of the students’ experiences with YouTube videos and other platforms. “Loads of them are going into these topics [outdoor adventure videos] and they can certainly make beautiful imagery and write well,” said one instructor. “But they are moving into an area where training and understanding of journalistic standards would probably help them have more serious impact.” Such films often end up as advocacy pieces, he added.

Administrative Support and Student Interest

A second common theme touched on the interaction between university administrators' desire to keep courses as full as possible (and other budgetary concerns, such as the cost of technology) along with the waxing and waning of the number of students interested in environmental journalism. “There’s a little anxiety every time I teach the class because it’s an elective, and it’s not required for any major,” said one instructor. “I’m trying to work on that because I think that [making it a requirement] would definitely help fill up the seats.” She reported that her class, which is offered once per year at her school, commonly enrolls between 12 and 24 students. “I feel it’s nothing personal towards me,” she said. “It’s just that our institution, like most other universities, looks at numbers.” Another professor said that enrollment challenges are not unique to environmental journalism classes at his school: “We are always fighting the balance in a certain way. We are always fighting to increase the size of our classes, but none of that is specific to environmental journalism.” Another teacher commented that a recent low enrollment could be the start of a trend or a brief blip, but his administration seemed willing to give the classes the benefit of the doubt.

Many respondents mentioned that their courses are often populated by non-journalism or non-communications majors – students from environmental studies, environmental sciences, and other science disciplines, mostly. “I think there is a sense among science students and in the sciences that communication about science has to improve, and the people working on the science side needs to improve their communication skills,” said one. “Collaborating with folks outside of journalism is really important,” said another. “More faculty and staff are moving toward that.” One veteran of the field said that when she first offered the course 20 years ago, “the journalism majors did not fall all over themselves to take it.” She persuaded the department to open the course to non-majors, and then “the courses became writing courses. Critical thinking on issues became harder. Students struggled with basic story issues – ledes, et cetera. It was basic journalism." In sum, said another instructor, "the challenge is to teach journalism to science students."

More than one professor worried a bit about the non-journalism students in class and how to instruct them effectively. "The quality differs," said one. "I would prefer prereqs for the class," said another. "More newswriting. Now I have to teach half newswriting and half on this topic." Some schools include graduate journalism students and undergraduate students side-by-side in the same course, with graduate students typically outperforming the undergrads.

Another said that while his course was labeled as "environmental journalism," a significant challenge is that few students understood journalism, let alone such a specialized form of it. "I taught the class more as media literacy, honestly, than I did environmental journalism just because they needed that level of understanding," he said. But others said that a move to greater interdisciplinarity means that they could impart journalism skills and approaches in courses without journalism in the title. There is a tradition of scientific impartiality that meshes well with journalism, one participant said. "The challenge is not to lose the authenticity of journalism when you are partnering with a science program."

Advocacy Issues among Students

A side effect of opening up environmental journalism courses to science and social science students across the curriculum is that the new enrollees often bring strong points of view into the classroom. In other cases, students from a communications program are majoring in public relations or advertising rather than journalism. The instructors interviewed deal with that issue in a number of ways, but nearly all of them said they continue to teach their courses as journalism classes. Many of the public relations students want to learn how to communicate environmental messages more effectively. “They want to get a little more training on those things, trying to understand those major environmental issues they might have to deal with in their professional lives as PR consultants or communications experts,” said one. “We have students coming in [who] are interesting in environmental topics but do not necessarily want to approach it from a journalistic standpoint,” said another. “Journalism skills translate well into advocacy jobs, and maybe advocacy is a better place for [these students], where they may be preaching to the choir but feel as though they are making more progress, rather than if they we to hold to journalistic standards.”

Many environmental studies students also bring an advocacy mentality to environmental journalism, said one instructor. “I wouldn’t tell them they couldn’t do it. We had discussions about the difference between advocacy press and traditional press and I said if you want to do this, that’s fine, but here are the challenges here.”

Many students are interested in journalistic forms of writing, although their current career plans do not include working in journalism. In other words, they are “students who are interested in a different form of communication than what they can get in their major program.” One professor begins the course with about three weeks’ worth of material on environmental issues and ethics. “I don’t think I would need to do that if people were more informed about ethical questions – animal rights and environmentalism. But most people aren’t,” she said. Science literacy has been a worry for the profession for as long as there have been science writers – the field dates to the 1930s or earlier. A 2002 survey by Sachsman and colleagues found that environmental journalists had meaningful differences in training in the sciences compared to journalists in general.

Career Prospects

A final common theme across the interviews were concerns from both students and faculty about job prospects. “The place we hear that concern is more when we are talking to the students about the curriculum in general, and they are very interested in what skill set do I need in order to be a good candidate for a job after graduation,” said one. Students chose a variety of careers, or graduate school, usually within a communication field. Faculty interviewed acknowledged that specialty reporting jobs such as covering the environment at mainstream media are more and more rare, particularly for entry-level employees. “My experience is that student who are really determined are making it work,” said one, who noted freelance assignments as a common entryway for younger journalists.

There is stress on instructors and departments to support specialty courses when the job market appears bleak. “How do we find funding for environmental journalism education when it does not draw the students or corporate support?” asked one. “It is hard to make the case when there are not jobs on the other side.” One experienced teacher also noted that the jobs dilemma is not a new one, that it is only in a different shape. “Finding them places where they can work and places to pay them has always been difficult,” she said. “If they are not paid in media organizations, they go to other communication settings where they get paid, but not in journalism.” Somewhat ironically, while fulltime mainstream media jobs covering environmental issues seem to be waning, scholarly work on environmental journalism in the academy is growing: “As with media and communication research generally and wider topics, the main focus of environmental communication research interest has been on news reporting and coverage with regard to environmental problems, disasters, crises and policies.” (Hansen and Cox, 6)

Moving from the ranks of professional journalism into academia was also identified by several instructors as a challenge. Some said that the highly specialized nature of environmental journalism made it difficult to find mentors or coaches.

One adjunct said his real-world experience gives him credibility and plenty of examples to use in teaching. But many professionals are challenged to make the transition from simply telling war stories, he said. “I think most journalists are not reflective practitioners. While doing what they do, they don’t think about what they’re doing and why. So when they get to the classroom they find it difficult to convey to the student what it is they do because they haven’t thought about it.”

But another said that fewer professional journalists look at academia as a cushy job until retirement, and if they do they soon find that’s not the case – especially when teaching environmental journalism. Not only do they have to keep up on evolving forms of communication technology, they have to stay on top of the latest science of complex issues like climate change, she said. “There is a lot of preparation and plain effort to stay current enough to be in front of a classroom.”

Solutions

The challenges of journalism education parallel the challenges of journalism. Easy access to digital publishing technology has prompted a redefinition of what constitutes a journalist. Should it not also redefine what constitutes a journalism student?

Several of the faculty interviewed indicated that while the ranks of traditional journalism students may be declining, they find an increasing role with non-journalism students and by partnering with environmental science and policy programs. Some said that this non-traditional constituency for journalism skills and values is support that may be unavailable to many other forms of journalism.

They say that capturing non-traditional journalism students isn't simply a strategy for increasing enrollment. Equipping environmental policy, science and even advocacy students with the tools and critical thinking required of journalists surely benefits society. If we cannot stem the loss of what are thought of as traditional jobs for journalists, can the academy preserve the functions of journalism by imbuing a broader range of students with an appreciation of the profession's values and the ability to implement them as part of whatever it is they do?

At the same time, non-traditional journalism students enrich environmental journalism students by exposing them to diverse viewpoints – the kind of competing perspectives students will have to reflect when they cover environmental news. Journalism is a messy profession; why shouldn't the journalism classroom be likewise?

The academy should look hard at prerequisites that tend to segregate journalism students instead of reflect their varying skill, knowledge and career goals. At the same time, it must be cognizant that meeting diverse needs in a single classroom places an especially heavy burden on faculty.

Low enrollment in specialized classes like environmental journalism can also be mitigated by increasing the environmental component of other required journalism coursework. The environment is so central to issues covered by all journalists that it easily fits into any public affairs, science or health reporting curricula.

The frustration that some instructors feel over lacking the facility with digital media that their students possess will ease as they either get skilled or retire. Meanwhile, there has always been a premium for faculty to learn the same lessons they often teach: be flexible, learn to learn, remain rooted to concepts of accuracy, fairness, transparency, engagement.

In this study, at least one adjunct faculty member noted that the specialized nature of environmental journalism means there often was no one at his institution who could mentor him in what is a part-time job. His solution was to join the U.S.-based Society of Environmental Journalists. The organization’s materials and conferences were useful in the classroom, he said. And the group’s academic members were helpful when he had questions about pedagogy.

Another said that his advice to an aspiring environmental journalism professor is to “be as hands-on as you can [with] more writing/communications projects and less lecture and testing. And I would say that we bring the magic of narrative to policy and science and make sure that people in the classroom are learning how to tell stories and sharing stories.”

Conclusion

Many of the challenges described in this paper – technology, student interest and ability, career prospects – are not limited to environmental journalism but can been seen as more acute when discussing a specialty area of journalism. (The advocacy issue voiced by many respondents is perhaps rarer among other specializations – although seldom is it brought up in areas such as business reporting, and it is actively discouraged in journalism courses as biased and unprofessional in reporting on politics and elections.) We would argue that the concerns are especially significant for journalism programs and faculty because environmental issues are not going away – indeed, with such global concerns as climate change, rising energy demands, and depleted natural resources, they promise to loom larger in the public arena. Nor -- as science becomes growingly complex -- will these issues become easier for overworked generalist journalists to understand and explain to lay readers, listeners, and viewers. Thus there will be an adverse societal impact if future journalists lose the opportunity to study and be trained in environmental journalism before they enter the profession.

"Clearly our customer base has widened beyond simply students who are going to become environmental journalists, and that's great," said one respondent. But the future of environmental journalism itself is unsettled, creating a challenging opportunity for academics to help chart a new course.

He points to increasing collaboration at his institution among faculty in journalism, media studies, environmental studies, computer science, communications, digital arts and others as an exciting development that needs to continue.

"Not only would we be helping students get jobs in the existing realm of journalism, we might be able to turn out students who could push things in directions that will make journalism more successful," he said. "Maybe we produce students who could be leaders out there in changing the way things are done.

"That's the dream anyway."

Overall, the findings of the study highlight the fact that training the next generation of environmental journalists to meet the information needs of an informed citizenry – and the challenges highlighted in this study -- deserve attention in the academy.

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Appendix

Challenges Facing Environmental Journalism Education - Consent Document & Questionnaire

Eric Freedman (professor and director, Knight Center for Environmental Journalism, Michigan State University), David Poulson (senior associate director, Knight Center for Environmental Journalism, Michigan State University) and Mark Neuzil (professor of communication and journalism, University of St. Thomas) are conducting research into challenges facing environmental journalism education and educators. Our research includes telephone or Skype interviews with current and former full-time and part time journalism faculty who teach environmental journalism classes. We plan to present our results through at least one conference paper and at least one journal article.

This project has MSU human subjects research approval.

Thank you for agreeing to participate with an interview of about 30 minutes.

Eric, Mark & Dave

#

I agree to be interviewed for the project Challenges Facing Environmental Journalism Education.

Yes No

You may record my interview.

Yes No

You may use my name in conference papers, journal articles and other intellectual products that incorporate this research.

Yes No

You may use my title in conference papers, journal articles and other intellectual products that incorporate this research.

Yes No

You may use my institutional affiliation in conference papers, journal articles and other intellectual products that incorporate this research.

Yes No

Name: Country:

Skype address: Email: Phone:

Institutional affiliation: Department:

Current academic rank:

Are you retired? Yes No

Faculty status: full-time part-time retired

Years of college-level journalism teaching (full-time and part-time)

Less than 5 6-10 more than 10

Titles (not course numbers) of environmental journalism courses taught

_______________________________ undergrad grad both

_______________________________ undergrad grad both

_______________________________ undergrad grad both

_______________________________ undergrad grad both

_______________________________ undergrad grad both

_______________________________ undergrad grad both

What year did you teach your 1st environmental journalism course?

Have you ever taught an environmental journalism study abroad course?

Yes No

How much fulltime professional experience do you have in journalism, communications and/or public relations? 0-5 years 6-10 years 11 years or more

By submitting this form, you are consenting to participate in the research project.

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The French Assessment System of Schools of Journalism: an essential Precondition to the Professional Connection?

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Abstract:
In France, social partners play a key role in the Journalism School assessment system, being the only recognized accrediting body. They are not part of the process, they are literally **the** process. Accredited schools that are have the essential advantage that places them at the core of the professional connections. This relationship with the journalistic profession found its roots long before the expansion of French Journalism Schools.

Following a rather informal process after WWII, over time social partners have required more rigorous demands. Together with the advantages of this process, *recognized* French Journalism Schools presently have to deal with a high level of control of their curricula.

Keywords:
Journalism school, school accreditation, social partners, journalism education.

Introduction

Since World War Two, French Journalism Schools have been strongly linked with the journalism profession. Journalists' trade unions and employers' federations entirely run and monitor an assessment process. Thus the Journalism Schools accreditation is not only carried out by the French Ministry of Higher education, but also by a Joint Board Commission for the Employment of Journalists, known as the CPNEJ Commission -Paritaire Nationale pour l'Emploi des Journalistes. This commission involves all signatory organizations of the journalists' national collective agreement[1].

Strangely enough this assessment system doesn't involve any academics. Even though this organization will have to decide whether or not a degree should be accredited, this will be done without any professional of the education system. This process is, even in France, unusual as for other kind of schools (engineer schools, management schools…) professionals are involved, but more as part of an advisory board, than as the only decision-making body. In many other countries accreditation bodies are run by Academics with the involvement of professionals, as the ACEJMC (Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications) in the United States.

In this paper we will try to understand why such a specific process was established in France, and what are the consequences for assessed schools. We will show that an old and strong link preexists between journalism education, journalism professions and the status of professional journalism. We will show how it was built, how, under professional supervision, the assessment and accreditation system has developed, and how it maintains its strong links.

The French journalism schools' history and their assessment system creates places for the benefit of their students, within very strong professional networks.

Do we need to teach journalism?

In France and in Europe, this has long since been the question. The oldest article found on this question was published on September 3rd 1833 in the daily paper "Le Figaro". The article is entitled "*The Fetus Journalists*"[2] a two-part feature dedicated to beginner journalists. At a time when anybody could be a journalist, following quite harsh criticism, the author, Nestor Roqueplan (Editor of the Figaro) suggested the creation of a journalism school. 201C*In my view, we should create a journalism school. We can't be journalists without a certain amount of training. (…) Today, you can write about politics or religion. It is extraordinary that journalism teachers don't exist: is journalism not a profession, a science or an art if you prefer. (…) Why can't you be journalism undergraduate? Why can't we study journalism, seeing as we study everything else?*"

However the issue of journalism education was only to be on the agenda during the first International Press Congress (Antwerp, Belgium, 1894) It was presented by Heinzmann-Savino, director of *Le Matin d'Anvers*, and professor at the Superior School of Commerce. He concluded as follows: "*In a nutshell, journalism education should concentrate all their efforts to develop students' theoretical backgrounds, practical skills and the moral character that journalism demands. Journalism education should be global, specialized, professional and moral at the same time*". Traditionally journalism education claims the pragmatic criterion of effectiveness (Chanel, 2001).

The year after, discussions pursued during the second International Press Congress (Bordeaux France). A special session started with a journalist, Mr. Ockert who read a report on Journalism Education in America. "*Over the last two or three years, several colleges and universities of the United States of America have added special courses to their curricula for young people who are interested in pursuing a career in journalism. Journalism Education is now, over the ocean, not merely a project, but a fact that holds the promise of fruitful results."*

Then, in 1898 in Lisbon, Mr. Albert Bataille, a Figaro journalist presented a significant report on Professional Journalism Education. "*By asking you to discuss the issue of journalism education, we know that we are likely to have trouble with prejudices. It is a widespread opinion that journalism can't be taught, that you need to be gifted and, a specific temperament is absolutely essential if you want to write for gazettes.*" Following that introduction a long report was read, leading to the final vote. "*The Fifth International Press Congress, willing to facilitate a career in journalism for young people, expresses the wish that, in every country, free practical journalism courses and conferences should be given, under the patronage of journalists' associations. The Congress decided that national associations would make one another's respective tasks easier by sharing proceedings and by protecting young journalists travelling abroad for their studies*". These conclusions were unanimously adopted. This is the first decision which clearly indicates the development of a relationship between journalism education and professional organizations.

During the same congress, Albert Bataille announced the creation of a journalism school in Paris, with the support of the daily paper "Le Figaro". However, Albert Bataille died in 1899, without proceeding with his project. A few months later, in 1899, the Paris Superior School of Journalism (Ecole Supérieure de Journalisme) was founded (Goulet, 2009) by Jeanne Weill (AKA Dick May), not without difficulties faced with journalists' skepticism, as shown by this "l'Illustration"[3] article: "I'm afraid that this school of journalism will probably be a subsidiary of the great school of losers".

As journalism education developed in the United States, leading to the foundation of the Columbia Graduate School of Journalism in 1912, the issue of utility of journalism education was still agitating the French press. Numerous examples of this can be found, such as the following article in "*le Radical*"[4], concerning a new school of journalism in Switzerland. "*Schools of Journalism can only train facilities for the newspaper 'kitchen'. But the essence of the Press is universality. The Press is the encyclopedia of our time. That's why only a university is the right place for the professional education of journalists. University will instill history, press structure, journalism ethics into journalism students. Journalism could be studied just as Law or Medicine is. Obtaining a degree in journalism, being an engineer in journalism is not such a bad idea. But after that, jobs will still have to be found.*" Here the link between training, degree and employment appeared, one that can also be found later on in the CPNEJ criteria.

It could be said that debates are still ongoing based on the n°24 of Mediamorphose Review[5] in 2008 entitled "*Do we still need to train journalists?*", or a public debate in 2010 "*Do we need to train journalists?*" during the Paris National Conference of Journalism Skills. In both cases, the answer was affirmative.

Status of the professional journalist in France

In 1935, a parliamentary committee, led by the MP Brachard defined the status of the professional journalist as we know it today. Mr Brachard's report focused on trying to define who a journalist is, merely by excluding who is not. Reading it today, in the digital age, some of the concerns seem incredibly contemporary. "*Amateurs?... For too many people journalism is like a public square or a passage. Open to anyone, an army of non-professionals camps there. They occupy positions, degrade prices, look down upon professionals, convinced those amateurs are they don't need revenues, as journalism is only an extra activity for them. How many authentic journalists have we seen forced to leave their jobs to amateurs, or who find all doors shut, houses being occupied by trespassers*"[6]

In this 53-page report, numerous aspects of the professional journalist status are addressed. But Mr Brachard remained cautious as far as Journalism Education is concerned. Only one diploma is mentioned, the one for press stenographers, which concern typing speed ability. However, the Brachard report considers that with a professional status, technical training should follow: "*The delivering of a press card will be a powerful lever to assist a profession in its organization in a methodical fashion. Moral interests pair with material interests. But it is also the opportunity to initiate and pursue serious technical training that will ensure efficient recruitment for the profession that will then raise the level*."[7]

Again, the relationship between technical training and professional practice is confirmed. With the Brachard Report and the professional status of the journalist, the foundations exist for a structured journalism education system.

Schools *recognition*

In this paper, we will use the term Schools *recognition* to translate the French Concept of "Reconnaissance des écoles". This concept covers, assessment, social recognition, and accreditation at the same time. We will use this term *in italics* when it refers to this French concept.

After the Second World War, the profession gradually organized the *recognition* of journalism schools, as a tool built to fulfill its employment needs. The first step will be the foundation of the CFJ (Centre de Formation des Journalistes/Training Centre of Journalists) by former members of the Resistance. It quickly became "The School of the Profession", with a board run by a joint committee: appointed by journalists' trade unions and by employers' federations. The history of *recognition* has deep roots in this post war period: importance of "le paritarisme" (co-management between unions and employers), strong media and society links, great ethic expectations, strong demarcation between journalism and communication, after a war when propaganda in the media was very powerful. The last point explains why, up to today, there is an absolute obligation for journalism education in France to be completely separated from any other field of communication. For schools which aim at *recognition*, having journalism and PR in the same course, for students, was utterly inconceivable.

In 1956, Social Partners signed the National Collective Agreement on Journalists' employment. Among the articles, one is dedicated to journalism education: "*The contracting parties express their commitment in the professional training of journalists. They wish that beginners receive a general and technical education as complete as possible.*"

For the first time two journalism schools obtained *recognition*, CFJ and ESJ (Superior School of Journalism of Lille). Followed by the CUEJ in Strasbourg in 1968 (University Centre for Journalism Education) and the IUT of Bordeaux in 1969 (now known as IJBA).

In 1976, with the new version of the National Collective Agreement, the CPNEJ was established. The CPNEJ (Commission Paritaire Nationale pour l'Emploi des Journalistes, National Joint Board Commission for the Employment of Journalists)[8].

"A national employment joint board commission will be created. One representative from each trade union, and an equivalent number of employers' representatives will form it.

Its missions will be:

a) To study the employment situation and its probable evolution;

b) To carry out or organize any studies allowing a better understanding of the situation of journalists;

c) To provide training opportunities and development in conjunction with the organizations defined in articles 10 et 12;

d) To examine the conditions for implementing the means of reclassification and readjustment, and to participate, if necessary, in this implementation;

e) To publish an annual report on the employment situation and its evolution

f) As soon as constituted, The Employment National Joint board commission will establish bylaws defining its work procedures and meeting frequency."

From this date on, the CPNEJ delivered *recognition* to journalism schools. From 1976 to 2001, the commission fulfilled its purposes without a formal list of criteria. The demand for *recognition* of three schools was examined in a demanding but informal way: CELSA and Tours IUT in 1981, IPJ in 1991. "*In those days, there were very few demands, and the procedure was rather informal, based on what we knew of these schools*" [9] But in the 2000's, six demands of *recognition* were received by the Commission. Thus it became urgent to formalize the process and to establish a list of criteria for the *recognition* process. After numerous meetings and debates, a first list was established in 2001. This was done by aggregating the different demands of social partners. A few years afterwards, the necessity to make changes appeared. A new list of criteria was published in 2008, after a two year period of debates.

Journalism School Name	**Town**	**Year of *recognition***
CFJ – Centre de formation des journalistes	Paris	1956
ESJ – Ecole Supérieure de Journalisme de Lille	Lille	1956
CUEJ – Centre Universitaire d'Enseignement du Journalisme de Strasbourg	Strasbourg	1968
IJBA – Institut de Journalisme Bordeaux Aquitaine (ex IUT de Bordeaux)	Bordeaux	1969
CELSA – Master de journalisme	Paris	1981
EPJT – Ecole Publique de Journalisme de Tours (ex IUT de Tours)	Tours	1981
IPJ – Institut Pratique du Journalisme	Paris	1991
EJT – Ecole de Journalisme de Toulouse	Toulouse	2001
IFP – Institut Français de Presse	Paris	2004
IUT de Lannion	Lannion	2004
EJCM – Ecole de Journalisme et de Communication de la Méditerranée	Marseille	2004
Ecole de Journalisme de Grenoble (ex ICM Grenoble)	Grenoble	2005
Ecole de Journalisme de Sc. Po Paris	Paris	2009
IUT de Cannes	Cannes	2013

Table No1: The 14 recognized French Journalism Schools, sorted by Year of *Recognition*

Journalism Education Landscape and Employment

The French Press Card is delivered by the Commission la Carte d'Identité des Journalistes Professionnels, CCIJP (Professional Journalist Identity Card Commission). Every year, each journalist has to declare revenues, employers and job titles to the commission. Thus we have accurate data on the journalism profession. There were 35928 press cards issued in 2015[10]. It is not compulsory to request a press card, but the vast majority of journalists do apply for one. In fact, it's the only official way to prove that you are a journalist. Some media have their own press cards, but with no official value for the authorities.

There were approximately 1700 first applications to the CCIJP in 2015 (a first application means you did not have a press card before). We can consider that this is corresponds to job openings in journalism.

Graduates from recognized schools have to send a copy of their diploma when requesting their first press card. Most of them do so as this means attaining better salaries on the salary scales. They also benefit from the journalist's National Collective Agreement of a form of hiring priority. There is a real difference in terms of job placements between recognized schools and the other schools. The quality of alumni job placements in journalism being an essential criterion of *school recognition*, they have to make all the necessary efforts to reach levels close to 100%. At the same time, other schools have to direct their students toward peripheral jobs such as public relations or communication.

According to existing studies, there are over 130 schools and universities with a journalism program (Bouron, 2016). It is a relatively competitive market, in comparison with the number of jobs available. Only 14 of these schools are recognized[11].

Journalism training (in %)[12]	**1990**	**1998**	**2008**
Recognized schools	8.9%	14.8%	**21.6%**
Other journalism schools (including universities)	7.3%	8,1%	**19.6%**
Sandwich courses	NC	NC	**8,7**
Vocational training	17%	25%	9,9%
Total	*33,2%*	*47,9%*	*60%*

Table No.2: Press card first application (Leteinturier, 2010b), %of journalists having followed journalism training.

(Note: in 1990 & 1998 sandwich courses were included in "vocational training"

Those figures show that graduates from recognized schools (11 graduates in 2008) obtained more press cards than any other journalism schools (approximately 100 estimated in 2008[13]). It could be said that the vast majority of recognized journalism schools will become press card professional journalists, compared to just a fraction of those from other schools. Furthermore, the study shows that thrice the number of students from recognized schools will be hired by mainstream Medias[14] compared to those from other schools. As many French research papers illustrates, they are indeed producing a kind of journalistic elite. For a student with no recognized diploma, aiming at the most prestigious French Medias will be virtually impossible.

The *Recognition* Process

Schools wishing to undertake a *recognition* process will have to apply for it. It's a voluntary process which is completely free of charge, and without any kind of fee due to the CPNEJ. In return, the school applying will receive the list of 10 criteria and the joint board pedagogical committee called Vademecum. No other instructions will be given, neither will filling in specific surveys or questionnaires be required.

According to the CPNEJ members, different schools will respond in different ways. Some of them will try to organize their answers precisely around the 10 criteria, in a very structured document. Others will send in a compilation of almost all the documents available, which can be more or less relevant to the criteria. The journalism school could also proceed to a thorough self-evaluation process to assess if they meet the CPNEJ standards.

There was a debate among the commission on whether a detailed questionnaire should be given, resulting in no unanimous position. Members concluded that creating a grid would mean running the risk of creating a tool that would not be adapted to different kinds of schools (public, private, universities etc.). Other members believed that such a grid would be an overly perspective framework. This could be called a sort of paradox seeing as the existing model curricula published by the CPNEJ is already rather extensive. (See below)

Once the application file has been established, it will be sent to the 12 members of the CPNEJ. One member will be designated Rapporteur and will be responsible for collecting all the remarks of the 11 other members and preparing a synthetic report. All these observations will be compiled on the criteria grid. This grid is not a public document, but can easily be rewritten using close criteria analysis.

Next the candidacy review phase starts. Information and figures will be checked, mostly through phone interviews with students, alumni, part-time and full time faculty, employers etc. Most of the time, this will include a site visit. As the CPNEJ has no specific budget for its mission, and can’t collect corresponding fees, it can be hard to fund traveling expenses. If a site visit with CPNEJ members is not possible, members of the local joint-board pedagogical committee (see below) will be asked to issue a reasoned opinion. A school can’t apply if the joint-board committee has not been active for at least three years. After two years, it is expected that local members of the committee are familiar enough with the school to be able to give an informed opinion.

Then, during a plenary session of the CPNEJ, the school management team will be convened to defend their application orally. They are required to answer questions of commission members who are both from employers’ and trade union representatives.

At the end of the candidacy assessment process, the members of the CPNEJ will vote. If the application is rejected, the school is informed by email. The rejection letter gives details of which criteria are not met, according to the commission. Candidate schools will not be able to access the CPNEJ reports. These reports are confidential and thus not public documents. The school will then be able to appeal, and will be allowed to apply again.

If the application is accepted, the school will not immediately be recognized. This is beyond the power of the CPNEJ which can only issue a favorable opinion and then sent to social partners for signature, at a national level. It would be very unlikely that social partners would not follow the CPNEJ recommendation.

A Particularly Demanding Training Framework

One of the counterparts of the *recognition* process is for schools to follow a very detailed training framework, including numerous and demanding courses. In 2012 a study on recognized schools curricula show that a two year program from a journalism student will include no less than a 1500 course hours, 700 to 800 per year (meaning a classic student/teacher setup) (Rémond, 2012). This implies a huge workload for the student as well as a huge financial cost for the school, which means offering innovative and attractive pedagogy. For a class of approximately 40 students (the average student population at recognized schools) due to options and specializations, more than 4000 course hours are paid to permanent and part-time faculty.

This *recognition* counterpart, even if it represents an important financial investment for the school, does have another advantage, mainly that they will have to recruit a large number of professional journalists as part-time staff, to provide the training. Thanks to their attractiveness owing to *recognition*, they will be able to recruit renowned trainers. The more staff they recruit, the more their professional connection expands, and the more they are up to date with the reality of professional practices in the media. Furthermore, some media outlets will use their staff teaching in journalism school as scouts to identify and recruit the best students.

This process has even been formalized as media companies organize competitions which are exclusively for recognized school graduates in the aim to recruit them.

Finally, a Media Company can decide to fund training by paying a training tax[15] (equivalent to 0.50% of the wage bill) to the school they wish to support. This is another very effective means to develop professional connections.

Joint Board Pedagogical Committee: the Process Corner Stone

In every recognized journalism school a mandatory Pedagogical Joint Board Committee must be set up. CPNEJ has published a two-page document called "Vademecum on CPNEJ expectations of composition and mode of operation of the Joint-Board Pedagogical Committee".

It comprises the following: one representative of every signatory organization of the National Collective Agreement (12 persons). This committee must be supplemented by professionals who are not involved in any way in the Journalism School (teaching or governance) to avoid any form of conflict of interest, students or former students and faculty members. This committee ensures that there is a complete separation between journalism schools and any other department, in particular as concerns other files of communication such as those of public relations, corporate communications etc.

The School Director must consult the Committee on any question regarding rules of selection for students (entrance exam for example), student assessment systems, diploma delivery regulations and any detail concerning internships. The committee must be informed of students' timetables, names and qualifications of teachers, curricula content…

The Committee must be convened at least twice a year, and an accurate and detailed report of the proceeding must be addressed to the CPNEJ. Thus, as shown, via this local Joint Board Committee, the CPNEJ has a powerful tool of control in every recognized school.

The 10 criteria used for school *recognition*

Ten criteria are used by the CPNEJ when deciding whether or not it will recognize a school. Two versions were published: one in 2001 and the current one in 2008. Strangely enough, the criteria are not named. It could also be added that this name is implicit if not explicit. But this lack of naming was probably a source of confusion. When the 2008 list was established, some new requirements were probably misplaced. The following analysis will attempt to compare the two versions of the *recognition* process. The 2001 version will not be analyzed, for the evolution analysis is an interesting indication for the CPNEJ case law and evolution. Please remember that between 1956 and 2001 the CPNEJ did not use a publicized list of criteria. To start with, we'd like to suggest a name for each criterion.

Criterion number	**Suggested name**	
	2001	2008
Criterion No.1	School length of existence (3 year)	School length of existence **(4 year)**
Criterion No.2	Joint Board Pedagogical Committee	Joint Board Pedagogical Committee
Criterion No.3	Curricula duration	Curricula duration **Students' enrollment and diversity**
Criterion No.4	Curricula & Training	Curricula & Training
Criterion No.5	Resources, technological equipment	Resources, technological equipment **documentation**
Criterion No.6	Faculty	Faculty **Job placement** **Governance**
Criterion No.7	Internships	Internships
Criterion No.8	Job placement	Job placement
Criterion No.9	*Recognition* control	*Recognition* Control
Criterion No.10	Social Diversity	Social Diversity

Table No.3: CPNEJ Criterion Suggested Names.

From 2001 to 2008: Criteria reinforcement

Criterion No1. School Length of Existence

This criterion adds the quality of its job placement to the length of existence of the school, by providing statistics of two graduate cohorts.

Criterion No.2. Joint Board Pedagogical Committee

In 2001 the Joint Board Pedagogical Committee the only members were the twelve social partners. The 2008 composition has expanded (see above). Its competency is extended to internship control. The annual frequency of the Committee meetings is reduced from 3 to 2, which is logical seeing as the European academic year is organized in two semesters.

Criterion No.3. Curricula Duration

Originally this criterion required a curriculum of at least three semesters (meaning a one-year course could not be recognized). The necessity to have a transparent student selection process as well as to balance theoretical and applied courses, and the obligation to produce documents attesting all the procedures in use at the school, were added in 2008. This criterion also included budgetary elements demands.

Criterion No.4. Curricula & Training

This criterion was only slightly modified. Students are now required to acquire and practise a foreign language, as well as a constant monitoring of the news. Schools are also required to develop exchanges with international students in particular those from Europe.

It is reputed that the CPNEJ does not require a specific definition of programs and teaching methods. However this criterion completed by a very detailed training framework model which is so demanding that it would seem to leave little space for anything else.

Criterion No.5 Resources, technological equipment

The 2008 version is more precise considering the quantity and the quality of the professional equipment made available for the students. Some of the site visits did show deficiencies in some candidate schools during the period 2001-2008.

Wide access to a variety of print, web and broadcast support including at a library, with a specialized media section is now also required.

Criterion No.6. Faculty

The criterion n°6 which was dedicated to faculty in 2001, is now completed by the demand of a pedagogical team not only dedicated to the journalism school but also including elements seemingly aligning other criteria: a course evaluation system, issuing of diploma conditions, logistical resources, pedagogical design, cohort size etc.

This criterion also requires a written document outlining missions, values, strategic missions and the role of faculty in the school governance.

As concerns the governance, the CPNEJ must now be informed of any changes in the structure of the school: ownership, management, address, diploma certifications, links with other establishments etc.

Criterion No.7 Internships

A new term is used: a period in a company, among which are not only internships. This new term is used to take into account not only full time courses but also sandwich courses or apprenticeship.

Concerning the duration, the 2001 formulation was of ‘two internships of at least eight weeks’ during the two-year term of the curriculum. It has been reorganized and completed by a maximum number of weeks to ‘a total internship period not inferior to 16 weeks and not superior to 26’. The CPNEJ wants to be certain that its training framework is strictly followed and also that recognized schools do not provide free or cheap workforce to media companies. This has been enforced by French law with an “illegal subcontracting misdemeanor” punishable by criminal law. The Law could prosecute a journalism school that did not observe the strict rules of internships. The person having legal responsibility will then be the director or university president.

Criterion No.8 Job placement

The job placement system must be completed with an alumni network and a job fair. Up to date information about the school curricula must be sent to guidance counselors in France.

Criterion No.9 *Recognition* Control

The school *recognition* is reexamined after a five-year period, based on a triennial report.

This somewhat strange formulation has no clear explanations. Probably a footprint of social partner debates as to the cadence of the reexamination process.

In the2008 version, this criterion required a mandatory dispatch of the proceedings report (this being already a criterion 2 request).

Criterion No.10 Social Diversity

In 2001 the criterion required that tuition be accessible to a vast majority of students. It is reinforced by an invitation to develop scholarships to foster social diversity ‘expected by the profession’.

As we can see, the CPNEJ has highly strengthened its criteria. The fact that the criteria have no name (at this point it is worth recalling that the name used here are the author's suggestions) could explain a certain lack of coherence. Furthermore, the working process of the CPNEJ, as a joint board committee where employers' and union interests have to balance, could be the reason. If a new version is to be written, it will be probably need to be reorganized, if not the contents, at least the form.

Conclusion: Schools under control: the price to pay for strong professional connections?

As we have seen, in France journalists share a long history with schools of journalisms, even a long time before the first school of journalism was founded. Journalists' trade union and employers' federations soon had a vision of what those schools should teach: theoretical backgrounds, practical skills and journalism ethics. They should be places where peers would have predominant roles. Founders of first journalism schools were journalists and many of those schools were funded or supported by media companies. Even if fundamental documents as MP Brachard reported in 1935, consider the necessity *to initiate and carry on serious technical training*, it was only after Second World War that Journalism Schools started to grow. As the journalistic population rose, so did the need for quality training, hence the idea of journalism school *recognition*.

After 45 years (1956-1981) without a formalized list of criteria used, one was finally established. The CPNEJ went from using an informal to a rather formal process, raising its requirement level. By doing so, it made *recognized* journalism schools places of Excellency, with the potential to attract the best students. At the same time, it placed them in the center of the professional connection.

Yet, in a certain way, those schools had to comply with rules established by social partners. The comparison analysis of 2008 versus 2001 did not show new expectations on the future of journalism, but rather new control rules. One can hypothesize that those social partners, well versed in negotiation techniques in their own companies, reproduce this very behavior during the CPNEJ debates. When they reflect on curricula, they may be more preoccupied by the present state of the journalism profession rather than its future. In a way, the criteria would then be representative of in-house debates and relationships of power within the company. This could also explain why certain of these changes are seemingly not placed in the right criteria (see above, table No3.). The CPNEJ would then consider its mission as a mandate: the future of recognized journalism schools is the future of journalism itself.

For schools, meeting the CPNEJ numerous requirements could seem a huge investment, as well as the necessity to comply with quite rigid rules. But this a small price to pay in comparison of the huge advantage of what this insertion in the core of the profession really implies for professional connections. In reality, these criteria are more safeguard mechanisms to ensure the supervision of recognized schools, than the will to control every day-to-day detail. When drafting the first version of the criteria list, the CPNEJ didn't even think including academics in the Joint Board Pedagogical Commission. More than a rejection of academic control, this should be viewed as the way the CPNEJ sees its role, complementary to other institutions as, for example the French Ministry of Higher Education or other boards already existing in journalism schools.

The CPNEJ is now at crossroads as it has recently lost a part of its budget. At the same time the necessity to evolve, probably towards more transparency in its process, and the urgency to find new means to pursue its missions. The challenge will be to maintain the originality and the specificity of the French assessment journalism school system, while ensuring its future, at an age of upheaval for the journalistic profession itself.

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[1] In France, relations between employees and employers are governed by National Collective Agreements. The one applicable to journalists was first signed in 1937, two years after MP Brachard's report.

[2] Le Figaro n°251, September 3rd 1833.

[3] l'Illustration, Paris July 22nd 1899.

[4] Le Radical, Paris, October 26th 1917, Henry MARET.

[5] Mediamorphoses issue 24 INA editions

[6] The Brachard Report p. 26

[7] The Brachard Report p.26

[8] As many joint-board organizations in France, CPNEJ is alternatively presided by a journalists' representative, than by an employers' representative. They switch after a six-month period.

[9] Former member of the Commission. Interview with author.

[10] Detailed statistics are available on the Commission website www.ccijp.net

[11] Size of those schools cohorts are from 24 to 56.

[12] Référence internet du tableau CNMJ

[13] AFDAS, an organization that collects money to fund journalist long life training publishes a list of these schools. www.afdas.com

[14] Mainstream media refers to "*Presse d'information générale et politique*"

[15] Taxe d'apprentissage/Apprenticeship Tax.

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A Trend in Media and Communication Research in Malaysia 1987-2005

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Abstract

The state of media and communications research and education have been undertaken periodically in the United States of America (USA) (Berelson, 1959; Schramm, 1983) and Britain (Carey, 1996; Halloran, 1981). However, no similar published works were identifiable in Malaysia. If any, there were only few published articles by Malaysian scholars that criticized the nature of M&C research in Malaysia as functionalist and policy-oriented (Zaharom Nain, 2001; 2003; Mustafa Kamal, 1992; 2000). This paper presents a small part of a study on the state of media and communications (M&C) research and education in Malaysia. Specifically, this paper investigates the trends of M&C research published in the local journal publications. Riffe and Freitag (1997) used content analysis as a method in their study of 25 years (1987-2005) of research trends through an analysis of *Journalism Quarterly*. Therefore, this paper identifies research paradigms and methodologies used in the two Malaysian journals on media and communications – *Jurnal Pengajian Media* (Journal of Media Studies) and *Jurnal Komunikasi* (Journal of Communication). There are not many M&C journals published in Malaysia and most academic journals are university based or published by the university. For example, Jurnal Pengajian Media is published by *University Malaya* (UM), while Jurnal Komunikasi is published by *Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia* (UKM). A total of 86 research articles related to media and communications published in these two journals between 1987 and 2005. Using content analysis, each article were coded according to (1) research issues, (2) research paradigm, (3) research approach, (4) method of research and (5) data gathering procedures. Results show that half of the research articles (52%) published in JK and JPM are a-theoretical which demonstrates the administrative nature of research. While 48% of published articles did engage with theory, most were using 'old theories' borrowed from the effect tradition or administrative paradigm. Less than 10% of the total research examined critical theories such as post-modernism, globalization, Habermas' critical theory, social semiotics, cultural theory etc.

Keywords:
Media and communication research, Malaysia, journal, research paradigm.

Communication is always part of something. It represents a relationship not only between individuals, but also between relationships. It is the web that binds society together. It is inclusive, rather than exclusive. By its very nature, 'it is not likely to develop into a part of any one social discipline, surrounded by discipline walls, at least until the various social disciplines coalesce into a science of man' (Schramm, 1983: 16).

Paradigm debates over the past decades, are simply arguments for the personal values of their authors and, perhaps, the interest groups they represent (Becker, 1989: 128). There is nothing wrong with such arguments. It is even desirable to have a 'healthy', constructive debate among scholars, only if the arguers recognized and acknowledged each other. It is not so when they seem to argue that it is the 'one' that they seem to believe in. This is because the phenomena we want to study in this field are diverse and the reasons for studying them are many and varied. Thus, it is possible to make – or even desirable – to have a single paradigm, problematic, or tradition, as noted by Rosengren (1989). However, there are some scholars who seem unwilling to recognize and to accept the legitimacy of doing communication research for different purposes and based on different assumptions from their own; they are unwilling to accept the fact that there are highly varied reasons for doing communication research (Becker, 1989: 127). What is more important is for the scholars to argue for better quality scholarship with whatever underlying philosophy or methodology, because our particular way is not always the right way.

In the case of Malaysia, many local scholars have levelled criticism at the state of media and communications research and education in Malaysia (see for examples Mohd. Yahya, 2005, Mustafa Kamal, 1992, Zaharom, 2001, Zaharom, 2003, Zaharom et al., 1995). Despite its wide popularity as an academic programme in all public universities in Malaysia, it has been argued that M&C education and research in Malaysia continues to be administrative and "normative" (Zaharom, 2002:89), and suffers from a "lack of intellectuality and …criticality" (Khattab, 2002:99). As Zaharom puts it in his damning critique of communications research and education in Malaysia,

> "... that [research and writings] continue to be informed by a combination of behaviourist psychology (for e.g., media effects studies), functionalist sociology (for e.g., media and modernization studies, and studies on the relationship between media, youth and deviance), a positivist-empiricist approach to the social-sciences (where researchers worship at the altar of hard, quantifiable data and sell their souls to statistics), and pluralistic conception of society in general... This normative paradigm...leaves societal prejudices and inequalities unquestioned and unchallenged" (Zaharom, 2002:91).

In an earlier publication, Zaharom claims that media research in Malaysia could be categorised as "(a) positivist and quantitative in nature, (b) policy oriented [...] the aim is to examine the effectiveness of policy implementation, primarily by the state; (c) least concerned about development of theory and largely concerned about refinement of methods; and (d) blissfully unaware of the ideological nature of media artefacts"(Zaharom, 2000:147). M&C research in Malaysia alleged to be very much "caught up in a time warp", resembling the 1940s and 1950s in America (Zaharom, 2000:147) where the studies were quantifiable, positivist, and non-critical. It was also claimed that many of Malaysian M&C researchers are using quantitative approach as their methodology (see for examples Samsudin, 1992b, Mustafa Kamal, 1992, Bukhari, 1992, Md. Salleh, 1992). It is clear that, methodologically, much M&C research in Malaysia has been dominated by quantitative methods such as content analysis and surveys. There is nothing wrong with using these methods, of course. But a total reliance on such quantifiable, 'objective' and 'scientific' methods, without looking at contexts, including historical, political, social and cultural, leaves such studies incapable of capturing the true essence of the relationships between media and society.

Much of the claims made by critical scholars in Malaysia such as Zaharom Nain have been without convincing empirical evidence. How far these claims are true is yet to be discovered. Therefore, this paper is an extraction of my study on the state of media and communication education and research in Malaysia. It presents a trend of media and communication research from 1987 until 2005. It is important to note that media and communications education in Malaysia is not (yet) offered at primary and secondary school level like any other countries. Therefore, this study examines tertiary level education, in particular public universities that offer M&C education in Malaysia.

The Paradigm War

Early studies of communication were based mostly on impressionistic and anecdotal analysis, prior to the late 1930s, reinforcing the notion of a powerful press, which used a "hypodermic needle" metaphor, suggesting that the media injected information into an impressionable public (Dennis, 1989). Thus, the early period of communication research is characterized by the "hypodermic needle" or "big effects" theory. In Gauntlett's words, mass media seem to commonly have "direct and reasonably predictable effects upon the behaviour of their fellow human beings" and this body of thought is known as "effects" model (Gauntlett, 1998: 120). "Effects" tradition is also known as the 'administrative paradigm' since it serves the powerful party 'administratively'. It was a belief in the early phases of mass media studies that media could shape opinion, mould behaviour, and impose political systems even against resistance (McQuail, 1977). By the late 1970s, the pre-eminence of the administrative paradigm was challenged by 'critical' researchers, a group of European scholars who migrated to US and brought broader Marxist's ideologies as Fascism took over Germany in the World War II (Heyer, 1988, Lang, 1996, Lazarsfeld, 1969, McQuail, 1972, Tunstall, 1970). The rise of these critical approaches has affected not only media studies but also studies in literature, art, history, culture and the humanities (Miller, 1990: 51). Thus had brought had some periodic clashes between the European critical theorists and the US rhetoricians and social scientists (Lang, 1996, Dennis and Wartella, 1996). These clashes were the starting point of dichotomy of approaches in media and communication studies or what is often referred to as 'paradigm war'.

In the early 1980s many communication scholars started to reflect on the dichotomy of these approaches although there were some scholars who believed that this dichotomy was not about paradigm but rather clashes between schools and research approaches. It was argued by Rosengren (1989) that "the social science and the humanities (including communication studies but with the exceptions of economic and linguistics) do not have any paradigms in the strong sense of the word…but they were fought between scholars and researchers representing differing schools and research traditions rather than different paradigms, and they were fought as much for political and social reasons as for intellectual ones" (Rosengren, 1989: 21). What we have, as suggested by Burrell and Morgan (1979), are not different paradigms, but rather schools and research traditions competing in a common field. Maybe the debate is not so much between "administrative" and "critical" research, as Gerbner (1983:356) argued both are needed for different purposes, but what is more important is how to make research most productive and ways to pursue the critical mission of the discipline in society. Regardless of paradigms, the debates on research approaches have stirred up many issues and have been taken up seriously by many scholars (Melody and Mansell, 1983: 104).

The clashes between these two research traditions and knowledge paradigms were best discussed in two special issues of *Journal of Communications* in 1983 – titled "Ferment in the Field" and 1993 – "Future of the Field". Both devoted to discussing the state of the art of media and communication studies. However, most of the debates in the articles reflected a split in the field between the behaviourists and empiricists, popular for their "administrative" approach, and the political economist and culturalists, who stood firmly behind their more "critical" approach.

Melody and Mansell (1983) suggested two factors that distinguish the two approaches or traditions in media and communication research. First, is the problem chosen and second is the research methods used in that research. However, Smythe and Dinh (1983) added another factor which is the ideological orientation of the researcher which are linked to the choice of problems and the fundamental questions concerning the state of communication.

Media Landscape in Malaysia

The rise of an alternative news portal, enabled by an uncensored Internet, such as Malaysiakini.com and political blog such as Malaysiatoday.com (banned since 2008) and social media (such as Youtube, Facebook, Twitter etc.) have expanded the mediascape and somewhat enabled a public sphere in Malaysia. Prior to the Internet, the Ministry of Information had the power to produce, circulate and control public communication via Radio Television Malaysia (RTM). RTM was established in 1963 with the introduction of TV1 followed by TV2. Under Mahathir's 22 year administration (1981-2003), in response to the de-regulation and privatisation fever around the world, the first private television station, TV3 was established in 1984 followed by other private television stations such as NTV7, Channel 9, 8TV and satellite TV ASTRO. As for the print media – newspapers are published for ethnic/language based audiences for example Utusan Malaysia and Berita Harian (Malay readers), Sin Chew Jit Poh (Chinese readers), Tamil Nesan (Tamil readers), The Star and The New Straits Times (English readers). The expansion of the media industry meant that more media practitioners were required and the need for the training and education of journalists became paramount. Along with training institutes, universities begun setting up Media and Communications (M&C hereafter) programmes to meet industry and government demand for a qualified workforce.

Media and communications education (M&C) – variously known as "communication studies", "media studies", "mass communication" or "culture and communication" - has a unique historical development in Malaysia. The institutionalization of M&C education in Malaysia began in the early 1970s when it first started as part of the Humanities curriculum in *Universiti Sains Malaysia* (USM) in 1970 (Zaharom, 2003: 158). However, *Universiti Teknologi MARA* (UiTM or formerly known as *Institut Teknologi MARA* - ITM) was officially the first institute to set up a School of Mass Communication and offer a Diploma of Mass Communication in 1972 (Syed Arabi Idid, 2000: 102). Shortly after, other universities followed suit such as *Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia* (UKM) in 1975, *Universiti Malaya* (UM) in 1976, *Universiti Putra Malaysia* (UPM) in 1979, *Universiti Sains Malaysia* (USM) in 1984, International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) in 1990, *Universiti Malaysia Sarawak* (UNIMAS) in 1993, *Universiti Malaysia Sabah* (UMS) in 1994 and *Universiti Utara Malaysia* (UUM) in 1999 (see Table 1). Several more public universities emerged following UUM in 1999, and numerous private and foreign ones mushroomed over the last few years offering M&C courses.

TABLE 1: The Birth of M&C in Malaysian Public Universities

Name of University	Year of Birth
Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM)	1972
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM)	1975
Universiti Malaya (UM)	1976
Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM)	1979
Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM)	1970/1984
International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM)	1990
Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS)	1993
Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS)	1994
Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM)	1999

**Based on the Student Handbook and the Universities' websites.*

Syed Arabi Idid (2000: 95) contends that having gained Independence in 1957 from the British, Malaysia depended heavily on the mass media to communicate with citizens, to develop the country, and to maintain political stability and social harmony. However, he points out, the country faced critical problems when there was almost no manpower to run the media and this is where the training and education in media and communications came into the picture.

Syed Arabi Idid (2000) argues that media training, education and research in Malaysia evolved much earlier than its formal, specialised university introduction. He contends there were a few significant phases with regard to how M&C education and research evolved. During the first post-colonial phase, when media forms were newspapers, magazines and radio, it was found that knowledge, techniques and practices were based on trial and error and not many constraints or regulations were imposed on the media (Syed Arabi Idid, 2000). Readership was low commensurate with low literacy rates. It is important to note that before the 1970s, there was no academic department involved in the teaching or training of journalism or other media related courses. Ideas on training and education for journalists and other arms of media practice came in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The early journalists, it was said, believed that journalism should be practised on the job and that it could not be taught. Some argued that journalistic writing skills were a God-given gift not acquirable via education (A. Samad, 1966: 2).

The second phase of communications or media training development in Malaysia begun with journalism training. For example, the South East Asia Press Centre was set up in Kuala Lumpur in 1970 to provide 'short-term in service training to journalists working in newspapers, radio, television and the information service' (Glattbach, 1972 in Syed Arabi Idid, 2000: 100) to meet the manpower needs at that time. Later, many other training centres were established to cater to the increasing demand from the media industry. For example, in 1971, the Institute of Public Relations Malaysia started to offer its certificate level course as part of a training programme to develop public relations practice in Malaysia. In 1972, another training centre was founded – the Malaysian Broadcasting Training Center (later renamed Tun Abdul Razak Institute of Broadcasting or IPTAR) which was created to train practitioners in the electronic media (Syed Arabi Idid, 2000).

In the third phase, according to Syed Arabi Idid (2000), the focus shifted to radio, television, news agency, advertising, public relations and other allied media. The focus not only concerned skills, knowledge or how-to-do things, but had also included research development. It was during this phase that tertiary institutions started to give attention to media and communications education. More public universities started to offer media and communications programmes in their curricula and focus on skills rather than critical thinking (Zaharom et al., 1995).

Methodology

Meta-analysis, from the Greek prefix *meta-* is transcending or comprehensive, meaning 'comprehensive-analysis' (Krathwohl, 1998). It offers 'a set of quantitative techniques that permit synthesizing results of many types of research' (Cook et al., 1992: 4). And since journal articles are a 'barometer of research trends' (Riffe and Freitag, 1997) and reflect the 'evolution of communication research' (Shaw et al., 2000), a thematic meta-analysis of journal articles is used in synthesizing the research trends in media and communications in Malaysia.

There are not many media/communications journals published in Malaysia, and in fact, the two journals that I chose for this study are the available ones and the most prominent in the field - *Jurnal Pengajian Media* (JPM) and *Jurnal Komunikasi* (JK). *Jurnal Pengajian Media* is published by *University Malaya* (UM), while *Jurnal Komunikasi* is published by *Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia* (UKM). Interestingly, most of the research articles in these journals tend to be contributions from scholars coming from within the same university. Although *Jurnal Komunikasi* was published long before *Jurnal Pengajian Media*, and as such has more volumes, the sampling was based on a systematic skip of five and two years respectively to ensure that they are equal in number and representative of the published volumes to a reasonable extent (see TABLE 2).

TABLE 2: Sample of Journals

Journal	***Jurnal Komunikasi***	***Jurnal Pengajian Media***
Published by	Centre for Communication and Media Studies, UKM	Department of Media Studies, UM
Publication Frequency	Annually	Annually
First Publication	1982	1998
Sampling Years	1987, 1992, 1997, 2002	1998, 2000, 2003, 2005

A total of 87 research articles related to media and communications published in these two journals between 1987 and 2005 were included in this analysis. Variables coded for each article included 1) research issues – organization, content, audience, combination and others; 2) research paradigm – administrative, critical cultural studies, critical political economy or hybrid; 3) research approach – empirical, non-empirical; 4) method of research - quantitative, qualitative, mix; 5) data gathering procedure - survey, content analysis, focus group, interview, etc. Results from content analysis of research articles are presented under several themes such as research issues, research paradigm, research methodology, research method and techniques and theoretical application.

Results

I. Research Issues

Research issues refer to the topics or communication phenomena that authors attempt to question, explore, explain and interpret. Following Roger Cooper's, James Potter's and Michel Dupagne's (1994) typology, and the *Lasswellian* model of "*who* says *what* to *whom* in *what* channel", research issues are divided into five categories : 1) organization; 2) context; 3) audience; 4) combination of areas; 5) others. Each area is defined in TABLE 3.

TABLE 3: Category of Research Issues

Issue Category	Definition	%
Organization/ Production	Any research that focuses on organizations, institutions or industries that play the role of owners, regulators, producers, circulators, distributors and practitioners in the communication process. Examples include: research looking at scenario of the media industry, media ownership, policy and regulation, professionalism etc. Example: public relations in Malaysia (Mohd. Yahya, 2002), book publishing industry (Md. Sidin, 2000) etc.	14
Text/Content	Any research that focuses on text and content in the communication process. Examples include genre such as news, soaps, documentaries, news sources and actors and other media forms and outputs. Example: Malay literature (Hamidah, 1998, Mohamad Salleh, 2000, Rahman, 2005), used of language in media (Azizah et al., 2002) etc.	29
Audience	Any research that focuses on media use, consumption and interpretation including effects, attitudinal and impact studies. Examples include election and public opinion studies, audience effects, campaigns, policies and developmental studies. Example: effects of television on children (Syukur Kholil, 2002), communication and ethnic solidarity (Samsudin, 1992a), women and technologies (Hasmah, 1997) etc.	7
Combination	Combination of two or more of the above. Examples include studies that carry out textual/content analysis and audience interviews. Example: Malay nationalism (Abdul Latiff, 2000), cross-cultural communication (Kaur, 1997), audience reception study (Wilson, 2002b) etc.	24

Others	Non-media studies such as management, leadership, organisational and interpersonal/speech communication and research that does not involve any particular form of media or mediatised process. Example: pedagogy of communication studies (Mansor, 1987), Japanese management style (Maizatul Haizan, 2002) etc.	26

All in all, from the 87 sampled articles, it was found that 29% of them focused on text/content while only 7 percent researched audiences. Nevertheless, audience research also tended to fall under the 'combination' category where again content dominated. 'Combination' is a category in which a research has two or more focus areas such as message content/text, institutional and/or audiences. For example, a research project by Syed Arabi Idid and Mohd Safar Hasim (1987) discussed the effects of international news flow on audiences and news gatekeepers (content/audience/institution). Other examples include research on television advertising (Meor Zailan, 1992), Malaysian newspapers (Mohd Dhari, 1992), image of women politicians in newspapers (Faridah and Chau, 1997), press and political agenda (Jeniri Amir, 2005), Malay nationalism (Abdul Latiff, 2000) and effects of music (Zaleha Amat, 1998).

On the whole, content/textual studies ranked the highest in terms of research issues. When I include combination studies, almost all had conducted a content analysis along with audience/practitioner interviews. There has been no single combination study that did not have a content/textual analysis in it.

One of the reasons why content/text has been the most studied area in Malaysia is because systematic study of the media in Malaysia begun in the 1970s along with the establishment of programs in universities with no earlier local studies. Media was very new at that time and practitioners were wondering what type of media content would be appropriate for public consumption in a post-colonial nation. Audiences were assumed to be docile and passive recipients of media messages as was assumed in the early post world war years of media research in the USA. The role of media was thus seen as powerful and therefore significant for development and change (see Lerner, 1958, Rogers, 1976, Samsudin, 1992a, Schramm, 1979). Thus the focus of research articles examined from 1987-2005 was on seeking answers to the question '*what*' rather than '*why*' or '*how*' or in '*whose interest*'. One would assume that over such a long period (1987-2005) the nature of research questions in Malaysia would have changed, but surprisingly this did not happen.

Another significant finding is the 'Other' category. 26 percent (second highest) of the total research conducted by academics in Malaysia focused on non-media issues such as organisational, corporate, marketing, management, interpersonal and speech as well as pedagogical and methodological matters. Content analysis findings of JK and JPM reflect a steady emphasis on content/text (29%) and non-media issues (26%). It is obvious that researchers in Malaysia are worried and troubled by media's impact on society, i.e. how people use media. However, they largely seem to gauge the impact of media via text/content research without sufficient research on audience readings, which does not say enough about impact.

The large body of research on non-media issues (26%) appears to move the focus away from the core of media studies and the critical concerns with regard to media effects.

II. Research Paradigm

Having looked at the research issues/topics, next is to prevailing theoretical paradigm pursued by local academics. Clearly, the answer to this is somewhat reflected in Table 3 where there is a heavy emphasis on content and non-media issues and a contradiction between what academics regarded as problematic and what they actually researched. Nevertheless, Table 4 explicitly explains the paradigms of research which is a critical theoretical area of enquiry in this project.

TABLE 4: Research Paradigms

	JK	JPM	Totals
Administrative	34 (74%)	19 (46%)	53 (61%)
Critical	5 (11%)	16 (39%)	21 (24%)
Hybrid	4 (9%)	4 (10%)	8 (9%)
Not identifiable	3 (6%)	2 (5%)	5 (6%)
Totals	46 (53%)	41(47%)	87(100%)

Table 4 shows that overall, administrative research dominates, contributing to 61% of the total research with more than three quarters published in *Jurnal Komunikasi* (74%). This relates to the research focus discussed earlier (see for example Abdul Latiff, 2000, Jeniri Amir, 2005, Meor Zailan, 1992, Zaleha Amat, 1998, Syed Arabi Idid and Mohd Safar, 1987). *Jurnal Komunikasi*, edited by UKM academics on a rotational basis, carries works undertaken mostly by these academics. Almost all of their works reflect the administrative paradigm.

Jurnal Pengajian Media (edited by UM academics on a rotational basis), however, seems to publish more critical research (39%) as compared to *Jurnal Komunikasi* (11%). This speaks of the research focus and training of the academics (for example see Hamidah (1998); Norbaiti (1998); Nor Raudah (1998); Mohd Yahya (2002); Azizah Hamzah (2000, 2002)). Most of their works examine Malay literature and cultural texts such as *pantun*, children's stories and other folk and traditional media including (Malay) book publishing.

Most deployed critical textual analysis combining Malay literary theories and methods to their work. Nevertheless, critical research made up only 24% of the total research. There were a small quantity of hybrid (9%) research – a combination of administrative and critical (for example in *Jurnal Pengajian Media*, A. Samad Ismail (1998); Noor Bathi (1998); Mahadi J. Murad (2000) and in *Jurnal Komunikasi,* Meor Zailan (1987, 1992); Hazidi and Nor Farizah (2002)). Of the 87 research articles coded, 5 (6%) did not fit into any of the three earlier categories. For example, among them, Abdul Latiff (1998) in JPM discussed how to write a biographical book; Azizah Hamzah (2000) wrote descriptively on 'what is research methods' and Mat Pauzi (2002) wrote on conceptualising materialism in advertising which was difficult to discern.

What is important is that it does not matter whether research approaches are based on administrative or critical, or quantitative or qualitative in methodology, but that everyone should work side by side and methods should complement each other as it will make the field stronger. Furthermore, what is needed is an indigenous way of exploring knowledge; more congenial and complementary research as suggested by Jensen in 2002 and Schroder et al in their meta-pluralism and theoretical analysis in 2003.

III. Theoretical application

As reflected in Table 3 and 4, there appears to be a consistent pattern with regard to the nature of research and the paradigms preferred by Malaysian media researchers. Lending further support to this is Table 5 detailing that more than half of the research articles (52%) published in JK and JPM are a-theoretical. This demonstrates the administrative nature of research and begs us to return to Table 3 and 4 which point towards the argument raised by Halloran (1998) that we tend to be 'putting the cart before the horse' giving importance to method and findings while neglecting theory. It likewise supports arguments raised by Zaharom (1992, 2000, 2002, 2003).

TABLE 5: Theoretical Application

	A-theoretical	**Theoretical**	**Total**
Jurnal Komunikasi (JK)	23 (50%)	23 (50%)	46 (53%)
Jurnal Pengajian Media (JKM)	22 (54%)	19 (46%)	41(47%)
Total	45 (52%)	42 (48%)	87(100%)

While 48 percent of published works did engage with theory, most were, what I would call 'old theories' borrowed from the effects tradition or the administrative paradigm such as bullet or hypodermic needle theory (Azizah, 2002), agenda setting (Mohd. Yahya, 2002), media dependency (Ezhar, 2005), diffusion (Amelia, 1992), persuasive model (Syed Arabi Idid, 1987), uses and gratifications (Syukur Kholil, 2002) etc. Less than 10% of the total research examined critical theories such as post-modernism (Mohamad Salleh, 2005), globalization (Azizul Halim, 2002), Habermas' critical theory (Mat Pauzi, 1987), social semiotics (Noor Bathi, 2002), public sphere (Wilson, 2002a, 2002b), cultural theory (Hazidi and Nor Fariza, 2002). Again those articles that engaged with theory, really did not offer a critique of the theory or an alternative perspective to it. For example, authors rarely suggested how or why a particular theory e.g. Uses and Gratifications was relevant to the Malaysian context In other words, engagement seemed more with data then with how and in what ways data impact theory within the Malaysian context..

IV. Methodological Approach

Table 6 reports on the frequently used methodology by academics in Malaysia. In this section, I have divided the findings into two categories i.e. empirical and non-empirical. The empirical category comprises of three sub-categories i.e. qualitative, quantitative and multi-methods. Meanwhile, the non-empirical includes studies on conceptual, historical, theoretical and non-scientific writings.

TABLE 6: Methodological Approach

		JK	JPM	Total
Empirical	*Quantitative*	19 (76%)	9 (43%)	28 (61%) [33%]
	Qualitative	4 (16%)	12 (57%)	16 (35%) [18%]
	Multimethods	2 (8%)	0 (0%)	2 (4%) [2%]
	Total	**25 (54%)**	**21 (46%)**	**46 [53%]**
Non-Empirical	*Theoretical*	6 (28%)	3 (15%)	9 (22%) [10%]
	Historical	5 (24%)	7 (35%)	12 (29%) [14%]
	Conceptual	10 (48%)	9 (45%)	19 (46%) [22%]
	Others	0 (0%)	1 (5%)	1 (2%) [1%]
	Total	**21 (51%)**	**20 (49%)**	**41[47%]**

Table 6 depicts that most of the research articles published in Malaysian media and communications journals are empirical in nature (53%) with 61% of the articles using quantitative methods. Some examples include Azizah Hamzah's on 'language and media' (2002), Md. Sidin's on 'Malaysian book publishing' (2000), Fuziah Kartini's on 'online newspaper' (Fuziah Kartini et al., 2002) etc. The deployment of qualitative approach is limited with only 35% of the articles identified as having opted to use such an approach. A few examples include Tony Wilson's on 'audience research' (2002a), Rahimah Hamdan's on 'Malay literature' (2000), Noor Bathi's on 'news presentation' (2002) etc. Furthermore, only 2 percent of the articles identified had deployed mixed, complementary methods. They are Syed Arabi's and Mohd. Safar's (1987) on 'foreign news' (survey and content analysis) and Amelia's (1992) on 'news value and diffusion' (participant observation and content analysis).

In terms of methodological approach, it was found that JK had a much wider output of quantitative studies (76%) compared to JPM. Furthermore JPM had a more balanced qualitative (57%) – quantitative (43%) output. This clearly explains the difference in research and teaching approach between UKM and UM. While the former seems very much influenced by the effects tradition and focused on quantitative studies of media perse, the latter appears to focus on textual analysis of Malay literary works, moving away from being media-centric. Multi-method approach appears rare and where deployed (see Syed Arabi Idid and Mohd. Safar, 1987 and Amelia, 1992 in JK) seem to combine quantitative with qualitative and quantitative with quantitative. Again, JPM does not seem to prefer mix-methods due to its textual approach.

With regard to non-empirical projects, most of the articles in JK and JPM appear conceptual in nature (46%). Some examples include Azizah Hamzah's on 'research methods' (2000), A. Samad Said's on the 'independence press' (1998), Mohd. Helmi's on 'listening skills' (1987) and Mat Pauzi's on 'materialism' (2002). Only 10 percent of articles were categorizable as theoretical and they include Mansor Ahmad's on 'cultural imperialism' (1987), Anwar Ariffin's on 'Indonesian ideology' (1987), Hazidi's and Nor Fariza's on 'cross-cultural communication' (2002). These 'theoretical' articles merely described a particular theory without any engagement with past debates and without a critical analysis.

To offer a more in-depth understanding of the methodological approaches, I identified the research method/s and techniques of data collection used by each author. Table 7 explains in detail the common methods and techniques deployed under qualitative, quantitative and mixed approaches. Clearly, justifying the effects paradigm is the popular use of survey method

(61%) and content analysis (32%). Textual, semiotic and discourse analysis appear to be commonly used by JPM authors as reflected in Table 7 and discussed earlier. The major contribution for this method is from the JPM where many of the articles were written by the literary scholars who studied semiotic or textual analysis (see for examples Hamidah, 1998, Meor Zailan, 1987, Mus Chairil, 2005, Noor Bathi, 2002, Rahimah, 2000, Rahman, 2005). Meanwhile, 50% of the qualitative articles published by JK seem to deploy focus or small group analysis. This comes from outside UKM with a study on cross-cultural communication at the workplace by Manjit Kaur (1997) and audience reception study by Tony Wilson (2002b).

TABLE 7: Use of Methods and Techniques

		JK	JPM	Total
Quantitative (Qn)	*Survey*	13 (68%)	4 (45%)	17 (61%) [37%]
	Content Analysis	6 (32%)	3 (33%)	9 (32%) [20%]
	Experiments	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%) [0%]
	Others	0 (0%)	2 (22%)	2 (7%) [4%]
	Total	19 (68%)	9 (32%)	28 [61%]
Qualitative (QL)	*Interviews*	0 (0%)	1 (8%)	1 (6.5%) [2%]
	Focus Group	2 (50%)	1 (8%)	3 (19%) [7%]
	Textual/Discourse An.	1 (25%)	9 (76%)	10 (62%) [22%]
	Participant Obs.	1 (25%)	1 (8%)	2 (12.5%) [4%]
	Total	4 (51%)	12 (49%)	16 [35%]
Multi-methods	*2Qn*	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%) [0%]
	2QL	1 (50%)	0 (0%)	1 (50%) [2%]
	Qn+QL	1 (50%)	0 (0%)	1 (50%) [2%]
	Total	2 (100%)	0 (0%)	2 [4%]

Conclusion

This paper offers empirical evidence from a multi-method approach integrating findings from content analysis of two key journals i.e. Jurnal Komunikasi (JK) and Jurnal Pengajian Media (JPM) sampled over 20 years – 1987 to 2005. Findings presented via descriptive statistics in tables explain the research trends and the major approaches and methods adopted by Malaysian academics. It is clear as argued by Todd Gitlin (1978) that the effects tradition, despite its shortcomings, dominates and continues to shape and colour the nature of questions asked and the method of research deployed. From the five categories i.e. research issues, research paradigm, theoretical application, methodological approach and research methods, all of which are inter-related, it is evident that research in media and communications appears applied, a-theoretical and quantitative.

Results show that most of the researchers are very quantitative and a-theoretical nature of their own research. Most seem to have deployed content analysis instead of audience research. Several engaged with non-media related issues such as interpersonal, speech and organisational communication. The few articles that attempted to engage with theory seem rather limited in terms of literature reviewed and debates examined. Generally it was found that JK, produced by UKM and JPM produced by UM respectively had the majority of articles authored by their own staff members. This prevents debates and contestations and leaves little scope for a critical review of local literature. With the exception of a handful of articles that were critical in nature, most avoided engaging in critiques of the work of colleagues. It was rare to find works from authors from other universities within and without with the exception of one or two.

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Status and Significance of Journalism Education in Tamil Nadu, India

By

Dr.S.Jenefa

Mass media possess the definite power to influence people's minds and perception about the issues pertaining to their public sphere of life. As Herbert Schiller would say, mass media performs the function of "mind managers". It is even more so with the news media as it caters to the intellectual quotient of a man. Hence the originators of media content play a more crucial role in the democratic societies like India, where ideologies with regard to the issues of public concern will be shared and adopted and where press freedom has always been intact. It is imperative for a journalist to undergo a lengthy professional training.

Journalism education aims to prepare students for careers in newspapers, news magazines, broadcast news, and news services. Journalism education should prepare graduates to work as highly informed, strongly committed practitioners who have high ethical principles and are able to fulfill public-interest obligations. Today the need for journalism training has been accepted all over the world .Even media owners have accepted the fact journalists should be properly trained and expected to have learnt before entering media industry (AMIC study,2002).According to the report of the University Grants Commission (1981) on the 'Status of Journalism and Communication Education in India' the need for journalism training is no longer in doubt or dispute .There is scope for proper briefing and orientation on the concept of journalism, the role it has in the society, and the role it can play in society. (Sharma,1990). Journalism students try to form an opinion and shape their attitude towards society and all spheres of life only during their education which would definitely get reflected in their media content produced by them when they take up media career.

Literature Review

A study titled "Journalism as a Profession in India – A Sociological Perspective" (Sharma, 1990) has analyzed the trends in Journalism in India and issues like professional autonomy in Journalism. One of the chapters traces back the history of Journalism education in India, the role of organized forums in journalism education and Journalists' opinion on major issues in journalism education**.**

The book authored by K.E.Eapen (1995) titled "Communication - A Discipline in Distress" provides the historical background of communication education in India and deals with what ails journalism education in India. This book analyses current trends in Journalism training programmes in India. It has also highlighted the need for standardization of journalism education in the country.

In another study carried out in the Indian context by AMIC & UNESCO-IPDC (2002) titled "Communication and Media Needs in India" presented a detailed overview of Communication education and the status of media industry in India. It has tried to link the scope of media institution in preparing media students for entry level jobs in the media and the expectation and attitudes of media industry on media educational institutions.

Karan (2001) has also found that early journalism education had emphasized more on theories than practical components of the subject. It also lacked a broad spectrum education in journalism and mass communication.

Guru and Madhura (2005) has examined the status of journalism and mass communication in India and exposed certain deficiencies such as week curriculum and inadequate faculty expertise, poor infrastructure, lack of locally relevant text books, etc.

Muppidi (2008) has studied various problems faced by the journalism educational institutions with media educators from various government and private media schools as the respondents. The findings were on similar lines of the earlier studies.

Murthy (2013) has traced the state of journalism education before India's economic reforms in the 90s. It has also raised the question of whether the course content should be industry-focussed or academic-centric or both. It has also discussed various issues like the competence level of faculty, infrastructural and research facilities at the journalism departments. It has also suggested an ideal course curriculum as a reference for journalism educators in India.

Pattnaik (2013) has analyzed the growth and current status of mass media environment and how the growth has influenced the process of elevating the standard of journalism education in

India. The paper also discussed the pattern of Indian journalism education, prospects and problems prevailing in the system and suggested some purposeful layouts for appropriate growth of mass media education in the country in the global competitive media environment.

Background of the Study

Journalism education has overcome the skepticism of media industry and its own conflict between of being journalism training and studying media. Thanks to the immense growth in the number of both news and entertainment media, the industry requires huge skilled man power which has resulted in employing media graduates. In India it has been offered under the umbrella term “mass communication” in many universities. Hence it is important to understand the status and significance of journalism education being imparted to the aspiring journalists.

Methodology

The present study aims to examine the status quo of journalism education in one of the southern states of India- Tamil Nadu. It will also analyse the industry preparedness rendered to journalism graduates of various state-funded and private funded institutions across Tamil Nadu from curricula to pedagogy in imparting journalistic skills. The proposed study is exploratory in nature and adopts two methods to collect primary data. The curriculum of all journalism and media related programmes offered by the Institutions located in the study area will be collected and analysed. In-depth Interview method will be adopted to examine the pedagogical approaches of journalism educators (10 no.s). Teachers who handle journalism courses and the Heads of the University Departments who will be the chairperson of Boards of Studies of all Institutions affiliated to the Universities form the respondents. Five media owners/Editors will also be interviewed to understand the relevance and significance of journalism education in the study area.

Status of Mass Communication and Journalism Education

In the Indian sub-continent, Punjab University of Lahore was the first to offer a journalism course. In India, education and training in Mass Communication and Journalism is about 60 years old. Media education in India has not received proper recognition from the government as well as media. Indian media education institutes cover a wide range of university and non-university entities, such as Indian Institute of Mass Communication, Indian Institute of Journalism and New Media, Manipal Institute of Communication, Kerala Press Academy, FTII, Ad Club Chennai, Public Relations Society of India, Bangalore University, Sophia Polytechnic, Xavier Institute of Communication, MICA, and Symbiosis Institute of Mass Communication, to name just a few (Mahesh Chandra Guru & Madhura Veena, 2005).

. Presently, about 300 journalism and mass communication departments in various Indian universities (including some private and deemed universities) are engaged in providing post-graduate diploma, degree, MPhil, doctoral, and post-doctoral programmes. Besides, over half-a-thousand institutions are offering diploma and certificate programmes in various branches of journalism and mass communication. Another development in the past one decade has been the growth of the colleges offering undergraduate courses at various private and public academic institutions. They are being offered self-financed vocational courses. All these have changed the entire orientation of the courses towards making journalism more skill course rather than one with a theoretical base (Pattnaik, 2013). At present, more than 20,000 students pass out from these universities and institutions with diverse specialisation in print, electronic, public relations, advertising, film, media management, media law and ethics, etc. In the study area – Tamil Nadu It was all started in the 1970s when the century old University of Madras started the Journalism Department and offered the P.G. Programme M.A. Journalism and Mass Communication. It could attract a good number of students including girls. Gradually more girl students started enrolling themselves in the programme and the gender ratio of the students is equal and even the balance got tilted towards girl students sometimes. The success run of the first journalism department in the state made the P.S.G College of Arts and Science, a state-aided private institution to set up a journalism department and the P.G programme – M.A Mass Communication was offered in the year 1984.Soon other state-run universities started introducing the media programme in their university department as well as in their affiliated colleges. During this period the curricula of communication studies encompasses components like communication theory, print journalism, advertising and public relations primarily.Since print media was the only existent media industry, communication programme focused mainly on journalism with respect to print media.

With the boom in satellite TV channels in 1990's across the country and the consequent sudden demand for trained professionals, a host of television training institutes mushroomed throughout the last decade. As a result communication studies also embraced the components of electronic media in the curricula in order to produce media graduates who can work in the broadcast industry. With the curriculum of these communication programme already loaded with many components pertaining to all forms of communication, it becomes all the more difficult for the academicians to accommodate the modules of electronic media. Moreover most of the departments offering communication programme were ill-equipped and lacked qualified educators to teach print journalism itself. Teaching the modules like electronic media require audio/video studio and other expensive equipment which were not provided by the management during those days. This was also the period in which the number of institutions offering professional programmes like 'Engineering' soared to a new high.As a result Arts and Science colleges and universities offering faced a major threat of heavy decrease in the student enrollment. They had to compete with these professional colleges by offering technical and science programmes which are integrated and job-oriented in nature to attract students to their colleges. Thus it took almost a decade for the educational institutions to offer programme like M.Sc. Electronic Media and B.Sc. Visual Communication. Media houses also join the party with the Asian College of Journalism which was instituted by the Indian Express Group shifting its base from Bangalore to Chennai. It offers Post-graduate Diploma in Journalism with four streams of specializations like Print/Radio/Television/New media.

This study deals with the journalism education scenario in Tamil Nadu wherein under-graduate and post-graduate degree programmes on media education is offered in different nomenclatures namely Mass Communication & Journalism, Electronic Media, Visual Communication etc. While there are no authentic data available on the total number of Educational Institutions offering media programmes in the State, around 30 colleges in Chennai alone offer these media programmes. Most of the state run Universities do have University Departments of Communication Studies and design curriculum for U.G & P.G regular media programmes to the affiliated colleges. The curriculum of all these Universities' media programmes were analyzed during the course of this study. The curriculum of media programmes offered by Loyola College ,an autonomous Institution has also been included in the study as a special case since it is considered as *'mecca of modern day media education'* in the

State .In-depth Interview with the media teachers, majority of them who teach journalism felicitated qualitative data on the selected topic.

Course Content and Curriculum Analysis

The analysed curriculum of almost all P.G programmes on Mass Communication and Journalism have atleast four core papers on imparting journalistic skills like Reporting, Editing, Broadcast Journalism, Web Journalism, etc. There is more scope for including papers like on skills required for journalism like ‘Writing skills’, ‘News and Current affairs Lab’ in an 5-year Integrated P.G Course like the one run by Anna University. Papers like these are very less in number in U.G programmes like B.Sc Visual Communication of all Universities so to say. In a 2 year P.G course like M.A Mass Communication and Journalism the curriculum cannot include so many papers on journalism due to constraints in the system the Universities follow. Since it is Post-graduate course the curriculum has to include both theoretical and skill-based papers in proper balance, papers on journalism find a marginal space. With the Choice-Based-Credit-System (CBCS) being made mandatory to be adopted by all the State-run Universities, there is a possibility of offering more papers on Journalism as optional wherein students can opt for those and earn extra credits. But then Journalism education is not just skills specific but the one which requires a rounded knowledge on society and polity. This void is filled by including papers like “Media, culture and Society’ in some curriculum. With these kind of media programmes going highly commercialized more attractive papers like ‘Digital Photography’ replaces such papers in programmes like Visual Communication and Electronic Media.

The face of Journalism Education has been changed in recent years as the job-oriented discipline, with the commercial success of the Visual Communication programme. This may be due to the transformation, that the characteristics of journalism industry itself has undergone, in recent times, from the ‘fourth estate’ status to the ‘glamourous and money spinning business’. Thus journalism education too has adopted the transformation and started churning out suitable candidates to excel in this thriving field. The responses of the women journalists regarding the reasons for them to enter journalism field reflect the same trend, where a vast majority of the respondents said it was the ‘passion for the job’ and the ‘suitability for the acquired qualification’ which has made them to practise journalism.

To make their products (students) more suitable to the profession and industry-ready, these journalism institutes were forced to give more space for journalistic components like Reporting, Editing, Broadcast Journalism, and Web Journalism, without which these journalism programmes hardly become successful and the increase in the number of takers for the programmes in the coming years, thereby enhancing their saleability value and monetary gains. Hence, it is no surprise that almost all P.G. programmes on Mass Communication and Journalism have at least four core courses on imparting journalistic skills. All curricula have made Internships mandatory and media students in the study area spend at least a month or so as internees. Though these media schools have included the phrases like ‘to produce the socially responsible and culture conscious media professionals’ as their motto, they continue to highlight only the ‘glamour and job orientation’ quotient as their USP in the promotional materials in their admission campaign.

Consequently, subjects (papers) like ‘Media, Culture and Society’ have to make way for the commercially attractive ones such as ‘Digital Photography’. Another significant finding of the study is that no media departments offer journalism programmes in the regional language, except one, supports this theory. With the less remuneration offered for the members of the regional language press, being very low (on an average, a Tamil journalist gets Rs.7000/- equivalent to just over 100 U.S. dollars, as the monthly salary, as a new entrant) compared to their counterparts in the English press, journalism institutes will not be willing to go extra mile and design the curriculum for the Tamil journalists aspirants, since there is no guarantee that such programmes will be successful among the present day media students. Moreover, there are very few journalism textbooks in Tamil.

The present study has also found that almost all postgraduate programmes in Mass Communication have focused on ‘Development Communication’ but only foreign contexts barring a very few curricula despite Indian books are coming out on this subject. It can be interpreted as these components continue to find a place in the curriculum due to the reluctance on the part of journalism educators to update it. These courses are the residual components of the older curriculum of journalism programmes, when journalism was considered to be the real catalyst for social change. There was no real commitment among the curriculum designers, in incorporating development communication concepts related to Indian contexts. The members of these boards of studies, who design the curriculum, always look for retaining such customary courses in the curricula and update the technological advancements that the industry had undergone, which again, are done with the intention of attracting more students. Much of the time is spent on renaming the courses to make their programmes more commercially viable.

When comes to academic programmes on Journalism in regional language, only Loyola College offers a P.G. programme M.A 'Voodaha Kalai' (Media Arts).Journalism students who want to enter vernacular press also have to take up Journalism education in English only which will ultimately make them feel handicapped both in academic knowledge on journalism and learning the skills required in Tamil journalism. This may be the cause for very few journalists with journalism education in Tamil news media. Issues like Pay anomalies, insecurity of jobs, denial of holidays & maternity leave are widely prevalent in the regional press and this state can be attributed to the absence of trained journalists.

Papers like 'Development Communication', 'Development Journalism' are mainly focusing on International perspectives. Barring Anna University, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University (in M.A.Communication) & Loyola College all the other curricula deals with Indianise or regional contents in a single unit only. But it is a positive sign to note that most of the curricula comprises of these papers.

Practical Knowledge and Exposure

When comes to make the students to get exposed to real scenario and practical knowledge all Institutions send students to Media organizations through Internships and Projects spending atleast two months of time during the course of study. It seems that most of the journalism departments in the study area, take too much care in imparting practical knowledge and exposure to their wards. For instance, the curriculum of M.A.Communication Programme of Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, has 4 core courses and 3 optional courses on journalism namely – news gathering and writing, news editing, print media production, new media production, writing for magazines, specialized reporting and photo journalism. The significant aspect of this curriculum is that every last unit of all courses is workshop courses wherein the practical components of the respective courses are included. For instance, in the core course titled ‘News gathering and writing’ the final unit reads like this – Unit 5: Workshop. This module would provide basic training in news gathering and writing. Students must submit a record of work samples completed during the workshop for internal valuation and viva voce. They are also supposed to produce a lab journal by name ‘Tamirabarani’ as mandatory course requirement. Out of the 25-30 minutes video project, which again is one of the course requirements, it is mentioned, at least four news and current affairs formats should be included.

In the curricula of M.A.Communication programme offered, by the M.O.P.Vaishnav college for women, one can find only two courses on journalism. But when it comes to the practical components, there are ample opportunities for their students to learn journalistic skills practically since it is mandatory for them to publish a broadcast newspaper by doing reporting, editing and designing it on their own. They are also expected to publish a lab journal and get the experience with the online version as an e-journal. They are also supposed to contribute for the college-run community radio – MOP CRS 107.8 MHz. The students seem to be getting hands on experiences with all forms of new media. The Department has a tie up with a regional television channel – Jaya TV Channel’s news production wing. The students have to work in the Television Channel’s news desk on a daily basis, after the college hours.

Media Internships

Journalism Departments seem to understand the fact that journalism can never be taught within the four walls of a classroom. They strongly seem to believe that only in the real environment like News Rooms, students can unlearn and learn the nuances of professional journalistic skills. All the analysed curricula have made Internships mandatory and media students in the study area spend at least a month or so as internees, which carry 3-6 credits, in the analysed curricula. On an average, a curriculum has made 2 Internships as the mandatory requirement. Madurai Kamaraj University’s master degree journalism students have to undergo 4 internships, which are considered as core courses. A few curricula consider Internship as Elective courses.

Academic programmes in the study area seem to have realized the fact that classroom teaching is just not enough to impart practical knowledge and skills required to make a journalist. Only 30% of teaching happens inside the campus. These departments have professional people as part-time faculty members; conduct a lot of regular activities like current affairs Lab, debate, workshop modules in components like Web journalism, e-Publishing etc., arranging guest lecturesand sharing sessions, so on and so forth. A few institutions could successfully make their students to publish Lab journals and E-journals. Out of the studied institutions, four have got their own community radio stations, which are run by the journalism students. Media internships are also widely used in making the students to understand the nuances of the profession. However, very few institutions can boast of producing quality professionals to the news media industry. As the bunch of graduates who are theoretically sound and professionally skilled, these journalism graduates make a difference in the process of news production process.

Significance of Journalism Education

As a part of this study Media decision-makers such as Editors who recruit people for their respective media houses were also interviewed to understand the importance given to journalism education by the media industry in terms of selection. To a question - Is it necessary for a journalist to have undergone journalism training before taking up journalism? None of them have accepted that journalism education is necessary for a person to become a journalist. But they have acknowledged the fact that having trained in journalism helps a student to get a job. It is definitely an added advantage when comes to recruitment and further growth in their careers depends a lot in the skills they have acquired during their education. One editor however denied that saying, ‘I would still prefer a candidate even without journalism education but with the attitude to learn more, to a candidate with journalism education lacking the same. As another editor put it, ‘writing skills cannot be acquired over two or three year period and it comes only with voracious reading. So I would prefer a candidate with curiosity and love for language to a person with journalism education’.

According to another chief of bureau of a television channel, it is easier for a superior to mould a person with journalism education than without journalism education as an efficient journalist. One more editor agreed to the fact that seniors can make or mar the career of a journalist. ‘If he could assign them challenging beats and motivate them to be daring journalists with ethical principles, these youngsters will go a long way in changing the status quo in journalism. Unfortunately these seniors are not journalism trained and their ego is hurt when journalists with journalism degree suggested some correction in the news copy’, remarked another. He concluded saying that things will change for the better when this bunch of youngsters become seniors.

While there is a command and respect for journalism programmes among the students in the study area the men who matters in the media industry do not seem to think in similar lines. They are still skeptic about the efficiency of journalism graduates in making big in the news media. But journalism graduates have a slight edge over others who want to enter in the media industry. Journalism education is commercially viable in the study area with a lot of attractive options like audio/video production studio and media labs, etc.

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Disrupting the Narrative: examining 360 immersive journalism

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Abstract:
When the New York Times distributed 1.2 million cardboard headsets to its subscribers (11/2015), they made virtual reality accessible, placing it in the hands of anyone with access to a smartphone. 360 immersive films are rapidly being developed exploring the refugee crisis (MilkVR 01/2015), Sky News, 11/2015), crime scenes (Emblematic Group 04/2015) and protests (Vice News 03/2015). Virtual reality is not a new concept but the potential for rapid adoption poses challenges for broadcasters, journalists and educators. The goal is now to recast the role of the reporter as a storyteller and a guide for the VR audience.

With a change in how stories are presented and consumed, there is a need to explore the narrative within 360 immersive films. The traditional presentation of a television story has been disrupted with the reporter taking on a different role. The structure of writing to pictures, interview set ups, sound bites and graphic sequences has to be rethought when placed within a virtual environment where the viewer is determining the way the story is viewed and the direction that they wish to take. It calls for a new relationship between the audience and the consumer and although it can work to increase empathy and a connection to the story, there are other ethical concerns over placing a viewer in a potentially emotionally charged environment.

This paper explores and analyses the narratives found in the rise of 360 immersive journalism and how they disrupt traditional journalistic storytelling. It develops the idea that narrative has to change to accommodate this new form of storytelling. Through focus groups, a framework is presented to produce 360 immersive journalism that can be viewed within 'headset mounted displays', whilst developing a narrative for a new kind of audience. The paper will also look at the opportunities for using immersive stories within a classroom setting to develop journalism education and guide the student journalists through reporting scenarios they would otherwise have little access to. This research is informed by a pilot project that has been running to determine how immersive education can work.

2016 is predicted as being the year for VR with more devices being launched and 360 films being uploaded on social media daily. With Facebook acquiring Oculus Rift (March 2015), it is time for journalism to respond and journalism educators to think of what this narrative needs to be.

NB. These are the initial findings for a study on immersive journalism and the narrative forms. More analysis will be presented at the WJEC 2016 in Auckland, New Zealand, July 2016.

Introduction

There's a new form of journalism that is disrupting how we tell stories. It is a form of journalism that is experimental (Jones 2016) and used to generate empathy and connection (De La Pena 2010). It's experiential and allows the audience to experience a story for themselves, in a way that they choose. This is immersive journalism, where we capture the narrative using 360 degree cameras, to produce a story where the audience can look up, down and all around. This paper serves as a call to action to evaluate how we tell stories where experience is at the heart of the narrative. It provides a framework for the emergence of immersive journalism as a response to infotainment and the use of technology within news gathering and production. It offers a content analysis of immersive journalism that has been produced, analyzing the varying narrative forms and identifies, through quantitative data, how audiences are responding to the stories produced to provide a greater understanding of immersive journalism.

Immersive Journalism

Immersive journalism is not a new concept or one that has arisen in the past decade. In the past decade there has been an increase in this type of journalism as a response to infotainment to add entertainment values to some forms of broadcast news (Jones, 2014). The argument that to produce good quality journalism, it must be factual, objective and with no room for emotion (Meijer 2001), implies that involvement which is inherently subjective is linked to popular journalism. The ideology of objectivity has long been the focus in journalism and sociology of journalism studies (Schudson 2001) with the idea that journalism needs to "invoke some concept of objectivity in order to process facts about social reality" (Tuchman 1972:660). It is seen as the "chief occupational value" (Schudson 2001:149) and can be seen as the ideology permeating the journalist and ethnographic studies of newsrooms and journalistic behaviour. With immersive journalism, subjectivity from both a journalists' perspective and a device to illicit connections with an audience is therefore linked to the rise of popular infotainment.

Early understandings of immersive journalism can be traced to the New Journalism movement of the 1960s and 1970s, arising out of the features arena and prominently featured the journalist. They demonstrated an involvement in features and a conflicting storytelling measure with objective ideologies. The work was written in the first person narrative and demonstrated the writer "acting as a participant, as well as observer" (Canley 1997:225). The aim of the New Journalists was to write journalism that would read like a novel (Wolfe 1973). Objective descriptions are presented before introducing more subjective accounts of the situation or personal experiences, that can contribute to an increased understanding of the story (Wolfe 1973). It is seen as more intense and ethnographic in design, with journalists being focused on a group or subject for a long period of time to fully understand the story. As an example, Truman Capote spent five years researching the Clutter murders for *In Cold Blood* (1966) and humanising the killers Perry Smith and Dick Hickock.

New Journalism exploits the narrative conventions of subjectivity and goes against the objective ideologies at the heart of news conventions. It gives the journalist a voice with the emphasis on experience but this can lead to a journalist being self-indulgent in their storytelling (Manguel 1997) and can be accused of "stretching the truth" (Harbers and Broersma 2014). As the development of immersive journalism continues, the focus switches to the immersive audience. When an audience is in control of how they experience the story and what they look at in a story, the concerns of the egotistical journalist are diminished and the attention shifts to how an audience will receive and respond to the narrative.

The demand for more narrative and long-form journalism has been identified in recent literature (Neveu 2014, Blanding 2015). Neveu identified the need for more narrative reporting as a way to save journalism at a time when technology can lead to smaller newsrooms, multi-skilling and an audience overwhelmed by the accessibility of news to be consumed. This era of journalism means there are “less opportunities for in-depth investigations, less time for experiencing the ‘flesh’, flavours and scenes of the news” (Neveu 2014:535). It is a way to produce “lasting journalism” and allows the journalist to go out there and ‘do journalism’ at a time where they can be accessing data, images, visuals remotely from a newsroom. With this ‘new’ new journalism, the journalist has to be ‘doing’ with the aim “to combine the objectivity, the factuality of the scenes an actions and the greatest attention to the subjective dimension of the experience and feelings of the actors of the event” (2014:538). Blanding (2015) documented the journalist Andrew Sullibvan’s decision to move into ‘slow journalism’ as a response to be able to write “more deeply and subtly the many questions ... presented to me”. This line of argument gives validity and support for involved reporting, which follows the same combination of objectivity through an experienced narrative. It allows an opportunity for a different type of storytelling and one that can last in a saturated news economy. It requires more focus and concentration in a fast paced news cycle which can be dominated by the click culture and the race to be first in a highly saturated news environment.

An important feature of narrative journalism is the notion of becoming immersed in the story to be able to present reality from the lens of the journalist self. This has received limited academic debate although more recent studies have expressed the need for journalism practices to evolve and recognise emotions in practice. The concern is that news today “fails to acknowledge fully the significance of people’s immediate world” (Meijer 2001:198). Displaying emotions in journalistic practices comes most under scrutiny in news events of disasters and conflicts and this has been discussed both in media press by professionals working in the industry and in academic literature. Slow journalism and the more long form journalistic pieces identified above develops this.

It is often argued that eliciting emotions and bringing a personalised approach changes the narrative of television news and the focus of the journalists’ role. Turnock (2010) argued that in the coverage of the death of Princess Diana, witnessing the journalists own emotions “may have legitimated the distressed and emotional responses of some viewers” (2010:19). Viewers would turn the television on to see the journalist as a trusted friend and gain comfort from being reassured and sharing the same experience. This kind of or high-impact stories is seen as more of a legitimate part of journalistic culture, post September 11 (Tumber and Prentoulis 2003) despite it still being seen as part of the entertainment genre (Pantti 2010).

The focus of emotions in the narratives of immersive journalism, through filming 360 degrees, has been at the heart of discussions as the technology develops. The emphasis of the genre to act as an ‘empathy-machine’ (Constine, 2015) has evidence in the impact of immersive journalistic stories that have already been produced. Chris Milk, a leading VR filmmaker, has been using the medium to create the “ultimate empathy machine”. He believes the ability to do this is rooted in the medium of film that allows us “to feel empathy for people that are very different than us and worlds completely foreign from our own”. He is using films to show the United Nations the lives of the people they are making decisions about. This develops the role of immersive journalism, reporter involvement and the movement of new journalism, as being a tool to generate empathy and connection with the story.

Eliciting emotions and driving empathy can be linked to what has been defined as ‘infotainment’, which sees entertainment techniques and styles increasingly permeating news programming (Thussu 2007). Infotainment was described as being “rampant” (Franklin 1997) and even critiqued as being “McNugget” news (Marr 2005), to describe the perception of news as fast food takeaway sound bites. Infotainment is “journalism in which entertainment values take precedence over information content, presented at an intellectual level low enough to appeal to the mass audiences which comprise the major media markets” (McNair 2012: 4). It generally is used as an argument that sensationalizing the news is “dumbing down” society, and that it has lost its power to inform and engage (Postman 1985), therefore having adverse societal effects. Conflicting research argues that the transition to a more entertainment-orientated style of news is one that is reaching a wider audience and allows less engaged communities to ‘brain up’ (McNair 2003) implying that there is a need to educate. Temple (2006) maintains that this ‘dumbing down’ is a good thing with entertainment-style news programmes drawing in a wider audience demographic, engaging the “ignorant and disenfranchized” (Temple 2006). From this perspective, there is only a democratic and socially aware society when it is active, and so infotainment’s wider social and cultural appeal means that a bigger audience can be captured and engaged (Warner 2002). Infotainment, it is asserted, can achieve this. Temple (2006) argues that infotainment has made society more democratically inclusive, reflecting a wider population, rather than the cultural elite so that ‘knowledge is no longer a gift carefully wrapped by experts' (Cottle 2001: 76). From this perspective, we can identify immersive journalism in the form of 360-degree filming as widening the audience’s perspectives and understanding. By giving the audience the responsibility to develop their own narrative by experiencing the story in the way that they choose, we are can see that the technology allows for a wider audience perspective.

Landscape of immersive 360 journalism

We can understand immersive 360 journalism from the background of New Journalism against a discourse of infotainment and a development of technological advances. With the rise in accessibility of virtual reality (VR) headsets, there has been an increse in the amount of content produced to reach audiences often disengaged from mainstream news production.

When Google launched a cardboard headset at a developers conference in 2014, they placed virtual reality in the hands of every day people, no longer making it accessible to only those with high powered computer systems. This provided an opportunity for immersive journalism to reach larger audiences. Google Cardboard is a virtual reality headset designed for a mobile device. It is made out of cardboard and comes with lenses and a magnet that can work to change the view or make actions within an experience. Any 360-degree film or virtual reality content can be viewed through Cardboard headsets. In November 2015, the New York Times capitalised on this when they distributed 1.2 million NYTimes branded cardboard headsets to to all of its subscribers. They simultaneously launched the NYT:VR app that viewers could download and view 360 degree films. They launched the app with a 10-minute film called *The Displaced*, produced to tell the story of three children who had lost their homes due to war and conflict. The move prompted Wired to write, ‘Google Cardboard’s New York Times Experiment Just Hooked a Generation on VR’ (Wohlsen 2015). The experience resonated with viewers; the average time spent within the app is 14.7 minutes, which is a much higher figure than normal. The app had more downloads in its first few days than any other New York Times app has had at launch (Jaekel 2015).

By providing a low-cost solution to take VR to the masses, the relatively niche experiments in VR taking place in newsrooms gain more importance. Rather than small scale experimental stories like De La Pena’s *Hunger in LA* that requires an Oculus Rift and high powered machine to view it, Google Cardboard allows for journalists to explore and expand onto a new, immersive and potentially powerful platform that will require them to develop new skills and new forms of storytelling (Jarvis 2008). This has been evident in the range of 360-degree films that have been produced over the past year (2015). Both mainstream broadcasters and new media companies have made steps into the virtual landscape in 2015 (Jones and Callaghan, 2016) with the production of immersive stories. Digital-led news outlets, namely Vice News and RYOT all hold a presence within virtual reality with Huffington Post's acquisition of RYOT (April 2016) argued as using "cutting-edge technology for a larger purpose" (Huffington Post, 2016). In the content analysis stories were more feature-led and offered long form approaches to storytelling, developing on the slow journalism movement that has gained traction in mainstream media and trade press (Blanding 2015). It is generally not a technology that drives the daily news diary, although social 360 options (Jones 2016) have been filling the gap to diversify audiences on social networks. The study also revealed that the average length for an immersive journalistic piece was 6 mins, 39 seconds, far longer than a standard broadcast news item of 1.30.

Focused group studies of immersive journalistic stories show a high level of empathy with what was being seen and experienced (Jones and Callaghan, 2016). Qualitative data from focus groups where narratives were compared between traditional broadcast news and similar stories within a 360-degree framework, found the connection has lasting impact. After watching a story directed by Milk about refugee camps in Jordan (*Clouds Over Sidra*) the responses included that from one student, who said she could understand how subjects of the story felt in a way that she couldn't before. Anecdotal responses included statements that "they were whispering in my ear. I can't forget that".

Methodology

At this stage it is important to note the distinction between 360-degree filming and virtual reality. The terms are mistakenly used interchangeably with the accessibility of cardboard headsets being distributed to watch 360-degree films. For many, there is no issue of the interchangeability of the technology, but it is necessary to note it now.

360-degree filming positions the audience in the place of the camera and it is capturing the real environment. In virtual reality you have the freedom to explore a constructed environment through CGI. The story leads to an important distinction. In a VR setting, the user leads the way. In a 360-degre film, the journalist still has more of a sense of control to construct the narrative and push it forward so the user experiences the story happening around them, rather than happening to them.

Technologies are developing to allow interactivity within 360-degree films but this is very much emerging technology. This author is currently working on an immersive education project that fuses the two technologies of 360-degree filming with the computer graphics of virtual reality. This is something that will be developed a lot in the next year.

To highlight this distinction further, the work of leading immersive storytellers, Nonny De La Pena and Chris Milk can be highlighted. De La Pena takes the CGI approach to create simulated news events, whilst blending real audio of emergency calls and situational audio to add a sense of reality. Milk utilizes 360 degree cameras to tell character-led stories of Ebola sufferers or refugees in the United Nations films Waves of Grace and Clouds Over Sidra, respectively.

For this study, the focus has been on 360 immersive journalism. This is more common within the news industry with only De La Pena exploring true virtual reality as a form of immersive journalism. To better understand the audience impact of the stories and how immersive journalism is disrupting the news landscape, the narrative forms were identified in three categories; reporter-led, character-led and then social 360. These have been clearly defined (Jones, 2016) and can be identified easily. Social 360 takes the form of simple VR. A short 360 video or a 360 image that provides a user with an opportunity to look around the scene. Increased functionality on social networks like Facebook, allows users to use their phone or to swipe the screen to peruse the environment. This option is identified as a separate narrative form and has been one focus in the methodology.

Content selected for analysis was based on stories that are journalistic in nature with a focus on factual storytelling. Four platforms for production were selected as the leading providers for watching VR or 360-degree content and ones that were accessible to anyone with a smartphone. These were the apps VRSE, NY Times VR, Jaunt and RYOT. VRSE and Jaunt have been leading the way in producing 360-degree content. NY Times, as earlier discussed, became the first news organisation to send headsets to create an app devoted to this content and RYOT exist as a platform for journalism and content relating to activism. Other content has been made by BBC, Wall Street Journal and independent journalists. Some of these are embedded within websites (BBC) or often behind a pay wall (Wall Street Journal). The content selected is accessible and situated where an audience would go to find such content.

The quantitative study was devised to include participants that are being targeted by the immersive storytelling genre: the 18-24 year olds that Wired Magazine said *The New York Times* cardboard experiment had “made VR cool for a generation”. A trend report into the VR industry found that 71% of those born after 2000 (Gen-Z) will either get a headset themselves of ask a parent or guardian to buy one for them. This data suggests that the audience for immersive journalistic content will within this age bracket. It is also the group who routinely switch off from mainstream news and so news organisations are trying to find new ways to reach this fragmented audience (Ofcom 2105).
Twenty participants took part in the study, aged between 18-24. They were selected randomly from students studying media production at degree level and they all possessed a smartphone that they frequently used to source media. In the group, they all experienced different narrative forms of immersive journalism. Samples ranged from *The New York Times’* “The Displaced”, *Vice News’* “Millions March”, *Sky News’* “Migrant Crisis” and *VRSE’s* “Clouds over Sidra”. They were then asked to answer a series of questions, based on their experience and understanding of the subjects and the stories. The participants used a range of headset mounted devices with smartphones, including Google Cardboard and the Homido HMD to house any smartphone. All produce a very similar field of vision with little difference to the viewing experience and all require headphones for a more immersive experience.

the sample is small, the aim of the study was to gain an initial understanding of the experiences of different narrative forms within 360-degree films. As this is an emerging field and a new genre of storytelling, it is important to gain early data to inform understanding of what is working and what isn’t.

Findings

The focus group were asked to watch a range of content that can be divided into three narrative forms; reporter-led, character-led and social 360. They were then asked a series of questions based on their experiences, drawn from studies on using VR technology in education (Chertoff *et al.*, 2010). The responses are outlined below in table 1. *Quantitative Data for 360 Narrative Forms*.

Social 360 is the furthest away from what virtual reality can be. It is at the entry level in the VR spectrum, closely followed by 360 content. As something that allows you to just look around an environment on a smartphone, in social 360, there is no real immersion. However, the majority of respondents still felt like it was virtual reality, backing up the earlier statement that the tensions of the distinction between 360-degree films and VR is largely an issue for the tech purists. Despite an increase in social 360 content being produced since Facebook and YouTube started supporting spherical video, 55% of respondents had never seen this kind of content before, however 85% said that they would view it again. This could be linked to the findings that reveal that 70% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that it changed their understanding of the story and that it added value to the narrative.

Across narrative forms, the results showed a sense of presence in the environment. 90% of respondents viewing social 360 content agreed or strongly agreed that they felt like they were there. This increased to 93% in reporter-led narratives to 95% in character-led narratives.

Discussions around immersive journalism have focused on connection to a story (De La Pena 2010). This study substantiates that claim with high percentages agreeing or strongly agreeing that they felt more connection. This is high in both character and reporter-led narratives. It is slightly higher in a character-led narrative, which has been found in the author's previous studies (Jones 2016). 86% supported the claim within a reporter-led narrative and 94% in character-led narratives. When it comes to empathy, the reporter-led narratives created a stronger impact with 86% experiencing feelings of empathy, 11% higher than in a character-led narrative. This may be linked to having reporter led them more around the story. This helps battle previous problems identified within the fear of missing out that can often arise within immersive journalism (Jones 2016). Immersive journalism takes a different approach to traditional linear narrative forms, which are heavily guided by the journalist showing what they want you to see and what the story dictates what you see. Although there is still a high percentage that liked to have a character guide them through a story (67%), it may be early in the development of journalism to establish a new form of journalistic narrative.

More on the findings and analysis of the data will be explored and presented at WJEC 2016 in Auckalnd, New Zealand.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree/ Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Social 360:					
When I watched the story I felt like I was there	60%	30%	5%	5%	
This changed my understanding of the story.	30%	40%	20%	10%	
This didn't add any value to the story.	5%		20%	55%	15%
I have seen social 360 content before.	35%	5%	5%	20%	35%
I will watch social 360 stories again.	53%	32%	11%		5%
The social 360 story needs audio.	44%	39%	11%	5%	
I would watch social 360 for more than a minute.	53%	32%	5%	10%	
I would watch social 360 for around 30 seconds.	20%	30%	25%	20%	5%
This didn't feel like virtual reality to me.	11%	5%	16%	42%	26%
Character-led narratives:					
I understand the story better.	38%	44%	19%		
I feel more connection to the story.	37%	42%	21%		
Character-led narratives help connect more to the story.	44%	50%	5%		
I would prefer the story to be more interactive.	32%	32%	21%	16%	
I like having a character to guide the story.	39%	28%	11%	17%	5%
I felt like people were invading my personal space.	20%	15%	25%	30%	10%
When I watched the story I felt like I was there.	37%	58%	5%		
When I watched the story I experienced feelings of empathy.	33%	42%	16%	10%	
When I watched the story I felt like I was a character in the story.	47%	26%	16%	5%	5%
The characters felt real to me.	32%	42%	16%	5%	5%
When I watched the story, I lost the sense of time.	42%	5%	37%	11%	5%
The character added authority and legitimacy to the story.	37%	42%	21%		
It was clear how to watch and engage with the story.	22%	67%	11%		
I felt like I wanted to reach out and touch the characters.	33%	44%	5%	16%	
Reporter-led narratives:					
It was clear how to watch and engage with the story.	33%	53%	13%		
The reporter added authority and legitimacy to the story.	20%	60%	20%		
I like having a reporter to guide the story.	27%	47%	20%	7%	
I understand the story better.	53%	27%	20%		
I feel more connection to the story.	33%	47%	13%	7%	
Reporter-led narratives help connect more to the story.	43%	43%	7%	7%	
I want to watch more immersive stories.	56%	31%	6%	6%	
I would prefer the story to be more interactive.	57%	8%	8%	4%	4%
I like having a reporter to guide the story.	33%	53%	7%		7%
I felt like people were invading my personal space.	20%	27%	20%	20%	13%
When I watched the story I felt like I was there.	43%	50%		7%	
When I watched the story I experienced feelings of empathy.	33%	53%	7%		7%
When I watched the story, I lost the sense of time.	40%	33%	20%	7%	
I felt like the reporter was next to me, telling me about the story.	53%	33%	7%	7%	

1. *Quantitative Data for 360 Narrative Forms*.

Opportunities for Journalism Education

This paper provides a framework for understanding narrative forms within immersive journalism and how content creators can use 360-degree technology to produce stories that are empathetic and experiential. There is a further opportunity to use this technology within journalism education to better equip students with the experiences necessary to develop their reporting skills.

Using virtual training for journalists is not new, whether it be the use of role plays in the classroom (Simmons 2010), scripted simulations (Heide 2010; Lockett & Kawamoto 2010), via online platforms (ifj.org 2005), or using specialist simulators such as Second Life (D'Agostino 2013). As noted in this paper, immersive technology can act as an empathy machine with stories told in the right way (Milk 2015). This then informs the approach to developing a platform that engages student journalists in a scene that they can empathise with, find a connection and consequently deeper understanding.

In developing this, a pilot project is underway funded by the Association of Journalism Education UK. While some virtual reality educational experiences do exist, notably the Apollo 11 experience by VR Immersive Education, there is no working prototype for a VR journalism training experience (Jones and Callaghan, 2016). An emerging body of research focuses on the potential of VR storytelling in journalism (De La Pena *et al. 2010*), however this technology could also be used to train journalists in handling niche reporting situations, such as war and conflict, as well as basic journalism practice through "pedagogically immersed" experiences (Bronack *et al*, 2008).
This project aims to investigate the impact, viability and effectiveness of virtual reality in journalism education through a pilot simulation. Students experience a news event, such as a crime or protest scenario, and are offered options that guide them through the process of constructing their story. In addition, the project would assess the efficacy of the process through the piloting of its use with groups of journalism students.
The results of this pilot are expected to be published in 2017.

Conclusions

This paper presents an overview of the landscape within immersive journalism and the narrative forms that are presented. It develops the notion of slow journalism as one that can be established through immersive storytelling where an audience can experience first-hand a news story, whilst attributing the rise of immersive journalism as one that has developed against the infotainment discourse and technological advances.

The three distinct narratives are identified as 360social, reporter-led and character-led narratives. These narratives all have their place within immersive journalism with data demonstrating value to the audience's understanding of a story and their connection. Data reveals that more content is wanted with 65% respondents wanting more VR experiences with interactivity and choices within an immersive story.

As the technology develops in the next year, more media organisations are experimenting and launching VR studios, namely UK's Sky News which is due to be launched towards the end of 2016. This development offers challenges in terms of ensuring that good content is produced and that is accessible to a wide audience. The next stage of this body of work will explore the empathy that can be generated within immersive stories, the ethical questions that are being raised and the production of a framework to better understand the place of the journalist and the audience within this emerging genre.

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Detecting the Dynamic Interactions Between the media and State in China: A Case Study of the Coverage of Sino-Japanese Relations between 2001 and 2015 by Leading Chinese Newspapers Through the Lens of Framing Theory

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Abstract

The interaction between news media and the government has been a long-standing research topic in both global and Chinese contexts. Since China's media environment has shown considerable transformation due to large-scale commercialization, globalization, and the dramatic development of information technology in the past two decades, the discussion of Chinese media-state relations has moved from a traditional propaganda model to a liberalization-control framework. This study will directly engage in this discussion, investigating the dynamic interactions between the press and state in contemporary China by choosing Chinese media's coverage of Sino-Japanese relations as a case study. It examines the ways in which the Chinese journalists' reporting of Japan and Sino-Japanese relations reflect and affect China's policy towards Japan between 2001 and 2015. By drawing on the framing theory, this work will quantitatively content analyze two leading Chinese newspapers' framings of Sino-Japanese relations. This work aims to provide a comprehensive explanation of the Chinese journalists' role in China's policy towards Japan, and deepen and extend the understanding of media-state relations in the Chinese context.

Key words

Media-state relations; Chinese newspaper; framing; Sino-Japanese relations

Introduction

Over the past two decades, due to large-scale commercialization, globalization, and the dramatic development of information technology, China's media industry has shown some considerable transformation in terms of ownership, organizational structure, and profit models. The discussion of the practices and functions of news media and journalists in China's government policy has increasingly attracted research attention. The argument of journalism and the news media acting as the 'fourth estate' by serving the public interest, which is widely accepted in Western societies is not an empirically evident in China, and journalism's press freedom and the media's influence on government policy is still quite limited. However, while Western understanding of the journalism does not translate well to Chinese contexts, the simplistic authoritarian paradigms that are preoccupied with images of state censorship and repression over-simplify the complex realities of journalists-state relations in China as well. This article aims to provide insight for journalism studies in Chinese context, investigating the dynamic interactions between journalism and state in contemporary China.

This study will employ framing theory as the lens to examine the media-state relations dynamic due to its specific explanation of the way the news media serve and exert influence on a government or regime. Framing theory proposes that the media select and emphasize specific issues or aspects of an issue in order to influence their audience's attitude towards them (Entman, 1993). Sino-Japanese relations are chosen for this study to examine the press-state dynamics in China due to the complexity and significance of bilateral relations to China as well as the vast media coverage of Japan in the Chinese media. Based on framing theory, this research constructs an analytical framework to analyze Chinese newspaper's coverage of Japan. In terms of methodology, this study will use a mixed methods approach, which combines quantitative content analysis of news reports of Sino-Japanese relations between 2001 and 2015 from two mainstream Chinese newspapers: the *People's Daily* and the *Southern Metropolis Daily*, and in-depth interviews with media professionals and government officials. The interviews will be used to help decide the analytical categories and supplement the research findings.

Theories of media-state relations

As a sociologist and communication scholar, Manuel Castells put it, in our society, "politics is primarily media politics" (2007, p. 240). Castells (2007, 2013) observed that throughout history, information, media and communication have been fundamental sources of power and counter-power, and domination and social change, because the fundamental battle being fought in society is over the minds of the people. Although the media are not the holders of power, they enjoy crucial significance since they constitute the space where power is decided. As the media plays a vital role in politics, the interactions between those two concepts have been a long-standing discussion topic, centering on struggle and cooperation between journalists and national governments (Robinson, 2001).

The manufacturing consent theory that was first proposed by Herman and Chomsky (1988) suggests that usually the government has the ability to influence the output of journalists and the power to set news media agendas. It states that journalists' reporting has a propaganda function by highlighting the dominant views and marginalizing opposition voices (Bennett, 1990; Herman & Chomsky, 1988; Zaller & Chui, 1996). According to Herman and Chomsky (2008), "in countries where the levers of power are in the hands of a state bureaucracy, the monopolistic control over the media, often supplemented by official censorship, makes it clear that the media serve the ends of a dominant elite" (p. 1). The manufacturing consent theory is widely recognized and many recent studies have adopted this model to examine the mass media's role in political crisis reporting (Matthews & Cottle, 2012; Rahman & Marjan, 2013). For instance, Matthews and Cottle (2012) analyzed the U.S. TV news output during crises and found that the American news providers used the dominant and authoritative source very frequently while adopting the expose/investigation frame much less frequently, which indicated a "decline in the traditional democratic 'watchdog' role of critically scrutinizing the activities of the state and other power holders" (p. 576).

In contrast to the manufacturing consent theory, the CNN effect theory contends that the journalists and news media influence rather than are influenced by the government

(Livingston & Eachus, 1995). Although called the CNN effect, this theory not only refers to the American-based television channel, Cable News Network (CNN), but also highlights the role of all global real-time news coverage in driving government policy. Livingston and Eachus (1995, p. 413) defined the CNN effect "as elite decision makers' loss of policy control to news media" while Seib (2002) suggested that the CNN effect "is presumed to illustrate the dynamic tension that exists between real-time television news and policymaking, with the news having the upper hand in terms of influence" (p. 27). According to Seib (1997), by uncovering what is happening in distant places, news media play a significant role in shaping public opinion, which in turn helps to influence the policy-making process. The CNN effect theory has gained considerable empirical support. Many researchers have used case study methodology to investigate the role of news media in setting political agenda and forcing governments to intervene in international conflicts. For instance, Hammond and Herman (2000) investigated the CNN effect on NATO's intervention in Kosovo while Mermin (1997) explored the media influence on American policies during the Somalia morass.

By drawing upon the manufacturing consent and CNN effect theories, Robinson (2005) developed the policy-media interaction model which systematically examines under which conditions the media serve the authority's interests, or alternatively, are able to influence government policy-making. According to Robinson (2005), elite consensus and policy uncertainty are two significant factors which determine whether the media can be more or less influential. When an elite consensus exists on an issue, the media operate within a sphere of consensus and coverage reflects elite consensus on policy. Under this condition, the news media's role of manufacturing consent works, which remains uncritical and helps build support for official policy. In the second case, there is elite dissension on specific issues but policy certainty still exists. At this time, the media have the potential to play a more active role but this influence is resisted. In the third case, under circumstances where there is elite dissension and a high level of policy uncertainty within the government, the news media can come to affect government policy-making outcomes. Only in this case, does the CNN effect function and critical media coverage provides bargaining power for those seeking a change in policy.

The perspective of framing

In addition to above-mentioned three theories, the concept of framing has been widely used within the debate over the media-state relations dynamic, due to its specific explanation of the way the news media serve and exert influence on the regime. Entman (1993) provided a classic definition of framing in terms of an activity "to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating context in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described" (p. 52). According to Entman (1993), the concept of frame, in short, emphases the salience of different aspects of a topic that can give a specific meaning to an event or issue so as to influence the audience's attitudes toward it.

Entman (2004) put forward the concepts of magnitude and cultural congruence that help explain the way media frames work, and the factors that determine their success. The first concept is magnitude. The focus throughout his study on media frames was "on those frames that attain magnitude and repetition, and on comparing them with possible counterframes that received insufficient attention to influence politics" (p. 31). He suggested that except for a few experts on foreign policy and international affairs, ordinary people's perceptions of international affairs are usually selective and segmentary rather than comprehensive and all-sided, and based on their established mental maps and habits. The media's coverage and frames are capable of making the flow of information become less and less thorough and increasingly limited to the selected highlights. This is the way the media frames function—to influence the audience's attitude through selecting and emphasizing.

The second notion is cultural congruence, which refers to the level of information disseminated to the audience in accordance with the ideas and values that have already been rooted in people's minds based on their experience, memory and knowledge. Entman (2004) argued that congruence is a crucial element to determine the success of framing. Usually the more congruent the frame with the schemas that dominate the political culture, the more success it will enjoy. The most inherently powerful frames are those fully congruent with schemas habitually used by most members of society. Such frames have the greatest intrinsic capacity to arouse similar responses among people. According to Entman's (2004) analysis, when an event or issue shows a high level of congruence with the dominant culture, the media frames tend to conform to the authority's narrative and have little room to provide a different interpretation. The opposite extreme is cultural incongruence, meaning the event or issue that shows significant variance with the public's inherent cognition. In this instance, the influence of media frames is quite limited because the government will actively provide a normative explanation and block other explanations. The third case is cultural ambiguity. Only under the circumstance of cultural ambiguity can the media enjoy more freedom in framing issues. Ambiguous events present more opportunities for players outside the administration, including the media themselves, to affect framing. Since framing theory provides a worthy theoretical framework for researching the media's practices and roles in government policy, this study will employ it as the lens to examine the dynamic relations between news media and government in Chinese context. Based on framing theory, this research constructs an analytical framework to analyze Chinese journalists' reporting.

Whilst literature on media-state relations has remained all too often centered on the United States (US) and Europe, study on this issue in other regions, such as Asia, is very limited. The exploration of new national contexts is likely to yield a greater understanding of how and why levels of media influence might vary across different countries. Although there is a more balanced and symbiotic relationship in Western democracies, the interaction between the press and state has shown marked differences in non-democratic regimes. It is believed that for most hegemonic regimes, strict control of the news media is a crucial means of sustaining their legitimacy as the media act as the platform through which the government's ideological framework is propagated (Hung & Dingle, 2014). China is no exception in its strict government control over the media; however, its strategies and tactics are subtler and always updated with the times.

Media-state interactions in contemporary China

It is a widely held view that the Chinese news media has been a tool of the Communist Party's propaganda for more than 70 years. This has been supported by the Chinese media's description of itself as a mouthpiece of the state (Scotton, 2010).

The development of the propaganda function of the Chinese media has several historical and politico-social origins. From the birth of the Xinhua News Agency in the 1940s during the Second Sino-Japan War, party journalism and media were used as an effective instrument for promulgating the Party's ideology and mobilizing public support (Zhao, 1998). After the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the president, Mao Zedong, suggested that journalism and the media should be completely controlled by the Communist Party by providing a top-down flow of communication (Zhao, 1998). Therefore, the Chinese news media system represented the quintessential Leninist "transmission belt" for indoctrination and mass mobilization (Shambaugh, 2007).

The past two decades have witnessed an overwhelming trend of commercialization, globalization, and the dramatic development of information technology in the field of media and communication. The Chinese news media have also been swept up in these changes and have shown considerable transformation in terms of ownership, organizational structure, profit models, and integration into the global media system (Hadland & Zhang, 2012; Hung & Dingle, 2014; Hyun & Kim, 2015). Some hold the view that the Chinese news media have been undergoing some positive changes in journalistic independence and a more free press (Huang, 2007), and the rise of market-oriented commercial media has made a significant contribution to the creation of a pluralistic media environment in China (Huang, 2007; Winfield & Peng, 2005). It has been observed that in the past, the state-controlled media environment and government subsidies protected media agencies from competition, the need to generate returns, and even from audience preference. However, the recent commercialization of the media industry has introduced these elements and radically forced the media to change the way it conducts its business (Hadland & Zhang, 2012).

Meanwhile, the Mao era's old propaganda methods have changed in contemporary China. In recent years, the Chinese government and the official news media have promoted two perspectives of the media's role: public scrutiny and the guidance of opinion (Lagerkvist, 2010). Public scrutiny refers to the monitoring by ordinary people of the government's performance through news media. Although the media have played a scrutiny role to some extent and critical opinions toward the government and officials have emerged, it has been argued that, on the whole, this role has been limited because most critiques remain within the boundaries set by the state (Stockmann, 2010). The implementation of the guidance of opinion is usually through "covert persuasion and overt persuasion demonstrating the correctness of government policy" (Lagerkvist, 2010, p. 169). These two concepts illustrate that the Chinese government has attempted to use a less restrictive approach than in the past to influence and lead public opinion (Zhao, 2012). As Lagerkvist (2010) concluded, "the propaganda has been transformed to ideotainment, which refers to more information and less propagandistic content" (p. 161).

Advocates of new technology argue that this transformation from propaganda to 'ideotainment' in the media field has been greatly accelerated by the emergence of new media (Couldry & Curran, 2003; Lei, 2011; Wallis, 2011). As the Internet and social media have dramatically enriched and diversified public information, a number of studies have suggested that the new media are capable of promoting a free press in many countries (Benkler, 2006; Castells, 2010; Habermas, 2006; Lei, 2011). In China, Zhao (2001) proposed that user-generated content of social media and the Internet have the potential of undermining the hegemony of official mass media and allowing more diverse information and viewpoints to be disseminated. Yang (2013) argued that a network-based flow of information has made censorship of information more difficult to achieve than before, which has more recently allowed Chinese people a platform to discuss public events and participate in civic actions.

Although a number of studies have found that the Chinese news media are gradually undergoing a positive change from Leninist propaganda to Western-style press freedom, others have disagreed and asserted that the Chinese Communist Party still strictly controls the media output and is adept at utilizing commercialization and new technology to enhance and strengthen the propaganda apparatus (Hung & Dingle, 2014; Hyun & Kim, 2015; Shambaugh, 2007). Hadland and Zhang (2012) argued that despite some aspects of media business being deregulated by the government, such as advertisement and distribution, the most crucial component, content, has been excluded in this transformation. Zhao (1998) argued that the controlled nature of reform prevented the commercial news sector from posing any fundamental challenge to the dominant model of political communication. She claimed that the public's need for entertainment, micro-economic and business information and, more generally, its participation in economic and cultural life through the media were acknowledged and, at least, partially fulfilled. However, its rights to political information, meaningful participation in political life, and to a role in making key economic decisions have continued to be negated. Hachten (2010) also suggested that although the Chinese government "allowed media commercialization to flourish, it restricted freedom of political coverage" (p. 21). Hadland (2015) concluded that the idea of commercialization being capable of promoting press freedom is based more on Western paradigms of media-state relations, in which there is an inexorable drift toward liberalism, than on the robust reality of China's model.

Whilst economic autonomy has failed to bring political autonomy to the Chinese media, the optimistic idea of new information technology being capable of facilitating this political autonomy has been refuted as well. Results from some studies have shown that despite the Chinese new media's important developments, China remains far from having a free Internet or press (Chin, 2014; Gladwell, 2010; Zhang, 2007). The Chinese government still uses legal and administrative methods to strictly monitor political news and information on new media, combined with new software technology that blocks or filters information and communication.

It has been widely recognized that the new media do diversify the news output and content in many 'soft' news categories, such as the sports and entertainment news. However, with regards to 'hard news', which refers to sensitive political news or foreign policy issues, the government has no wish to loose its control over it. In 2005, the State Council Information Office and Ministry of Information Industry jointly published the Provisions for the Administration of Internet News Information Services, which stipulated the rules that the Internet news information service providers should obey in disseminating news information. This regulation prohibited commercial portals from gathering news directly, which in the end forced them to become news aggregators instead of news collectors. Therefore, despite the commercial portals prevailing over state-owned news websites with regards to financial profits and user population, the content they disseminate is merely a copy of their state-owned counterparts. Although the Chinese people can easily access new media, the information posted on new media sites has mostly been a reproduction of official news media postings (Chin, 2014).

Just like the incompatibility between the manufacturing consent paradigm and the CNN effect in global context, the debate over media-state relations in contemporary China seems to also be dichotomous. Some have contended that the Chinese government still keeps strict control over the media, at least in the political arena, while others have suggested that commercialization and new technologies have greatly empowered the media to challenge the government information hegemony. This study will directly engage in this discussion. To examine the interaction between the Chinese news media and government policy and to gain a deeper understanding of this issue, Sino-Japanese relations is a worthy research case due to the complexity and significance of bilateral relations to China as well as the vast media coverage of Japan in the Chinese media.

Case study: Chinese journalists' reporting of Japan and Sino-Japanese relations

The topic of Sino-Japanese relations is important and sensitive in both China and Japan. As two influential Asian powers, China and Japan are significant to each other in terms of geopolitics, national security, economy and trade, and culture (Dent, 2010; Downs & Saunders, 2012; Hollihan, 2014; Reilly, 2013; Zhang, 2007). However, the long-term hostility and conflict between these two nations have created complex and vulnerable bilateral relations.

China and Japan had been friendly neighbours for more than two thousand years, engaging in cultural exchange since China's Sui and Tang dynasty (around 600 AD). However, in modern times, two Sino-Japanese Wars during 1894-1895 and 1938-1945 made the bilateral relations hostile. Although the war has ended for more than seventy years, those traumatic memories do not fade away in Chinese people's minds. In contrast, the controversy surrounding historical issues have prevented China and Japan from achieving a real national reconciliation (He, 2007; Reilly, 2006; Rose, 2004). In this historical context of hostility, the recent territorial dispute over the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands has further strained bilateral relations. Due to the Japanese government's nationalization of the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands in 2012 and the subsequent anti-Japanese demonstrations in China, bilateral relations between China and Japan have reached their lowest point since the normalization of diplomacy in 1972, with very little effective political dialogue and a sharp decrease in economic and trade cooperation (Fisman et al., 2014; Hollihan, 2014; Togo, 2014).

Since Sino-Japanese relations have worsened, a widely held view is that the Chinese government is responsible for the deterioration in political bilateral relations due to its dissemination of material that contains nationalistic and patriotic content, and its control of the mass media that have stoked anti-Japanese passion (Downs & Saunders, 2012; Kawashima, 2014). It has also been argued that the Chinese media's incitement and propaganda has been very effective, as it has resulted in an increase in nationalism and anti-Japanese sentiment among the Chinese public (Lye & Wu, 2013; Stockmann, 2010). While some believe the Chinese government has used the media to encourage and manipulate popular nationalism and anti-Japanese passion that has resulted in deteriorated Sino-Japanese relations (Downs & Saunders, 2012; Kawashima, 2014; Lye & Wu, 2013), other studies have argued that the Chinese media have suppressed anti-Japanese sentiment rather than provoked it because of potential political risks (Tang & Darr, 2012; Wan, 2012; Zhao, 2012). According to this view, the media's mobilization of public response to the conflict could endanger the maintenance of social stability and political order, resulting in unexpected consequences (Tang & Darr, 2012). For example, the concern has been that public indignation towards foreign states may turn into discontent toward the Chinese authority because the public may consider the government too weak to protect its people and sovereignty, which could potentially lead to revolution.

There seems to exist two contradictory opinions about the role and function played by the Chinese media in Sino-Japanese relations that involve their manipulation of anti-Japanese sentiment or their suppression of it, both of which have received wide empirical support. Despite these opposite viewpoints, most current research on the media's role in Sino-Japanese relations has been event-based and crisis-driven, investigating the media's practice by analyzing press coverage during several significant political events and crises between China and Japan since the 2000s.

However, considering that international events and crises are a special condition in bilateral relations, it may not be valid to generalize the media's role and function from its practices during international events and crises. Therefore, the controversy of media's manipulation or suppression lacks a sufficiently valid and reliable research sampling. To overcome the shortcomings of current research that is mostly event-based and crises-driven, and to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the media's function in China's policy towards Japan, this study investigates the 15-year period of Sino-Japanese relations between 2001 and 2015, which included several significant bilateral crises between China and Japan and witnessed a relatively alleviative period for bilateral relations from 2006 to 2011. This thesis aims to investigate the dynamic interaction between the Chinese news media and the state, examining the consistency as well as the variation of the media's practices during peacetime and political crises in Sino-Japanese relations.

From a broader perspective, this thesis also aims to contribute to the debate about media-state relations that has been widely discussed in Western democracies but has lacked sufficient empirical attention in China. It should be noted that the argument of the media acting as the 'fourth estate' by serving the public interest (the CNN-effect model), which is widely accepted in Western societies, is not as empirically evident in China. The media's influence on government policy is still quite limited in contemporary China. However, the simplistic, authoritarian paradigms and the manufacturing consent paradigm that are preoccupied with images of state censorship and repression over-simplify the complex realities of media-state relations in China as well. The present study proposes that the Chinese news media's roles in government policy, especially foreign policy, are not uni-directional during different international and domestic political circumstances. This study aims to deepen the understanding of media-state relations in Chinese context by investigating the dynamic interaction between Chinese media's practices and China's foreign policy.

Methodology

This study will use a mixed methods approach, which combines quantitative content analysis of news reports of Sino-Japanese relations between 2001 and 2015 from two mainstream Chinese newspapers and interviews with media professionals and government officials. The analysis will involve six related steps as follows:

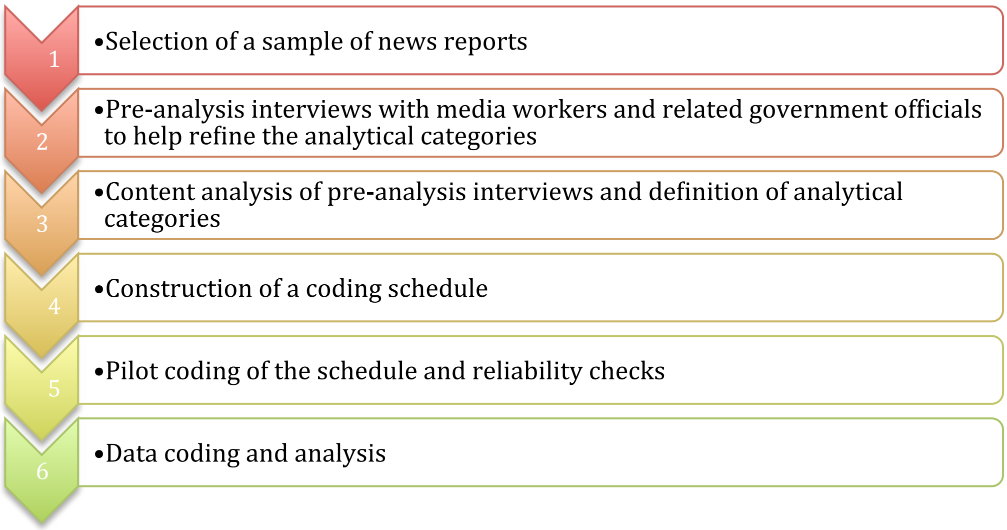

Figure 1 The six research steps

The sample selected for this study will be the reports from January 2001 to December 2015 of Sino-Japanese relations in two leading Chinese newspapers: *the People's Daily* and *Southern Metropolis Daily.* The two Chinese leading newspapers were chosen for the study because of their political importance, and varied degree of commercialization and high circulation. The *People's Daily* is the most comprehensive Party newspaper that is owned by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and is published worldwide (Huang, 2011). As the leading official newspaper, the *People's Daily* is a highly representative example for detecting the government's policy, stance and practice on domestic and international affairs. In 2012, the circulation of the *People's Daily* occupied second place in China, and tenth in the world for newspaper circulations. The *Southern Metropolis Daily* is a commercial newspaper that is part of the giant Southern Media Group, which is considered the most successful commercial media organization in China. The *Southern Metropolis Daily* is well known in China due to its investigative reporting and critical attitudes towards the central government and has a strong national reputation and circulation (Wang, 2012). According to Bosi Data (2012), its circulation in 2012 was seventh in China and thirtieth worldwide. Since these two newspapers have shown considerable differences in terms of commercialization, it is believed that the content analysis of their coverage could provide a representative picture of the practice of the whole Chinese newspaper industry. News articles published in the above two newspapers will be collected from their official databases using key word searches of 'Japan', and the time period for the analysis of news articles will be limited to the 15-year period of 2001 to 2015.

The dimensions or characteristics to be analyzed will be defined (Cottle et al., 1998) according to coding categories. The construction of the coding categories will first involve the definition of general identifiers, comprising date, length, and type or genre of the newspaper reports. Then, the study will identify three factors as follows:

a) ***Sources.*** According to Cottle et al. (1998), the analysis of source/primary definers and their attributes "is essential to an understanding of media roles in social representation and power relationships in society" (p. 108). Accordingly, Ericson et al. (1991) categorized the sources of news coverage into five types: governments, private sector, individuals not representing agencies, journalists, and unspecified sources referenced through non-specific terms, such as analysts, reporters, and observers.
b) ***Themes and stances.*** A key objective of the content analysis of the media coverage will be to classify types or sub-categories of reporting within a general area of investigation (Cottle et al., 1998). By drawing upon previous research on Sino-Japanese relations and a pilot study of Chinese newspaper's reporting, this work will construct an analytical framework to categorize the themes of the media reports of Sino-Japanese relations. According to this framework, the themes through which Chinese news media discuss China-Japan relations could be categorized along the two dimensions of content and stance. The content refers to the frames of political, economic, social and non-governmental exchanges. The stance comprises conflict, cooperation and neutral frames. Examples of the specific content and stance frames are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Content and Stance Frames of Sino-Japanese Relations in Chinese Newspapers

Content Frames	Stance Frames		
	Conflict	**Cooperation**	**Neutral**
Politics	The second Sino-Japanese war; The territorial dispute over East China Sea and South China Sea; Japanese government and right wing politicians' speech and actions regarding historical issues; Japanese government's assertive moves in security and diplomatic fields.	Sino-Japanese governmental exchanges and cooperation	Japanese domestic politics; Japan-US/Japan-South Korea/ Japan-North Korea/Japan-Russia/ Japan-Australia/Japan-Indian/ Japan-South East Asia relations
Economic		Chinese and Japanese economies are complementary to each other, import and export trade between the two nations are continuingly increasing.	The economic stagnation in Japan
Social frames			Japan pays much attention to energy conservation and environmental protection; Japan makes effort in disaster prevention and mitigation; Japanese enterprises focus on innovation; Japan does well in education and healthcare.
Non-governmental		China-Japan friendship has a long history; Exchanges of non-governmental organization between China and Japan.	

c) ***Vocabulary or lexical choice***. Analyzing vocabulary use or lexical choice will be an important component of the content analysis because the choice of one word over another may signal the opinions, emotions, or social positions of a speaker (Van Dijk, 1993).

After drafting the research categories, results from a content analysis of the interviews transcript will be used to supplement and refine these categories. Interviews will be conducted in Chinese in the cities of Beijing and Guangzhou where the headquarters of *People's Daily* and *Southern Metropolis Daily* are located. The linguistic choice is largely because the participants will be native Chinese speakers. A sample of 15 interviewees will be selected by invitation comprising 10 media workers and 5 government officials. The individual, semi-structured interviews of no more than two hours duration will involve several open-ended questions that will mainly focus on the pre-defined categories. Each interviewee will be given the opportunity to express their feelings, thoughts and experiences about the four key study factors of sources, themes, vocabulary choice and stance when they write and report Sino-Japanese relations. All the interviews will be digitally recorded with the permission of the participants, and subsequently transcribed, coded and analyzed. The participants will be informed that the information they share will be kept private and confidential and that only anonymized data will be published.

The next stage in the analysis will involve the coding of newspaper articles according to an operational measure of the a priori categories corresponding to pre-assumed media frames, and collating descriptive examples in each. Each news article will be coded for the presence (1 = yes) or absence (0 = no) of a few questions that measure the news frames of political, economic, social and non-governmental exchanges frames (content dimension), as well as conflict, cooperation and neutral frames (stance dimension). The general evaluation question for each of the frames to determine the code of presence or absence will be as follows:

Content dimension:

(1) Does the article mention the political issues or events between China and Japan? (Politics Frame)

(2) Does the story report any economy and trade relations between China and Japan, and its influence on both countries? (Economics frame)

(3) Is there mention of any social aspect of Japan, such as environment, education, healthcare or culture? (Social frame)

(4) Does the report highlight how non-government actors in China and Japan contact and communicate to each other? (Non-governmental exchange frame)

Stance dimension:

(1) Does the article suggest some level of conflict, contradiction or confrontation in Sino-Japanese relations? (Conflict frame).

(2) Does the article highlight the cooperation and friendship between China and Japan in the field of government, economic and social exchanges? (Cooperation frame).

(3) Does the report mention Japan's domestic and foreign affairs through a neutral stance or without relating them to China? (Neutral frame).

As the goal of this thesis is to identify and categorize all frames of the Chinese media that report Sino-Japanese relations, the coding process will consist of two stages. First, the content analyzer will read the news coverage of the Sino-Japanese relations and highlight all passages that appear to reflect the media frames. Second, all highlighted text will be coded using the predetermined frames. The content analyzer will be the author of this study who is a Chinese post-graduate student of media and communication studies with experience in reading and analyzing Chinese media reports. Reliability of the news article ratings will be addressed by undertaking checks for consistency by an expert colleague in Chinese media, and where discrepancies arise, discussion will occur until agreement is reached. It is expected that data coding and analysis we will be able to detect the similarities and differences of the media's practices during peacetime and political crises in Sino-Japanese relations. The similarity and subtle distinction between the different types of newspaper are likely to be examined as well.

Preliminary findings

Since this study is a working project, it has not come to a conclusion at current stage. However, this researcher has conducted a frequency analysis of the amount of the news reports of Japan and Sino-Japanese relations from the Chinese official newspaper—*the People's Daily* by each month and each year from 2006 to 2014, some preliminary findings could be introduced.

As figure 2 has shown, in 2007 the number of news reports in regarding to Japan saw a considerable growth due to the improvement of Sino-Japanese relations with the then Chinese Premier, Wen Jiabao's visit to Japan. The *People's Daily* provided an intensive report of Wen Jiabao's visit. However, between 2008 and 2010, this figure drops sharply with the stable bilateral relations and rises in 2011 because of Japan's earthquake and tsunami. After 2011, the figure decreases slightly during 2012 and 2013. However, 2014 witnessed a dramatic increase in terms of news coverage of Japan because the Chinese government started to raise war-related issues to a realistic level by connecting the Japanese military past to its current political and military policies and the *People's Daily* actively reflected this change through its more intensive coverage of Japan.

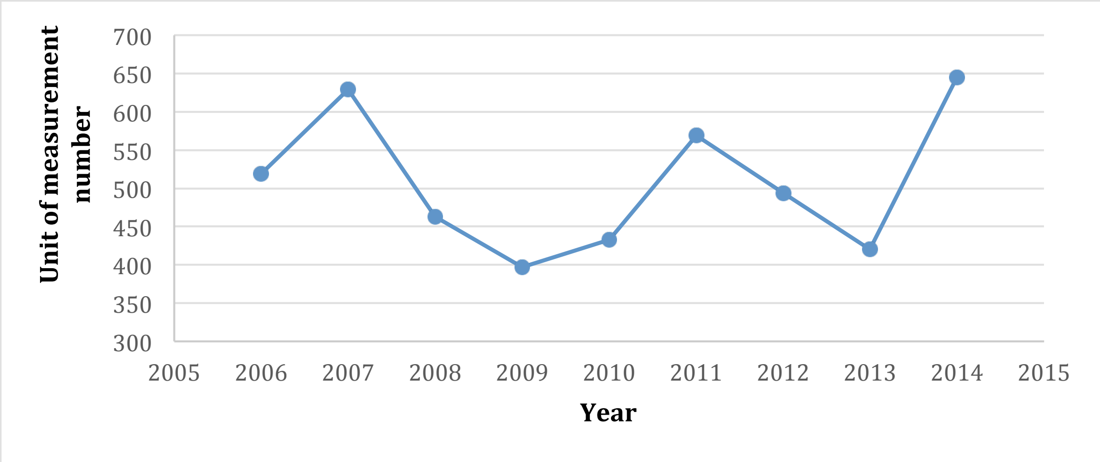

Figure 2 The frequency of news reports of Japan from the People's Daily between 2006 and 2014

This researcher also randomly selected two years (2008 and 2014) to content analyze the news coverage in terms of the stance and value judgments they conveyed. The analysis suggested that in 2008 with the improvement and stability of Sino-Japanese relations, in *the People's Daily*'s coverage of Japan and Sino-Japanese relations the cooperation frame was used the most (56.4%), the neutral frame was next most frequently used (28%), and the conflict frame was used the least (15.6%). These results imply that the news reports of Japan mainly held a positive and neutral stance, emphasizing official visits between the heads of China and Japan, the complementariness of two nations' economy to each other, and exchanges of non-governmental organization in two countries.

However, in 2014 when the Sino-Japanese relations had reached its lowest point due to the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands dispute and Abe's visit to the controversial Yasukuni shrine, the news reports of Japan from *the People's Daily* showed a dramatic change in terms of stance and content, becoming extremely negative. Among 645 news reports regarding Japan and Sino-Japanese relations, 80% (n = 516) belonged to conflict frames by condemning the Japanese government and right wing politicians' speeches and actions regarding historical issues and Japan's assertive moves in security field, 16.2% (n = 105) of the news reports were neutral frames, describing the economy, society and culture in Japan. While only 3.7% (n = 24) pieces of news coverage could be seen be using cooperation frames by mentioning the exchange and friendship between non-governmental organizations between China and Japan. The comparative results between 2008's and 2014's news coverage of Japan from *the People's Daily* are shown in Table 2. It was found that as the official party media, news reports of Japan from *the People's Daily* are strictly in accordance with the Chinese government's attitude and policy towards Japan with little alternative or challenging viewpoints.

Table 2 The Stance of News Reports of Japan in The People's Daily in 2008 and 2014

Stance (Value dimension)	2008 (463 news reports in total)	2014 (645 news reports in total)
Cooperation frames	261 (56.4%)	24 (3.7%)
Neutral frames	130 (28%)	105 (16.2%)
Conflict frames	72 (15.5%)	516 (80%)

These preliminary findings will be important for use to quantitatively describe the changing trend of Chinese media's reports of Japan and Sino-Japanese relations. Meanwhile, these data will be triangulated with the interview data in order to test the validity of the fieldwork findings.

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An “Imagination” of Knowledge Community: Discourse Analysis of China's Environmental News Reporting

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Key words: Knowledge Community Environmental News Reporting Consensus

Introduction to the "knowledge community" in the news reporting

As a theoretical system of comprehensive knowledge, the knowledge community can be regarded as the "alloy" organization structure which is supported by the authority of each department. Community knowledge endures in the interdisciplinary field of study. Once the sngle departments-net connected with the knowledge of the community, more general knowledge is released from the extensive connections with the knowledge of the community (He, 1998).

The concept and mode of knowledge community are not necessarily included in the news reporting work net. Based on the particularity of environmental news reports, environmental news is more significant in the field of the report in using different subject knowledge to cover out the news stories. Environmental news report follows the basic rules of news reports, but at the same time focusing on the contradictions and problems between natural environment and society, and waring government in a professional way.

According to our observation, we found the scholars in the fields of the environment appeared in the report text or even participate in reporting process as the interview objectors, source partners. The goal of this paper thus focused on how the work-net between these scholars and news reporters constructs a kind of imagination of knowledge community consciously or unconsciously through interacting and

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communicating across the margins of the two different subjects of journalism and environment.

General news stories are classified based on the social fields of news events, environmental news is derived from in the United States in the 19th century the Conservation Movement (the conservation movement 1850-1920), across public, political or economical areas, along with public and private issues. It grows quickly in the 20th century 60's, 70 years. At the same time, the theory framework of environmental journalism has been developed. In the eighties of the 20th century, Ulrich Beck， a famous scholar and sociologist developed the theory about “risk society ”as an other mode of modern society, which moved research topics with pragmatism of the environmental towards the modern theoretical construction, British scholar Michael R. Lindell directly brought the risk theory into the research field of environmental news(Michael R. Lindell,2004). Other studies applied environmental risk theory to media research in electrical, newspapers and television, and as follows, theories of health communication, policy and risk theory, globalization are carried into quantitative and qualitative study in environmental news(Stuart Allan，Cynthia Carter，Barbara Adam,2000), which enriches the content research and practice of environmental news.

Michael frome (1998) proposed the complete concept of environmental journalism and related research gathered in media how to construct the environmental agenda and to report news events, how to spread and influence the government and the public （Anders Hansen，1993；Sheldon Krimsky & Alonzo Plough，1988；Craig L.LaMay & Everette E.Dennis，2000）。）。

How the environment reporters identify themselves is an important research topic. As an important messenger to popularize scientific knowledge, the reporter plays a teacher of public environment, through bringing first-hand data with the latest scientific research report, such as climate change information, to the audience. Fromm believes that " (Michael Frome,2000) The best method of environmental reporting is to survey and to conduct research work beyond the knowledge in the book, making real dialogue between the human and environment"（Moser，S.C.,2010）; in addition, environmental problems include interdisciplinary professional knowledge so as to make news story scientific, so environmental reporters especially pay attention to the preparatory work before the interview. At the same time, environmental reporter would also like to be able to explain how the problems occurred and what consequence are through the language easy to understand for the readers. Like the New York Times reporter William Lawrence said: "the real descendant of the Prometheus is scientific journalists passed the fire seed of knowledge from Olympus ---laboratory and University to the public through the media." In this sense, the role of journalists have been understood as "professional translator".

According to research in recent years, Chinese environmental news has the obvious difference with foreign countries, there are still some controversial on the reporting’s professionalism and ethics. Many studies show that environmental reporters’reputation is facing a crisis, due a lot of environmental propaganda stories or encouraging news。The complex relationship among the environmental reporting, encouraging the news and the objectivity of the news is becoming more serious. (Li Xiguang & Li Ying, 2005; Wang Jilong, 2009; Liu Xiangrong & Zhang Bin, 2009).

From the standpoint of environmental news reports, by selecting the people's daily 1978-2008 environmental news reports as the research sample content analysis found from the beginning of 2000, the positive environmental news reported in the annual reports of the total accounted for the proportion of decline, and from then there has been no more than 50% (except 67.8% in 2002), and critical reports accounted for the proportion of basically maintained at about l0%. Through these data, the researchers believe that with the continuous development of environmental news, the media reported more objective and rational than ever, which is no longer a simple praise or criticism, but pays more attention to the objective facts and rethinks profoundly (Xu Yanxu, 2009). From the point of view of social communication, for recent years China's major environmental news reporting huge environmental soicl issues, media plays an essential role in the social transformation as a "green mobilization" (Sun Wei, 2009).

On the other hand, through to the Shanghai 12 media news reporters interview, the study found that (Yu, 2012) compared with Western Environmental Journalists, China Environment News reporter mostly lack knowledge of natural science background, due to the lack of environmental news media incentives, not to establish a professional team of environmental reporter consciousness, resulting their own low career evaluation.

Although practice and research have been concerned about environmental news' professional characteristics of knowledge, there is no enough in-depth research work relates to how "knowledge" between journalists and experts in interactive communication process products and flows out. We also agree that, in interactive communication, the process of how subject-object of prior experience cognition of the reporters and scholars to affect the production and flow of knowledge, how the news questions to be refined from those environmental issues and how news agenda setting about problems to be conducted in media must be observed and deconstructed.

The basic point of this paper is still to review the professional characteristics presented in the environmental news reports, however, different from other former studies, we hope, through the introduction of "knowledge community" concept, to prompt how "knowledge" generate its power and format it in the process of news coverage.

The hypothesis: the formation and elimination of the knowledge community

According to the practical observation, experts and academic environment reporters set of knowledge community with differences from its theoretical model, this study proposes two hypotheses. First, in the theoretical model of knowledge community, various departments subject connected and become a consistent overall by relying on their own authority; however, the knowledge community between the environment news reporters and the scholars in China may rely more on a kind of consensus of the partners, rather than the subjects' authority; it may come from social tension when the journalists and scholars, the Chinese intellectuals in the field of the environment, have to face the governments. Second, the value of contribution to knowledge community often come from in the theory of knowledge innovation and extension in which the lower part or outside knowledge jumps into, and from that package contains many unique thinking and capacity by which can be transformed and released (He, 1998).But knowledge community in Chinese environment news reports does not produce mobility and produces a new knowledge or intellectual understanding on deeper or broader perspectives. The partner of consensus still exists crisis because of essentialism arising from divergence in the knowledge community.

Method and sample analysis

The research method of this paper involves content analysis, Newsnroom-Observation and depth interview. Firstly, content analysis will select the typical reports with media coverage of more than a few of months. Secondly, one researcher is going to enter some workshop to get newsroom observation on how the journalists and the experts to make some kind of consensus about a specific case in the knowledge community. Thirdly, two depth interview groups is design to study how a new knowledge community to be gradually formed. Interview of group of journalists will focus on how the journalists to find out and explain the problem, and the another one of experts will focus on how to share their own academic achievements or professional knowledge to interact with a large number of environmental journalists and how to provide solutions to the relevant government departments and their policies.

Through above three research methods, this research expects to draw the "dynamic diagram" of how the environmental reporters and experts to synthetize in the knowledge community based on their "consensus" and "sharing".

There are environment news stories in the People's Daily, Xinhua Agency, China Environmental News Newspaper and so on; while there are fixed columns of environments reporting in other media such as the Caixin media with its column of "Environment and Technology", the Southern Weekend media with its column of "Green Version", and the Pengpai media with its column of "Green Office ".The research object of this paper focuses news stories in the fixes column.

There three criteria for sample selection of content analysis: 1. The news reported on important events in the last three years or on major environmental problems involving major pollution of water, air and soil; 2. The news have done an investigation with writing text of more than 5000 words length (including a series of reports). 3. The media is popular domestic but not local.

Based on above three criteria, we choose for text samples of “a series of investigating reports on the cadmium treatment of polluted rice ” , “a series of investigating reports on sewage disposal, a series of investigating reports on emergent events of "Tianjin port big bang", and the analysis story about the Evaluation system of environmental protection.

9 Deep Interviewees include 5 reporters in Caixin media, southern weekend, Pengpai news and 4 famous experts in soil pollution and environmental law.

Imagine one: as a consensus of the "partner"

In the context of knowledge dialogue, which is set by the authority of a variety of subjects, it is necessary to produce a "consensus" which is an indispensable prerequisite for the formation of knowledge community. The principle of universality that consensus must meet in various disciplines in the community so as to improve the practice of “knowledge based creative regeneration”, the base of “alloy” is not by knowledge level to determine the level of the subjects, but by the authorities in it to discuss and approve the decision; that means, it is the members’ “identity cognition with its identification on knowledge community.” However, it does not mean that the authority boundary each subject has become vague or eliminated, but it is more remind or emphasize that the each subject’s authority exist in this “alloy”. In fact, identity cognition with its identification on knowledge community is not going to maintain and safeguard the authority by the authority, and not to inform new authority like discourse formation on the ideology of monopoly, it only presents a freedom to respect the authority because of coexistence of emotion and reason, and shows an intellectual expectation from this respect, which would be a kind of a consensus of the “partner”.

This is similar to the idea of the basic condition of the generation of consensus by Habermas. Firstly, an ideal communication situation is necessarily formed for ones involved in in the discourse participation, in which the ones in the discourse have their rights to explain, demonstrate their own opinions, and to express of their likes and dislikes, feelings and desires. i.e., Secondly, participates in the communication parties must abide by some rules and basic requirements to effectively and rationally communicate with each other, such as the statements by the participates must be true facts, communicators sincerely have their subjective intention, follow kinds of reasonable or correct code of conduct. However, Foucault believes that such an ideal communication situation is "Utopia", the essence of any relationship is power relations, which is to control and determine the means of others.

From above two ideas and consensus， Habermas pay more attention to the rationality of production process of consensus so as to prove the rationality of consensus, Foucault intentions to reveal, by structuralism, that power abstractly beyond discourse and the process, which is a priori to create strength and experience of self defense forces (Habermas, 2011:302.)

However, there may be another case. In this case, the participates in the process of communication are not so much imagined as the "consensus" of the producer, they are better to say that the “consensus of the manufacturing partner". In the discourse analysis of the process and essence of the knowledge community formed by the environmental experts in the process of news report, we found that power seems to be everywhere in the presence of authority, and in the structure of the flow. On the other hand, as a result of the common goal beyond of kind of intellectual community, the two participates have turned to be the "consensus" of the “partner” or consensus of the “allies ". This shift of identity can also be seen as an internal solution to the power dilemma indicated by Foucault.

The sample text analysis results show that in the composed of knowledge community by the journalists and scholars, the environmental scholars’ professional authority significantly is beyond the professional authority of the news reporters and become an important force in discourse of interpretation.

The environmental scholars discourse almost in the form of live strolls in the press and the logical structure, and then constructs the logic of journalistic professionalism. News reporters and environmental scholars jointly become the consensus partner, with following fourth characteristics:

Firstly, using facts and data to expose the environmental hazards.

Environmental reports are often doing their work to reveal environmental hazards by means of in-depth investigations as similar as social science research methods. However, in the text strategy, it is mainly to use the environmental research data and scholars' conclusions to explain so as to autocratically show the seriousness of environmental problems. These data and conclusions are often used to analyze how the crisis are dangerous, the reasons, the national or regional impact, and discuss the solution.

Secondly, the root reason of problems is attributable to the oversight system.

Environmental reporting is more like to attribute of environmental problems to a system that is not a business or a local government caused the crisis, but lack of both environmental protection system and the supervision of the government; the latter is the root course.

The government is divided into "central government" and "local government" .The focus of environmental reporting is that the central government regulate the protection system and remedy other lacks from the macroscopic formulation, so-called "Top-Level Design"; meanwhile, the local government need implementation to increase efforts to take responsibility. Most of the evaluation of the above views from experts.

Thirdly, constructing public opinion as a second strategy for the problem solution

Although the environment is unavoidable to explore the way to solve through the experts in the news reports, from the reality of the impact of environmental reports, it is not popular for the reports to change or create a new policy. The agenda setting of a series of reports to form a certain period of public opinion atmosphere, and to arouse public concern, has become the second strategy of environmental reports.

Fourthly, increasing environmental knowledge and arise universal environmental awareness. Environmental scholars research data and authoritative analysis, environmental reporter through in-depth investigation, environmental exposure, satisfy the public right to know, to safeguard the interests of the public, while increasing public awareness of environmental protection and environmental issues cognitive.

Generally speaking, from the perspective of text, the consequence of the knowledge community by Environmental Journalists and environmental scholars is not to regenerate or extent of the internal knowledge of the community, but is to combine the environmental hazards, the public's life, health and safety, the ecological security of the environment into a moment of truth of public interests. This consensus transcends the fixed goals of knowledge community and unexpectedly becomes contemporary sampling, which is derived from universal value included in the transcendental-experience.

Imagine two: as the spokesman of "subjectivity"

Subjectivity is composed of individual experience and self identity, Foucault (2007) believes that subjectivity is the product of power and discourse, and they produce social self (We) through the regulation and order. Therefore, regardless of whether the mass media or individual's independent expression is only an illusion, people use the language symbol has decided its scope of discourse.

From the text analysis we got an imagine on how the journalists and experts rationally beyond their authority and the community of knowledge to become the partner with their consensus; depth interview research methods helped us to another imagine picture of cognitive subjectivity individually by themselves. The two imagined pictures made us confused technically.

Scholar in the eyes of reporters

The reporters and the scholars have their respective field of work with their respective positions. To a surprise， reporters are more like to regard scholars as a professional source with less direct interaction, based on the needs of their stories. The active communication of reporters with scholars sometimes is even less than with the NGO organization and. Sometimes, the relationship of two ones depressingly was described by reporters as “beware” or “alert”.

“*I don't think journalists and experts is a partnership, the reporter interviewed the experts to get their professional point of view, accessed data information, as the reports of rich, but our reporting should still be independent of the experts, because experts inevitably have their standpoints by the institutions or personal reasons with some tendency or retention, which would be dangerous for journalists’ professionalism. Besides, we are very grateful to the experts for their valuable information.*” (Caixin media, Cui Zheng)

Reporters show vigilance to some environmental scholars who love to speak out their opinions in public, and called them as "big mouth experts".

"*There are a lot of ‘big mouth experts' who have no professional knowledge and ability, but especially love to ask a reporter to interview, I think we should to guard against them.*" (Caixin media, Kong Lingyu)

We found that this sense of "beware" and "alert" is built on the basis of distrust for each other, once distrust continues to expand, interaction relationship can not be established.

There is a contradiction between the background of knowledge and the scope of its application, because the focus of the facts is not consistent. Reporters describes themselves as professional knowledge ‘s "Porter". In fact, the "handling " of the information as a Porter in the knowledge community is often appeared, but the relationship between the information handling, information processing and the subjectivity of handling has never been clarified. In the eyes of the reporter the subjectivity seems to be automatically given up but it is likely to be appeared in the details text of the selection and objectives, which reflects the news ‘professionalism.

"If one expect can clearly explain his academic opinions and technology, it may not need reporters to write the news story. Most of network editors in Guokr has their scientific or engineering background, which would be the trend of the future. None of current environmental reporter has Environmental Science PhD. But even if it is a doctor of environmental science, this field is too wide, what you can handle just is a narrow area. So, we need to carry the technical and academic points of the experts to the public; but before your carry, you have to understand what they said (Southern Weekend reporter: Wang Tao)

Reporters in Knowledge community in the eyes of scholars

Surprisingly, the two sides of the evaluation of each other significantly similar; in addition, the scholars describe the relationship with the reporters in the knowledge of the community as more complex.

Experts and the reporters are in relationship with mutual need, mutual help, cooperation but being beware with each other. The reporter needs experts 'academic authoritative to increasing their reports' professional credibility; meanwhile scholars need to spread their ideas and opinions through news stories and the press, so as to expand their social influence, therefore the mutual help and cooperation often occur. But many of journalists and scholars do not trust with each, we worry about reporter to distort scholars 'intention or opinions, they like to break and select out of context which they want. So the reporter needs to be on guard. (China University of Political Science and Law, environmental resources Professor Wang)

The scientificalness and credibility of the news reports is another area that the scholars often question.

Overall, it is obvious that the credibility of news reporting on soil environment is lack (Institute of Geographical Sciences and natural resources research, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Professor Wang)

The news stories are not satisfied and particularly uneven in quality. For many reasons, I think mainly reason is that it is very difficult for reporters to obtain China's environmental data because of its low degree of information disclosures. I noticed, *some of the media already have published many qualified and insightful stories, such as Southern Weekend, Caixin media reports. In recent years, environmental news reporting is increasing a lot, but there are still many environmental problems are not covered in the media attention.* (Shanghai Jiao Tong University, Professor Zhao)

Not satisfied with the media led the scholars to alien with media, also led to the passive interaction when the reporter contacted them. Coincidently, with their own sense of un-satisfaction, the impulse of intellectual exploration, which makes their academic understanding satisfied, then become not active but positive. That's means, because of refusal of corporation with some unqualified media and reports, or in opposite attitude to cooperation with the media, may make scholars lose possibility of exploration.

On the other hand, the scholars did not know and understand much about media's characteristics, demands of the reporters, that shows that the interaction between the media and the scholars is based on events, rather than on the basis of the system, or based on immediate interests of reporting, rather than the social interests of the public.

In spite of this, scholars have realized that journalists and news reports are very necessary for the academic community and the public.

Concern of environmental experts on environmental issues is always lasting and in-depth, so do the reporters are, in addition to this, other people's environmental issues may have a certain degree of concern; but, it is difficult to understand the lasting for a long term. If environmental experts only in their academic enjoy themselves, influence of environmental experts can play is relatively weak, environmental experts have the responsibility to awaken and warn the public about environmental issues through the media. On the other hand, in environment news reporting although there is a certain degree of news professionalism, sometimes reporters also need to cooperate with specialist, to communicate and interact, so as to make environmental reporting more professional, more scientifically grasping accuracy and depth. Now experts and scholars tend to be more passive, did not realize needs of the reporters and has not yet grasped the media. For example we have some academic activities, which needs to be open to the media, we may actively invite the media to participate in; but we are also *worried about the reporter on these issues are not interested, do not care about.(*Shanghai Jiao Tong University, Professor Zhao)

The scholars and journalists, in knowledge community ability to resolve subjectivity into relativity not only depends on their knowledge accumulation, such as the social and occupational environment, but also on their individual recognition of the importance on the environmental issues in China. They judge other just based on their respective camps. This is the conscience is not enough? Or the embodiment of the superiority of their individual knowledge authority? True thoughts seem to have been short-lived in this community, however, they did not form a new liquidity beyond the single news event, that is, and there is new knowledge or new idea regenerate out of their won. It's just a “skin sensation”. In other words, it is the knowledge of the "space feeling" embodied in ideology, which are often carried out in a non-ideological method, such as choice of words and expression, set the agenda for the environmental problems, the mode of action and perception. They are careful to avoid arguments, even the normal discussion, because these different views and ideas at any time may become a kind of “straw” breaking this loose cooperation.

The ability of relativity is actually a self denial and criticism. Specialized culture itself is a kind of way of exclusiveness. In the knowledge community, "essentialism" may be it more appropriate pronoun instead of specialism. When they discuss the problem of abstract, they abandon the "skin feeling" and often find out the general problems, such as the formulation of China's environmental law, the attitude of the government.

When this universality is related to realistic problems associated with concrete details, for example to discuss how to regulate the enterprise, whether to increase public spending on environmental protection, how to deal with these very specific details of reality, namely how to form a consensus that can be put into practice, become a challenge, or is a kind of imagination.

"Essentialism" frequent is kind of "trap", when it is present as professional, and it can often create high efficiency. But in the community, essentialism has may ignore the problem of complexity, also refuse of diversifiable thinking because of exclusiveness, thus the participates in the community are very difficultly organize effective research questions; Which is the same as universality dilemma. Knowledge community often find consensus and take its commitment to explore issues of universal, but when the universal pull away in its context, it become a possibility of the concept to be free to use. That would make it fact to a dilemma, drawn from the specific direction, university is possible to lose its meanings of existence because of losing its specific relativity with individual differences.

Like the objectivity contained in journalism. In common sense, Objectivity is the core of journalism, that is, universality of journalism. But we all know that objectivity is not the focus of discussion. Truth is the real focus； That is to say, under what objective circumstances, the fact is true, but in other situations it is not true; authenticity is the goal, objectivity is methodology to achieve the goal.

For example, agenda ordering of environmental problems in China, the study of soil environmental experts that soil is the most important, but reporters are more like to cover stories of the haze problem. differences of spatial perception can be found everywhere. This fact is about between the truth and facts differences, authenticity of the same facts under different condition may be different; the authenticity is the facts generated by the context of specific directivity, which means value and significance of the fact.

The differences between the scholars and scholars are different from the specific point of universality, which is different from their individual recognition of social conditions of the environmental problems.

The goal of environmental journalists in the event of environmental incidents reporting news is to maximiza public interest which includes the right to know. And environmental scholars tend to be elite and institutional, which fix their thinking or make them conside environmental problem in the public to affect social stabilit.

"*They are generally used to Chinese very huge population as the premise, the inevitability of the issue, so they hope reporters not to 'render' this problem; Steeped in a long time in the system, some scolars have been in a set of official discourse system, making their recognition as a part of the mode of thinking. In this case, it is* *not possible to interact communition into depth.*"(Caixin Media, Kong)

That each of news reports and expert opinion in much degree holds its authenticity depends on the news report and the opinion directly in much degree being related the truth that is contained those factors and recognized by the majority of the public.

Conclusion and discussion: the imagination of knowledge community

For the first hypothesis -- China environment news report in the community of knowledge may more depend on partner of consensus between journalists and scholars, rather than academic authority; this consensus may from a kind of "nervous feeling" when both environmental Journalists and academics face of Chinese official policy system -- have been tested. "Economic development", "the system is not perfect," government pay no attention on these issues"," evoke government's attention "and so on, such conclusions with anxious vocabulary invariably appearing in the discourse system of communication is actually a force to speak out dissatisfaction and temptation on the official system, which indicate that both conscience of social responsibility from the reporters or intellectual exploration of knowledge authority sense of universality, because of the joint "feeling", coincidently reach a "partner of consensus" in this community of knowledge, and filled in the structural elaboration on environmental issues.

The second hypothesis -- China environment news report of knowledge community the knowledge did not produce liquidity and production to regenerate new knowledge or more push into depth or in intellectual exploration, partner of consensus is under a danger of essentialism due to stubborn existence of subjectivity.

The essence of knowledge community is the process of learning. In terms of the reporter, which is a reflection of Journalistic Professionalism (Li & Gong, 2014), in terms of the scholars, which is relative a subjective process that also includes a reflective learning process. This reflective learning process led by the interaction of rational (including the main body of the rational),in which both the cognitive subject for their own and the objectivity of entity in the position is no longer have the privilege, then, the interaction mode determines the completion behavior and the position of the interactive participants (Habermas, 2011, p347) “It is inevitable that self-relationship is strengthening by a kind of priori - empirical level in addition to the observer's perspective with no alternative to the possibility ”(P348)

The deepening of thought as it becomes a consensus on the flow of the process, will be meaningful. This process of conflict is much more important than building a common knowledge position (Sun, 1999).

From the above discussion, construction of communication workshops by journalists and scholars in environmental news reports is just a knowledge of the community's imagination in addition to its essence.

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